

# BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

## MINUTES

FEBRUARY 23, 2012 - 7:30 P.M.

**MAYOR'S STATEMENT:** Mayor Gerald Mobus called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM and made the following statement: Under the provisions of N.J.S.A.10:4-6 et seq., notice of the time and place of this meeting was given by way of annual notice to the Courier News, Echoes Sentinel, and Star Ledger, and posted at Borough Hall.

### **SALUTE TO THE FLAG and a MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN, SERVING HOME AND ABROAD**

#### **ROLL CALL**

Joren [ P ] Black [ P ] Franklin [ P ] Pote [ A ] Nehls [ P ] Cassidy [ P ]

Also present were Administrator Tom Atkins, Attorney Albert Cruz, CFO William Hance, Engineer Tom Herits, Public Works Manager Bob Burns, and Clerk Michelle DeRocco. Although not present for Roll Call, Councilman Pote arrived at 7:36 P.M.

There were 2 members of the public present.

#### **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:**

1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Franklin announced the Borough received bids this week for BANS (bond anticipation notes) and the low bid received was from TD Securities with an offer of .544 of a percent interest, an excellent rate for \$5 million dollars. He said he was in receipt of the preliminary budget, and the Administration and Finance Committee will be meeting on Saturday, March 3rd to go over the figures.

2. Police - Council President and Police Commissioner Joren reported things at the Police Department have been quiet for the most part. She said the County had an inspection stop set up in front of headquarters and checked vehicles for emissions. She announced that the Department had received a grant to set up a DWI stop on Superbowl Sunday and Officer Kimock had one arrest. Councilwoman Joren said Officer Michael Bouchard is back on duty, and that she has discussed the issue of speeding on Washington Rock Road. She also said there is a resolution on tonight's agenda to authorize the Clerk to advertise for proposals for "Police Accreditation Services."

3. Public Works - Councilman Nehls announced a new federal law mandating all municipalities have a sign replacement plan. He explained the new legislation calls for signs to be replaced on an "as-needed" basis, however, all signs must be now uniformed to the required size. He said color is the municipalities choice, and asked Public Works Superintendent Bob Burns to display the optional colors. Councilwoman Joren said she will provide the choices to the Traffic and Beautification Committee for their recommendation. Councilman Nehls continued to report that he asked Bob Burns to obtain costs for the replacement of truck #2, anticipating it will be around \$165,000.00, and that Tom Herits and Bob Burns have recommended Hill Hollow and Knollwood for repaving.

4. Buildings and Grounds; Recreation - Councilwoman Cassidy said progress is being made at the Texier House, and that the Historical Committee members are trying to have cabinets and showcases moved from their room in the Library, however, Bob Burns received a quote of \$4,000. to move them so we have to brainstorm and come up with other ideas, maybe reach out for volunteers. She said Eagle Scout candidate Walter Pennett will be working with the Historical Committee on a "famous athletes from Watchung" section. In regard to Recreation, Councilwoman Cassidy said registrations for the summer playground program are now being accepted.

5. Public Affairs - Councilman Franklin reported the Board of Health met and discussed possible exclusions to the sewer ordinance regarding hook-ups. Councilman Black clarified that there will be no exclusions to the assessment. Councilman Franklin said he will be attending the next Open Space meeting.

6. Fire - Councilman Black announced the application for narrow banding has been filed, and thanked Administrator Atkins for his assistance. He reported the Department will perform an inventory of their equipment, and that there were only 5 calls during the month of February.

7. Laws/Ordinances - Councilman Pote said the next Laws and Ordinance meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 9th, and "McMansions" are among the ordinances that will be discussed. He said the Planning Board met and discussed the budget, and also reviewed the recommendations from the Laws and Ordinance Committee in regard to flag lots. He said they will be requesting Mr. Cruz review one question and then it should be ready for introduction, possibly at the next meeting.

**REPORTS - OTHER:**

8. Engineer - Mr. Herits said he will reach out to Tricia Bates Smith at the County for an update on the Mountain Boulevard improvements. He said he believes there may be leftover monies from a DOT grant that could be used for the paving of Hill Hollow and Knollwood. He said he will be meeting with residents next week to apprise them of the stormwater improvements on Mountain Drive and Edgemont Road, and announced that the agreement with North Plainfield to allow Watchung to tie into their storm sewer has been drafted. Councilman Pote asked Mr. Nehls if it was true that the County now intends to remove close to 80 trees along Mountain Boulevard, and Mr. Herits said he was not sure of the final number, but was sure that would be discussed at the next presentation. Councilman Nehls suggested the tree bank be utilized and Mr. Herits said the Council will be asked to replace the trees.

- 9. Police Chief - No report was presented.
- 10. Fire Department - No report was presented.
- 11. Rescue Squad - No report was presented.
- 12. Attorney - Mr. Cruz had nothing to report this evening.
- 13. Clerk - Mrs. DeRocco had nothing to report this evening.
- 14. Administrator - Mr. Atkins had nothing to report this evening.

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

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**NEW BUSINESS**

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**CONSENT AGENDA:** The Consent Agenda items listed below were unanimously accepted, following a motion by Councilwoman Joren, a second by Councilman Black and upon roll call as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye".

Approval of the following Council minutes:  
February 9, 2012

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:  
Police Activity Report - January 2012  
Recreation Minutes - January 4, 2012  
Historical Committee Minutes - December 14, 2011; Annual Report 2011  
Board of Health Minutes - January 18, 2012

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #5 - Timothy Stys, Administrator, Watchung Hills Regional High School 2/13/12 Resolution approvi
- #6 - Township of Readington 2/14/12 Resolution opposing S1085 - Forest Harvest on State Lands c: M & C, TEA, Env. Commission
- #7 - David Haupt, President, Watchung Arts Center 2/16/12 Requesting renewal of lease due to expire on April 30,2012 c: M & C, TEA, AC

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**CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS:** The Consent Agenda items listed below were unanimously accepted, following a motion by Councilwoman Joren, a second by Councilman Black and upon roll call as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye".

R1:02/23/12 Designating Administrator as Authorized Representative - State of NJ / Grants and/or Loans

- R2: Purchases Over \$2,000. - Efinger Sporting Goods Co., S.E. Rose Trucking, Summit Truck Body Inc.
- R3: Waive Chapter 2-25.10 of the Borough Code - Steve Monetti
- R4: Authorize Clerk to Advertise for Proposals - "Police Accreditation Services"
- R5: Authorize Tax Redemption - Certificate #12-2010
- R6: Authorize Grant Submission - NJ American Water Co. / Fire Department

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**NON-CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS AND RESOLUTIONS:** Items listed below will be individually addressed and acted upon accordingly. Council reserves the right to refer an item to Committee for further review and discussion.

R7:02/23/12 2011 Budget Transfer

Councilman Pote moved R7, a second was made by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye:"

R8: 2012 Temporary Budget

Councilman Franklin moved R8, a second was made by Councilman Black and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye:"

Councilwoman Cassidy recused herself at this time.

R9: Introduction of 2012 Temporary Capital Budget

Councilman Nehls moved R9, a second was made by Councilman Black and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, "aye:"

Proposed Assessment Bond Ordinance OR:12/02 entitled "BOND ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE TITLE AND SECTIONS 1, 2, 3, 6, 8 AND 11 OF THE BOND ORDINANCE (ORD. OR:11/15) ENTITLED: "BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$70,000 FOR ENGINEERING AND DESIGN PHASE IN CONNECTION WITH SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENTS TO A PORTION OF JOHNSTON DRIVE FOR AND BY THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY, DIRECTING A SPECIAL ASSESSMENT OF THE COST THEREOF IN THE AMOUNT OF \$35,000 AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$66,500 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF", ADOPTED ON DECEMBER 8, 2011." was introduced. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be given its first reading. So ordered. Councilman Pote moved the ordinance be adopted on first reading and the Clerk be directed to publish the ordinance and notice of public hearing. The motion was seconded by Councilman Black and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, "aye". Councilman Nehls explained that this bond ordinance will amend Bond Ordinance OR:11/15 adopted last year, by adding six additional properties from Valley Drive, enabling the Valley Drive property owners to benefit from the low interest loan from the NJEIT Trust Fund. He said this Ordinance will combine both projects into one. Public Hearing to be held on March 22, 2012.

R10: Introduction of Assessment Bond Ordinance OR:12/02 - Amendment to Assessment Bond Ordinance OR:11/15 - Engineering and Design / Sanitary Sewer Improvement Project

Councilwoman Cassidy returned to the dias.

R11: Payment of Bills

Councilman Franklin moved R11, a second was made by Councilman Black and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Joren, Black, Franklin, Pote, Nehls, Cassidy, "aye:"

Council President Joren read the following proclamation on behalf of the Mayor:

Proclamation - Read Across America - March 2, 2012 (copy attached)

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**PUBLIC PORTION**

Kathy Caldas, Brook Drive and Board of Education member, reminded all of the Budget Building Forum scheduled for Tuesday, February 28th at 7:00 P.M. Mrs. Caldas said she was proud to announce that the student's test scores ranked #1 in the County for math, and #2 in the County for language arts. She invited all to read to the children on March 2nd for Read Across America Day. Mayor Mobus said he will be there. Councilwoman Joren told Mrs. Caldas that school funding figures were being released this evening, and Mrs. Caldas said she was aware of that, and said they are "up" a little from last year.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 P.M. to the call of the Chair and to the next scheduled meeting to be held at 7:30 P.M. on Thursday, March 8, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco, RMC  
Clerk