

WESTAMPTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
7:00 PM Regular Meeting Minutes
February 7, 2023

The meeting was called to order and opened at 7:00 PM by Mayor Sandy Henley. Requirements of the Sunshine Law were read. This meeting was advertised in the Burlington County Times on January 6, 2023. This meeting was held in person in the Westampton Township Municipal Building Courtroom. The flag was saluted and there was a moment of silence.

Roll Call:

Committeewoman Burkley	Present
Committeeman Carr	Present
Mayor Henley	Present
Committeewoman Mungo	Absent
Committeewoman Wright	Absent

Township Administrator, Deputy Clerk, Township Solicitor, Chief of Police and Fire Chief were also present.

Approval of Minutes:

a. December 20, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve December 20, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes was made by Ms. Burkley; seconded by Mr. Carr.

Motion carried 3-0-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

b. January 3, 2023 Reorganization Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve January 3, 2023 Reorganization Meeting Minutes was made by Mr. Carr; seconded by Ms. Burkley.

Motion carried 3-0-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

c. January 17, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve January 17, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes was made by Mr. Carr; seconded by Ms. Burkley.

Motion carried 3-0-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mayor Henley

Naye: none
Abstain: none

Committeewoman Burkley asked if the township could improve the microphones or get new ones in the courtroom. She is concerned about the audio not coming through clear enough.

Mayor Henley responded to Committeewoman Burkley that the microphone issue will be investigated and addressed.

d. January 17, 2023 Executive Session Minutes

Motion to approve January 17, 2023 Executive Session Minutes was made by Mr. Carr; seconded by Ms. Burkley.

Motion carried 3-0-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

Open Meeting for Public Comments on Agenda Items Only:

Anthony Goetz, 109 West Maple Tree Drive, is looking for clarification on how the shared service agreement with Lumberton Fire Department will work. He would like to know how this will affect Westampton's budget and if Lumberton will be using Westampton's equipment.

Terrance Brown, 9 Pine Tree Drive, would like to know if the shared service agreement will be available for the public to read over it. He would like clarification on if new firefighters will be hired to help with the call volume.

All in favor to close public comment.

Resolutions:

- a. 29-23 Payment of Vouchers – this resolution approves the payment of bills through 02/07/2023.

Motion to approve Resolution 29-23 was made by Mr. Carr; seconded by Ms. Burkley.

Motion carried 3-0-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Carr, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

Committeewoman Burkley commented that she is going to vote yes because the bills need to be paid; however, she wanted clarification on the amount we paid to have the second floor carpeted, as she didn't realize it was going to be that high of a cost.

Township Administrator Wendy Gibson responded to Committeewoman Burkley that the cost went up due to inflation and that there will be an additional cost for the first floor to be completed later in the year.

Consent Agenda Resolutions:

Consent Agenda items are considered to be routine and will be enacted with a single motion; any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of funds; any items requiring discussion will be removed from the Consent Agenda.

- a. 30-23 Resolution Refunding Tax Overpayment Due to Tax Court Judgement
- b. 31-23 Resolution Authorizing Release of Performance Bond - Westampton Logistics Urban Renewal, LLC
- c. 32-23 Resolution Approving Place-to-Place Transfer of Liquor License – Arcadi Hospitality, Inc.
- d. 33-23 Resolution Authorizing Professional Services Contract – Animal Control Services
- e. 34-23 Resolution Authorizing Shared Service Agreement for Fire Department Services with Lumberton Township

Motion to approve Resolution numbers 30-23 through 33-23 was made by Mr. Carr; seconded by Ms. Burkley.

Motion carried 3-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

Committeewoman Burkley expressed that she had some concerns on the Shared Service Agreement for Fire Department Services with Lumberton Township and requested that Resolution number 34-23 be tabled to the next meeting. She did not want a volunteer organization to rely on a paid organization as a safety net and was concerned over having to make cuts in other departments to accommodate this agreement. She would like clarification on all the details of the agreement.

Mayor Henley explained that the agreement allows us to store more of our newer vehicles to be stored inside by making space in the fire house. He also explained that this is the older truck, and we have already done this in the past. He also said that there is an understanding that there are relationships between other surrounding organizations where there is a mutual agreement to assist when they are needed.

Fire Chief Craig Farnsworth addressed some of the concerns that were brought up with the Shared Service Agreement with the Lumberton Fire Department to Committeewoman Burkley and the residents in attendance. He explained that since Lumberton is not contiguous to Westampton, the State requires a shared service agreement. He explained that nothing is going to change when it comes to responding to calls, the employees on staff, and with the budget, other than having signed documentation that they need to have on record for legal purposes.

Committeeman Carr asked if it relieves Lumberton from responding, or if they were reducing their staffing, to which Chief Farnsworth said no.

Chief Farnsworth also noted that he was looking to reducing the amount of unnecessary call volume.

Ms. Burkley wanted to know why Lumberton thinks that the agreement will save them money.

Motion to table Resolution number 34-23 was made by Mr. Burkley; seconded by Mr. Carr.

Motion carried 3-0.

Ayes: Burkley, Mayor Henley

Naye: none

Abstain: none

Committeeman Carr motioned to open Public Comment. All in favor.

Open Meeting for Public Comment:

Terrance Brown, 9 Pine Tree Drive, asked Fire Chief Craig Farnsworth if Westampton Fire Department is going to be hiring more Firefighters to help respond to the extra calls.

Fire Chief Craig Farnsworth responded to Mr. Brown that there will be absolutely no changes. Everything will stay the same as it has been, this is just a formality that has to be done.

Kelly Gehin-Scott, 3 Valley Farm Road, asked who determines which Fire Departments respond to which calls. She hopes that the Westampton Fire Department puts the Westampton residents first when it comes to responding to calls over other towns.

Fire Chief Craig Farnsworth responded to Ms. Gehin-Scott that every call has a different type of response. For example, a house that caught on fire will draw a bigger response, with multiple towns responding, rather than it being just an alarm call. An alarm call, or a lower-level call, would only require the Westampton Fire Department to come out, unless they happen to be out on another call when that call comes through. If that's the case, then the next closest town will respond.

Kirstin Bjork-Jones, 120 West Maple Tree Drive, had some questions on the Master Plan revision. She is concerned about the zoning regarding certain Blocks and Lots within our township. Ms. Bjork-Jones noted her confusion about how and when the Master Plan comments would be addressed. She did not see the Master Plan on the agenda for the meeting.

Mayor Henley and Township Solicitor Bob Wright explained to her that she is speaking during the comment portion of the meeting, and that all comments can be answered either

after the meeting or via email. Mr. Wright explained that procedurally, residents can make a comment on any topic they choose; however, the Master Plan was not on the agenda for this evening's meeting.

Ms. Bjork-Jones noted there was nothing on the agenda for the Master Plan for the meeting tonight, but she had specific comments and stated that she attended the meeting a few weeks ago and heard otherwise. She then asked if the notes were published. She stated there was nothing publicized where the community could come and speak specifically about the Master Plan.

Committeewoman Burkley also added that she would like the Township Planner to be present for the next couple of meetings that are scheduled. That way, he is able to answer any questions or concerns the residents and Committee might have regarding the Master Plan.

Mr. Wright confirmed that the Planner will be in attendance at the introduction of the Ordinance and also at the adoption in March. He then confirmed the procedure for public comment on adoption of an Ordinance.

Mayor Henley confirmed that the process is not yet completed for the Ordinance to be introduced. Ms. Bjork-Jones wanted confirmed dates on the process.

Mr. Carr confirmed that there was a public workshop available to make substantive comments and input on resident's thoughts. Ms. Bjork-Jones was confused because she didn't see any notes from the meeting.

Township Administrator Wendy Gibson confirmed that the Committee voted on the minutes from the workshop and the meetings at the meeting tonight, and they are not available until after the vote.

Mayor Henley confirmed that the minutes will be published after they have been approved.

Discussion continued with Ms. Bjork-Jones, Mr. Wright and the Committee regarding the process for the Master Plan reexamination and public meeting information.

Gilbert Gehin-Scott, 3 Valley Farm Road, wants to make sure that the Westampton Township Fire Department will be responding to calls in Westampton Township first over Lumberton Township. He would also like to know if the Nelson Grovatt property will be getting rezoned.

Mayor Henley addressed his concern by stating that it was in the hands of the Land Development Board. Discussion continued with Mr. Gehin-Scott and the Committee members regarding the property.

Terrance Brown, 9 Pine Tree Drive, would like to know if there are any updates on questions and concerns that were brought up by the residents at the last Committee meeting on February 7, 2023. He was under the impression that his, along with the other residents that brought up questions and concerns from the last Committee meeting on February 7, 2023, would be specifically addressed at tonight's Committee meeting.

Mayor Henley confirmed that any resident can comment during public comment, even if the topic is not listed on the agenda. Discussion between Mr. Brown and Mr. Henley continued regarding commenting and questioning with the rest of the Committee members.

Mr. Brown commented that he thinks there is a morale problem with our township employees. Mayor Henley responded to Mr. Brown by asking what issue he was asking about and who he was referring to. Mr. Brown was unable to give a clear answer. Mayor Henley then asked our Township Administrator Ms. Gibson if we have an issue with our township employees not showing up to work, calling out last minute, showing up late or moral issues. Township Administrator Wendy Gibson responded "No" to all of Mayor Henley's questions.

Mayor Henley then responded to Mr. Brown noting that many of the former employees retired, but to say that we have a moral issue in our township building is not factual. He also confirmed that the Committee was not able to comment on specific individuals but confirmed that no one has brought up any issues to him when he comes into the building. He also confirmed that the staff have become very productive since Administrator Gibson had arrived. Mayor Henley stated that everyone tries to do the best they can to make the township better.

Township Solicitor Bob Wright addressed Mr. Brown that his concerns could not be discussed in a public meeting without proper notification to the employee in question.

Daniel McGonigle, 200 Bridge Street, is concerned about the lack of open space conservation in Westampton Township. He stated the Grovatt property is a historical property in Westampton Township, and he would hate to see developed and lose all its history. He was concerned that his Open Space tax was going primarily to Recreation, and he would like to see more of the historical landmarks in our township be preserved instead of redeveloped.

Gary Berberian, 138 Winstead Drive, asked if there is an issue with the vendor, E-Code 360, because the disposition list has not been updated on the website. Mr. Berberian also asked why pending Ordinances such as the No Knock Ordinance is not published on the township website, and if any pending Ordinances could be published.

Mr. Carr and Ms. Gibson confirmed that all Ordinances get codified once a year.

As he was looking through some of the older Ordinances regarding solicitation, he noticed that the Ordinance states that the solicitors permit fee used to be \$5.00 and then

was switched to \$50.00. However, he did not see where that new fee was adopted, he wants to know how and when the \$50.00 came into effect, and if he can he see the Ordinance showing the changed amount.

Mr. Berberian brought up being able to call 9-1-1. He stated that he went to the County Commissioners meeting, and said the former Captain Gianluca who retired after 23 years of service should have been commemorated by our township for his many years of service. He asked that we get in touch with the County Commissioners office to see what other types of milestones are coming up, so we can convey our gratitude for their services.

At that same meeting, Mr. Berberian brought up the fact that some of our residents who live in the village have requested speed bumps. Their response was that there is a jurisdictional agreement with the county and our township. He asked if there could be a liaison between the Township and the County Commissioners, and if someone could attend meetings and bring back information.

Mr. Berberian also brought up concerns about the emergency homeless shelter that is being built in Westampton Township. He is concerned about the fiscal responsibility of the township as well as public safety issues.

His last concern was about lead pipe abatements. He asked if the Committee would ensure that the water providers would confirm if federal funds were earmarked specifically for the lead pipe abatements.

Dates to Remember:

Dates to Remember: Next Township Committee Meeting February 21st Budget Workshop at 6PM Regular meeting at 7PM, Land Development Board Meeting March 1st at 7PM, Historic Commission February 22nd at 7PM, Recreation Committee March 8th at 7 PM, Coffee with a Cop at 7-11 at 939 Woodlane Road Friday February 17th at 9AM.

Committee Liaison Reports/Comments:

Committeewoman Burkley responded to Gary Berberian's concerns about the homeless shelter. She is also concerned, and would like to know where the money is coming from to help build the homeless shelter, besides the funds that were given from the state.

Ms. Burkley noted that she attended the Bowman financial seminar. She stated she received a lot of information regarding the annual municipal budget. She stated that he now understands what the CFO goes through. She also mentioned that the State was granting some exceptions on limitations for the annual municipal budget.

Committeewoman Burkley thanked Deputy Clerk Samantha Horton for hanging up the art work from some of the students at the Westampton Intermediate School. They are displayed on the second floor of the Municipal Building. She is also looking forward to seeing the 7th and 8th grade students participate in the Black History month essay writing contest. The topic is "To Meet Equality Needs". She requested assistance from other members of the Committee in reading some of the submissions.

Ms. Burkley would like to know if every Resolution can be voted on separately, instead of having the majority of the Resolutions be put under one vote for Consent Agenda. She would also like to see if it would be possible to have a workshop where the members of the Committee and the residents discuss goals for the township. She would like these types of meetings to be held in the meeting room rather than in the courtroom.

Committeeman Carr would like to thank all the residents for coming out to the meeting and addressing their comments and concerns. He understands why residents are frustrated with how long the process takes for certain things in the township; however, we are moving at the pace in which they are directed to do so, while trying to be as transparent as possible.

Mr. Carr looks forward to seeing all the residents come out to the budget meeting on the 21st of February. He is looking into increasing transparency and accessibility on our township website regarding to information that the residents are looking for. He is also looking forward to helping with finding more manpower for public safety.

Mr. Carr addressed Mr. McGonigle's comment about open space, the state opened a grant for funding to acquire space. He stressed that the only issue they would face is that the person who owns the land has to be willing to sell it. He also got in touch with the school Superintendent to find out the needs of the school now, so they can help and plan with those needs.

Mayor Henley would like to thank all the residents and township officials for coming out to the meeting. Mayor Henley stated that he reached out to the county regarding speed bumps. He stated that the county will place speed bumps, but if for some reason they need to get taken out, the township would be charged the cost for removal. An alternative way to resolve the speeding issue would be to put up four-way stop signs.

He then briefly commented on some of the comments made regarding the emergency shelter, the county's cost share within the township, and some of the concerns that were brought up. He stated he appreciates all the feedback; and as a resident, wants to make sure that all the needs are addressed on the Master Plan.

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Burkley, seconded by Mr. Carr. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:47PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Gibson, Acting Municipal Clerk