

## WESTAMPTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

6:00 PM CLOSED SESSION    7:00 PM REGULAR MEETING

January 17, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM with all present.  
Resolution 1-17-17 was adopted to go into Executive session to discuss contracts, payroll, litigation, new committees and American Legion building repairs.

The meeting was again called to order and reopened at 7:05 PM by Mayor Daniels. Requirements of the Sunshine Law were read. This meeting was advertised in the Burlington County Times January 5, 2017. The flag was saluted and there was a moment of silence. This past Sunday was the 88<sup>th</sup> birthday of Dr. Reverend Martin Luther King. Yesterday was the National Day of Service, he hopes everyone found the time to go out and do something in honor of the holiday.

### Roll Call:

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

Brian Schott, Solicitor, was present.

Maria Carrington, Administrator and Marion Karp, Clerk, were present.

Approve 1/17/17 Agenda – motion to approve by Mr. Lopez; second by Ms. Smith-Hartman. All voted yes.

Minutes of the 1/2/2017 Reorganization meeting – motion to approve by Mr. Lopez; second by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes.

### **Scheduled Appointments**

None

### **Public Comments on agenda items**

Vernita Jones – asked about the Fire Chief contract and if the term had always been for 5 years. Mayor Daniels believes so. Maria Carrington said she would look into this and get an answer. Ms. Jones asked about the American Legion resolution; she asked if a bid was put out for this additional \$1500. Mayor Daniels answered that this amount was well below the bid threshold, we own the building and it needs to be repaired. We aren't putting this out for bid; we are giving the money to the Legion to do the repairs.

### **New Business**

EMS Report – no further comments made.

Police Report – no further comments made.

Public Works Report – no further comments made.

2016 BURLCO JIF State of the Fund Report – no further comments made.

Westampton Township Historical Society Annual Report 2016 – no further comments made.

### **Resolutions**

38-17 Payment of Vouchers – motion to approve by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes.

39-17 Tallowood Drive & Greenwich Drive Project Grant – motion to approve by Ms. Teleisa; seconded by Mr. Lopez. All voted yes.

40-17 Authorize Mayor to Sign AFSCME Contract – motion to approve by Mr. Lopez; second by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes.

41-17 Authorize \$1,500 Payment to American Legion Post 509 – motion to approve by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Smith-Hartman. The resolution would be amended by changing the line item the funds would be drawn from Recreation to Buildings and Grounds. All voted yes.

42-17 Approve Fire Chief Employment Contract – motion to approve by Mr. Lopez; seconded by Ms. Smith-Hartman. All voted yes. Ms. Teleisa wanted a correction to the contract which was to list the NJ law that was in effect.

### **Ordinances**

None

### **Correspondence**

None

### **Dates to Remember**

1/28/17 NJLM, Training for Elected Officials, Mount Laurel, NJ

3/29/17 Elected Officials Liability Seminar, Eastampton, NJ, O'Connor's Restaurant – all Committee members would attend; we receive \$250 for each that attends.

1/28/17 -2/5/17 – Auto Show, the Cullen car will be on display

### **Open to public Comment**

John Mumbower – spoke about BCT article regarding nonpartisanship government in Westampton. He thinks this would be a better way for Westampton. He asked if the Committee was considering pursuing this. Ms. Smith-Hartman is in favor of this.

Brian Schott – it is something that can be looked into; there is a procedure that the State sets forth that would have to be followed. They would be happy to look into this if the Committee desires.

Mr. Wisniewski – Westampton Township has been primarily Democratic; it seems to him that the people who spend the most money in these types of elections are the ones that win. He is opposed to it for this reason.

John Mumbower – as far as those statistics go, he thinks the money comes from the parties behind a particular person.

Nancy Burkley – thinks that with technology money isn't that important, you can use social media. When she served on the Board of Education, no one knew who was a Democrat or a Republican. She thinks people would be freer to be who they are without political parties.

Vernita Jones – thinks it is an insult to Westampton residents; it amazes her how they want to change it knowing their positions are up soon. This country was built on the Republican/Democrat system. As we all know there is live streaming now and it is going on the Republican FB page.

Mr. Lopez – there is a lot of misinformation out there. One of the first parties registered in the States was the Whig party; the parties we have now weren't here when this country was founded. He believes people should always be put first. Every year another Committeeperson is up for reelection; it takes a toll on the employees; on town hall; it seems like there is an election every year. There are five forms of charters we can run under. We currently operate under the Township Committee form of government. They aren't trying to do away with political parties. Their objective is to have diverse thinkers come together to solve problems with community remaining the highest priority.

Mr. Wisniewski – thinks it is confusing and that it isn't true that there are uninformed voters; he thinks if so they will align with the ones who advertise the most; the ones with the most money.

Mayor Daniels – this isn't some sort of guise to help himself as an elected official. Maureen and Abe have the right to investigate this; if it is the will of the people, so be it. He thanked Mr. Mumbower for bringing the question of nonpartisan elections forward. He wishes that they should discuss the successes of Westampton Township instead of the politics.

Gil Gehin Scott – will dispute two comments Ms. Jones made; he saw Ms. Chang last year scream at Mr. Daniels to act like a Democrat. These issues in the town have been going on long before Mr. Lopez and Ms. Smith Hartman were elected to the Committee.

Machelle Pettis – thanked the Committee for the good job they did last year; and welcomed Mr. Wisniewski. She thanked Mr. Daniels for the great job he has done as Mayor.

### **Comments – Department Heads & Professionals**

Fire Chief Craig Farnsworth – thanks for the support tonight.

Police Chief Joe Otto – congratulations to Steve Ent who just graduated from his 13 week leadership course.

### **Committee Members Comments**

Mr. Wisniewski – thanks to the department heads; thanks to the administrative staff; they have been very helpful and have given him all the information he has requested. He thanked Maria Carrington and Marion Karp for their help. He is the new guy; largely unknown to everyone. He thinks as a Committee they need to watch social media because it is negative and not positive; he has a personal private page but isn't affiliated with anyone; he doesn't promote negativity nor make negative comments; he stays out of it. He doesn't want to be lumped into a group that he isn't part of. Please judge him on his actions.

Ms. Smith-Hartman – she is not the liaison to Public Works anymore but people are still emailing her. Mike Meenan always comes through when there are resident's concerns. We need to clear up that volunteers are welcome to join Westampton EMS; there are rumors out there that aren't true. Facebook has a purpose; she tries to put out information regarding trash pickup, recycling, snow plowing; it is useful.

Ms. Teleisa – is a little disheartened this evening; we are here to serve the people. They, as a Committee talk things out in closed session. We all voted unanimously tonight; then someone brings up politics; she has lived here for 30 years and it has never been political

until recently. She doesn't see anything wrong with keeping things the way they are; tonight we voted but not as Republicans and Democrats. Martin Luther King Day is a day to reflect upon progress and changes that have been made. We still need more change; we need to find a way and a common ground to move forward in. She agrees with what Dr. King said.

Mr. Lopez – what we saw earlier tonight is what we need to stop. Nonpartisanship could help with this. He commented on the EMS report; there is a significant difference in billing; the team is working hard to document incidents. Public Works did a great job with the recent snow storm; he heard from many neighbors in the Township. There is a part time job open in the Clerk's office; resumes are due by February 7<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to all who came out tonight.

Mayor Daniels – went to Atlanta on business this past weekend and visited with several members of the King family. Any decisions he has made while elected have always been for the people. History looks backwards; legacy moves forward. He wants Westampton to move forward. He asked Chief Otto to please extend his congratulations to Lt. Ent. Thanks to Chief Farnsworth for his steadfast service. We need to get rid of the partisanship in Westampton.

There were no further comments and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion Karp, Deputy Clerk