

## WESTAMPTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

### 7:00 PM REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

July 5, 2016

The meeting was called to order and at 7:03 PM by Mayor Daniels. Requirements of the Sunshine Law were read. This meeting was advertised in the Burlington County Times on January 14, 2016. The flag was saluted. Mayor Daniels wanted the moment of silence to be in memoriam of those whom were victims of the Orlando shootings. There was a moment of silence.

#### Roll Call:

Committeewoman Chang	Present
Committeeman Lopez	Present
Committeewoman Smith-Hartman	Present
Committeewoman Teleisa	Present
Mayor Daniels	Present

Al Marmero, Solicitor, was present.

Donna Ryan, Clerk/Administrator and Marion Karp, Deputy Clerk was present.

Approve 7/5/16 Agenda – motion to approve made by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Smith-Hartman. All voted yes.

Closed Session Minutes of 6/20/2016 – motion to approve by Ms. Chang; seconded by Mr. Lopez. All voted yes. Regular Meeting Minutes 6/20/16 – motion to approve by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Chang. Ms. Chang and Ms. Teleisa each had a correction to the minutes. All voted yes to the minutes with corrections.

#### **Public Comments on Agenda Items**

Janet Curran, 123 Main Street – asked about Ordinance 17-2016; she is happy to hear that we are holding off on this. She wants to see more studies done on if a new school or classrooms are necessary due to an increase of students from new developments. She doesn't know if we can afford the school at this time.

Vernita Jones, 20 Amara Lane – also commented on this ordinance. She spoke regarding the debt that the Township was responsible for as well as the further deferring of school taxes which was done earlier this year. She gave a synopsis of comments that had been made by various Committee members regarding the budget, PILOT agreements and the increase in students. The Mayor interrupted Ms. Jones since they had agreed to a 4 minute limit on comments a few meetings ago and she had exceeded her time. He asked that she get to her point. She asked that the school acquisition be adjourned until

September. At this point she isn't for or against it but wants more information and doesn't want it pushed through.

The Mayor stated that this issue was going to be tabled for now; it appears now that the Board of Education was not going in on this acquisition with the Township. They needed to investigate this further and will wait on it. They had thought it was a great time to purchase the property since it is being sold at a greatly reduced price and the seller was very interested in Westampton Township as a purchaser. There will be new students coming into the Township from new developments. He explained they wanted to have a vote at the last meeting in order to move forward with this, if necessary. He stated that at this point, it is moot.

Mr. Lopez explained that the Township has heard from the school board where they were told the schools are at capacity and soon will be over capacity. Project Freedom will bring in 30-50 new students; they are currently at 15 new students with only 30 units occupied in Phase 1. The Ingerman project doesn't even have shovels in the ground and there are 50 new students estimated. Woodmont development will have 470 new apartments. He didn't authorize the construction of these new developments which were mostly controversial at the time they were approved.

Mayor Daniels explained that the matter is tabled because they cannot move forward.

Nancy Burkley, 226 Olive Street – understands that others are interested in purchasing the property. She thinks that in light of other referendums for the schools at about 10 million dollars that this is a good acquisition. She is a former school board member; she knows how expensive it is to build classrooms. Even if the school needed to be retrofitted it would still be cheaper than a new addition or school. She isn't thrilled about finding out that this has come about so quickly but sometimes you have to take advantage of an opportunity. She continues to encourage the Township to work through this.

Ms. Chang – asked Nancy Burkley if she thinks it is important for the school board to be on board; she said definitely.

Robert Kelly, 2 Thames Lane – is a resident and a tax payer. His son attended Rancocas Friends School since preschool; he appreciated the openness in discussing the purchase of the school.

Mayor Daniels – it should be noted that the Committee was very surprised about the closing of the school, as was Mr. Kelly. They hoped it would have been able to remain open and operating. He thanked each of his colleagues.

Anthony D'Errico, 46 Roberts Drive – has been on both Westampton and RVRHS School Boards; he had concerns about getting the school ready and habitable for students. To ease apprehension they could consider holding an open house at the school for residents. He asked if there was additional buildable land on the property; there is,

behind the library. He spoke regarding the change in number of students that the new developments would be bringing in; there needs to be some consistency here.

Mayor Daniels said he thinks it is fair that the number of students was minimized at prior meetings; the acquisition made good sense from a community wide interest, especially based on price. He would like further discussions to take place.

### **New Business**

Appoint Craig Farnsworth as Fire Chief, effective 7/5/16 – motion to approve by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Smith-Hartman. Ms. Teleisa commented that as former liaison she has always supported the Fire/EMS department. Craig has always done a great job; however she doesn't agree with the process that got us here tonight. She has to abstain from voting. Mr. Lopez, Ms. Smith-Hartman and Mayor Daniels voted yes; Ms. Chang voted no, Ms. Teleisa abstained. Thursday night at the Firehouse at 7 PM Craig will be sworn in as Fire Chief. Mayor Daniels thanked Craig for his work over the years with moving the Department forward.

### **Resolutions**

61-16 Payment of Vouchers – motion to approve made by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Smith-Hartman. All voted yes. Ms. Chang commented that on page 2 of the bill list there seems to be some overlap on legal fees; she is concerned about that. Tax appeals are handled by Ms. Gaskill but she sees an overlap with Long & Marmero. Donna explained there was a conflict and this matter was assigned to Long & Marmero at Kathleen's request. There was a May 2016 bill from Capehard & Scatchard. Donna explained that this was regarding a FEMA issue; they composed the letter to FEMA in May. Donna would confirm this.

62-16 Chapter 159, Alcohol Education Rehabilitation Fund – motion to approve made by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes.

63-16 Appoint Township Administrator - motion to approve by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Smith-Hartman. All voted yes. Mayor Daniels stated that there was complete unanimity to hire Ms. Carrington; they were all very impressed with her resume and her ability to think outside the box. They look forward to her joining the team and moving the Township forward. Mr. Lopez stated that she has Township and Board of Education experience; she holds a Law Degree as well as a Bachelors and Master's degree; she is an impressive candidate. Ms. Chang is especially impressed that she did all this and is a mother too. Mr. D'Errico asked what her salary would be. The salary is \$88,000 a year. Ms. Smith-Hartman read her resume and is unbelievably impressed; she thanked her for accepting the Township's offer.

64-16 Authorize Purchase of 2 2017 Ford Pickup Trucks - motion to approve by Ms. Chang; seconded by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes. We had priced out a dump truck but

decided we would fit these in better in our budget; these are included in the bond ordinance.

65-16 Approve Street Name Change – motion to approve by Ms. Teleisa; seconded by Mr. Lopez. All voted yes. They are honoring someone but can't disclose who it is tonight. It is a two-step process and the County has to do their part. The Township has to move their part first.

66-16 2015 Audit – motion to approve by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Smith-Hartman. Ms. Chang noted the recommendations and findings were similar to prior years, it is her hope that we will get to work on these. All voted yes.

### **Ordinances**

17-2016 Bond Ordinance for purchase of Friends Academy, Block 201, Lot 6 (315 Bridge Street) – motion to hold for second reading & re advertisement for public hearing made by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Smith-Hartman. Ms. Chang has listened carefully; has heard residents say that we should wait on this until after the summer. She strongly believes we need the school on board with this; if they are not, they will not get her vote. Donna explained that she wanted to advertise this for the August 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, could she do this? Otherwise, we may lose the opportunity. Donna hopes we will have the public hearing on August 1<sup>st</sup>; they have to advertise it as part of a regular meeting. The Committee wants to keep their options open. All voted yes to table this matter until the August 1, 2016 meeting.

### **Correspondence**

Mayor Daniels – received a notice that Ms. Harris, a former school teacher and principal at WMS has passed away. He will do a proclamation to memorialize her life journey.

### **Dates to Remember**

Westampton Township Farmers Market – every Thursday at the Burlington County Library from 4 to 7 PM. Ms. Teleisa asked if the police could put out their electronic sign; they would do so.

August 2<sup>nd</sup> – National Night Out at the Public Safety Center.

There was a Boy Scout in the audience, he was working on a badge; Mayor Daniels had him stand up and be recognized.

### **Open to Public Comment**

Nancy Burkley – Ms. Harris really needs to be recognized; she was a marvelous teacher. She was a curriculum director, principal and an interim superintendent as well. She was still in communication with her the last few years. She was in her first 5<sup>th</sup> grade class in 1967.

Ms. Chang – she knew her and she really left an impression on her. She appreciates Nancy's comments.

Vernita Jones – she isn't for or against the Friends School, she just wants transparency for the residents. All 11 Boy's State students returned; she would try to get the Westampton student to come into a meeting and explain his experience. She went to the Farmer's Market; all residents should embrace this; we need more vendors and this is supporting local businesses.

Anthony D'Errico – Kelsi Worrell, township resident, keep your eye on her.

Ms. Smith-Hartman – her sister also qualified and went to the Olympic tryouts.

Anthony D'Errico – regarding veteran's tax exemptions, we had discussed this previously. It would be a good idea to know how many we have and if they are all legitimate. They need to be reviewed periodically.

Robert Kelly – asked where the August 1<sup>st</sup> meeting would be; would it be here or at the Friends School.

Mayor Daniels explained that they would get together and try and put together a concrete plan. Please be reminded that there is a sense of urgency in this matter; there are other entities interested in the Rancocas Friends School property.

Janet Curran – the BCT recently published 2 good stories. One was about police dogs; the other was about Peachfield Plantation on Burrs Road. She also spoke about the fire that occurred on the Rowan property. The Fire Police do an awesome job yet never receive any thanks; she thanked them, as they handle many of our affairs.

Mayor Daniels thanked Maureen Malecki for all of her efforts.

### **Comments from Department Heads and Professionals**

Police Chief Joe Otto – congrats to Craig Farnsworth and to Ms. Carrington.

Fire Chief Craig Farnsworth – they were dispatched for the Rowan house fire alarm at 4:30 AM; if no fire alarm it would have burned to the ground. They were out the door within 3 minutes. He thanked the Committee for the appointment.

PW Supervisor Mike Meenan – congratulations to Craig and to the new administrator.

Solicitor Al Marmero– welcome aboard to the new administrator.

Donna Ryan – congratulations to Craig and to Ms. Carrington.

Marion Karp – congratulations to Craig and to Ms. Carrington.

Ms. Smith-Hartman – congratulations to our new Fire Chief and Administrator.

Ms. Teleisa – wants to make it clear that she will continue to be an advocate of the Fire Department. She goes there to eat on Fridays. She appreciates Janet mentioning the Fire Police. She will support the new Chief in keeping the Department as great as it is. She welcomed new Administrator Maria Carrington.

Ms. Chang – welcome to Maria; she looks forward to working with her. Global Timbuctoo is a teacher's workshop; the first was last weekend, the second will take place this fall. Our Timbuctoo was the impetus for this to occur. It is being held at Rutgers University.

Mr. Lopez – thanked all the residents that came out. Congratulations to Maria; the interviews were an overall pleasure, he thinks she will be a great asset to our community. Congratulations to Chief Farnsworth, the department has had ups and downs but has always handled themselves well. He wanted to acknowledge all of the men and women who work for Westampton Township for their hard work.

Mayor Daniels – thanked Chief Otto. He spoke about the interchangeable patches to be worn by the Department honoring different causes; breast cancer awareness; autism, etc. He thanked Officer Einstein and watched him be honored as a hometown hero last week. Westampton was recently recognized as one of the top 100 places to raise a family in NJ. He thanked and congratulated Craig and Maria; he looks forward to working with them. He thanked the residents for coming out this evening.

There were no further comments and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion Karp, Deputy Municipal Clerk