

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
MINUTES
OCTOBER 4, 2018 - 7:30 P.M.**

OPENING STATEMENT: Mayor Stephen K. Pote called the meeting to order at 7:35 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 MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN, SERVING HOME AND ABROAD AND FOR SENATOR JOHN MC CAIN.

ROLL CALL

Gibbs [P] Black [P] Nehls [P] Mobus [P] Sopko [P] Alberto [P]

Also present were Administrator Tom Atkins, Attorney Albert Cruz, Clerk Michelle DeRocco, and Deputy Clerk MaryAnn Hance

There were 28 members of the public present.

PRESENTATION

Mayor Pote read the following Proclamation –
Domestic Violence Awareness Month / October (copy attached)

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

1. Administration & Finance – Councilman Mobus reported the Committee will be meeting on October 15th. He referred to Resolution #R1 on the agenda, to adopt a Bond Ordinance in the amount of \$1,351,000 for various public improvements, acquisitions of new communication and signal equipment for the Police Department, partial funding of a new fire truck, survey of Watchung Lake, and dam closure of Ross Pond. Councilman Mobus also said there is a survey available on the Borough website for Ride Wise to determine if there is a need for this in the town. He said discussions with Exempt Firemen for attaining the Hall for use as a Community Center is ongoing and great progress is being made. Mr. Cruz is preparing a draft lease and Councilman Mobus hopes this will be ready to present to the Exempts by the end of the month. Councilman Mobus mentioned the incident involving the work done recently at the library by volunteers, noting that it could have led to unsafe conditions.
2. Police – Council President Gibbs reported the Committee continues to work with the School Board to evaluate the need of crossing guards at certain cross walks. This should be completed in the next two to three weeks. The Committee also discussed the chaos at Valley View School in the morning and afternoon when parents drop off and pick up their children. There are now cones in place and teachers are there directing the flow of traffic. Council President Gibbs said the Police Department is still in the process of resolving a few disciplinary matters which should be completed shortly.
3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds – Councilman Nehls reported Bob Burns received a quote for \$3,000 to install two guide rails, one to protect the generator at the public works garage and one to protect the charging station at Borough Hall. Mr. Burns felt this amount was excessive and he contacted the County to see if they could install it for the Borough, which they did at a total cost of \$418.16. By using shared services with the County this saved the Borough approximately \$2,600. Councilman Nehls then reported the roads which have been milled and paved, noting the following roads will be done after the drainage work is completed: Ellisen Road, Parlin Lane, Lakeview Terrace, Phillip Lane and part of Joan Drive. He also reported the Somerset Street islands have been completed with planting of trees and shrubs, and Spratford Park trees have been planted. He said R4 on the Agenda will be awarding a contract this evening for the High Tor Drive project. Councilman Nehls explained the potential of lead paint at the library was brought to his attention just before the evening of the last meeting and he discussed this with Mr. Cruz, Mr. Atkins, and Mayor Pote and all those present determined it was best to close the library the next day until an inspection could be done. Mr. Burns contacted a company to come to inspect on Saturday and once it was determined there was no lead in the library it was reopened on Tuesday morning. Councilman Nehls also said there was an error in his statement that is on the website and he will send Ms. DeRocco the correction. Councilman Black asked why the Council was not apprised of the situation before the meeting and Mayor Pote said it was too late since it was just before the meeting was to begin. Councilman Sopko thanked Councilman Nehls and Bob Burns for getting this done so quickly.

4. Public Affairs:

Environmental – Councilwoman Alberto reported the Commission met on September 24th and they discussed the problem of invasive vines killing trees in the Borough. There are pictures on the website and she asked residents to familiarize themselves of these vines and if they do have the growing on their trees to remove them. She said there is a walking tour scheduled for October 13th at 10 AM with Jim Schlenker, member of “Adopt a Trail,” and Karen Pennett, Environmental Commission member. This will be about a 15 minute tour and anyone interested can meet at Phillips Field that morning. Councilwoman Alberto said the next meeting is scheduled for October 22nd at 7:30 PM. She then reported the barn at the Ness property has been removed and thanked RWL Construction, Russ Leffert and Rick Nune for completing this. The company will be recycling the wood and making something for the Borough. She said Mr. Leffert has suggested saving the silo that was part of the barn and also the ‘Milk House’. Councilwoman Alberto said she found many old articles from the house on the Ness property and she has given these to the Historical Committee.

Recreation – Councilman Mobus reported the Fishing Derby was a big success with 39 children participating. He said there was a 36 inch eel caught, a very large catfish, a turtle, two large mouth bass and many small fish. The next event will be the Harvest Festival on October 13th, 1 to 4 pm.

Historical – Councilman Mobus reported the Committee will host “Weekend Journey thru the Past” on October 13-14, as part of the tours sponsored by Somerset County.

Board of Health – Councilman Black reported the next meeting will be held on October 17th at 7:45 PM.

5. Fire – Councilman Black reported he has answers to the questions presented to council at the previous meeting by a resident and he will submit these to the Committee to discuss and review. He hopes to have an answer for the resident at the next meeting. Mr. Atkins reported that Fire Prevention week is next week with Sunday October 14th at Wilson Memorial Church for the awards ceremony.
6. Laws/Ordinances – Councilman Black reported the Committee met Friday and two items are being discussed.

REPORTS – OTHER:

7. Engineer- No report was submitted.
8. Police Chief – No report was submitted.
9. Fire Department – Chief Pivnichny reported there is an Open House on October 14th at the Fire House from 12 noon. All are invited to attend this. He then gave a report on the monthly statistics.
10. Rescue Squad – No report was submitted.
11. Emergency Management – Mr. Atkins reported Mr. Greves is working on a request for reimbursement from FEMA for expenses incurred from the three storms that hit Watchung in March, Quinn being the worst. He said FEMA initially denied any reimbursement from these storms but they are now considering the possibility of reimbursements. Mr. Atkins said the CERT Team held a drill on September 25th with 25 volunteers participating in a FAST (Functional Assessment Service Team). They train member of the team to recognize and know first line response to substance abuse, mental health issues, family issues, etc. when there are emergencies and people are together in tight spaces. He also reported OEM is working on Emergency Operating Plan updates and revisions of the manual which are due by the end of the year. All annex plans will go to the leaders tomorrow and once they review they will give their input to Gary Greves and Carolyn Solan by October 22, 2018. Modifications will be done in November and submit at the end of the month. Councilman Black questioned how much the Borough could expect to receive from FEMA and Mr. Atkins said possibly ten to fifteen thousand dollars.
12. Attorney – Albert Cruz reported a Case Management Conference was scheduled for Tuesday, October 2, 2018 at 9:00 AM in the Keep a Library in Watchung vs the Borough litigation. He said he appeared but their Counsel did not. Mr. Cruz said he informed the Judge of the status of the case and yesterday, October 3rd he received notice that this case was scheduled for trial on January 4, 2019 at 1:30 PM. He explained this is a particular type of case as an action in lieu of prerogative writs and the trial is in the nature of an appellate agreement, usually without witnesses and a decision is based upon the documentary record before the court, legal briefs and arguments. Councilman Nehls questioned the cost to date on this lawsuit and Mr. Atkins said it is approximately \$11,000 which does not include the cost for Mr. Cruz. There is no Executive session.
13. Clerk – Ms. DeRocco had no report.

14. Administrator – Mr. Atkins said at the last Council meeting there was a letter of retirement from our Plumbing Official, Joe Nicastro who has worked for the Borough for many years. He noted the age of many of the key personnel working for the Borough, with some in their early to late sixties and over the next year or two there will be some major vacancies due to people leaving. It will be a real challenge to the Borough because there will be a lot of knowledge and experience walking out the door. Mr. Atkins said R6 on the agenda is regarding modifying the personnel policy and manual to comply with JIF and MEL requirements. He said this is done every two years and there a few things regarding the HIPA laws that have to be modified and one thing with ADA to comply with both of these. Once Council approves this resolution, Ms. DeRocco and he will review and then send to Mayor and Council for approval. He said this helps with the MEL premiums and also if there is any litigation. Council President Gibbs said Administrative Finance Committee does discuss personnel frequently and are doing this with anticipated vacancies and there could be spur of the moment retirements that could arise also. Mr. Atkins said as an option shared services will also be explored.

Mayor Pote thanked the Freeholders who provided the Borough a check in the amount of \$5,000 for the annual Youth Services Grant. He said this money goes toward the Girls on the Run program as well as other programs. Mayor Pote also wished to thank the Patriots Pass Boy Scouts of the Regional Area for the Good Scouts Dinner, where they recently honored Anthony Ingrassia and Chris VanderFliet as outstanding citizens for their volunteer service in numerous areas. He said they well deserve this honor.

PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, asked to have Ordinance OR:18/15 tabled until there is more information, research, and discussion regarding the purchase of the fire truck. Mayor Pote explained this Ordinance just establishes the ability to purchase the vehicle and there is a lot of discussion still to do prior to making any commitment for this purchase. Ms. Goldschein also mentioned the Warren Green Team will be sponsoring a film on saving the great swamp at the Watchung Hills High School on Thursday, October 18th.

Pete Martino, Sunbright Road, said he had a meeting with the Councilmen Mobus and Black and he wished to give copies of the presentation to the Mayor and also Councilman Nehls who could not attend that meeting. Mr. Martino said it is a large expenditure and expressed the need to make sure the right decision is being made. Mayor Pote said the Committee will see this and then it will go to the Council. Councilman Nehls also agreed that the Committee should review the responses to the previously asked questions.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A Public Hearing of Bond Ordinance OR:18/15 entitled “BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAKING OF VARIOUS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND THE ACQUISITION OF NEW COMMUNICATION AND SIGNAL SYSTEMS EQUIPMENT AND A NEW FIRE TRUCK (PARTIAL FUNDING), INCLUDING ORIGINAL APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT, IN, BY AND FOR THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$1,351,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS.” was held.

Councilman Black moved a Public Hearing be held with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, Alberto, “aye.”

Margaret Ellis, Valley Road, said she understands there have been concerns about the purchase of a Fire truck and asked for an explanation of what a R1 is actually doing. Mr. Cruz explained R1 is a Bond Ordinance which authorizes the funding of a series of acquisitions, including a partial funding for a new fire truck. He said it also deals with radio and other types of equipment. Mr. Cruz said it would not be appropriate in his judgement to table the Ordinance or separate one part from the others. That would require the Ordinance to be republished and the process starting again. On any of these a separate and independent action by the Council would also be required. This just places the money in place and if in the future the Council desires to purchase this equipment it would be done by separate action by resolution.

With no one else from the public wishing to be heard Councilman Black closed the Public Hearing and moved the following resolution:

R1:10/1/18 Adoption of Bond Ordinance OR:18/15 – Authorize Various Public Improvements

Prior to the vote Council President Gibbs wished to remind everyone that a significant portion of this Ordinance is to replace the Police Department’s communication system for 911 calls and dispatch.

Councilman Nehls seconded the motion and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, Alberto, “aye.”

NEW BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA: The Consent Agenda Items listed below were unanimously accepted as amended, following a motion by Council President Gibbs and a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, Alberto, “aye.”

Prior to the Roll Call Council President Gibbs requested item #32 be removed for separate vote.

Prior to the motion for Item #32 Council President Gibbs recused himself and stepped down from the dais.

Councilman Nehls moved Item #32 with a second by Councilman Black and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Black, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, Alberto, “aye.”

Council President Gibbs returned to the dais after the vote was completed.

Approval of the following Council minutes:

September 27, 2018 – Bid Opening

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:

Watchung Environmental Commission Minutes – August 27, 2018
Library Advisory Board Minutes – July 11, 2018
Building Department Report – September 2018
Planning Board Minutes – September 18, 2018

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Correspondence:

- #32- PSE&G 9/24/18 Notice of Public Hearing for Zero Emission Certificate Recovery Charge
c: M&C, TEA, Post
- #33 - JCP&L 10/01/18 Notice of Public Hearing for Zero Emission Certificate Recovery Charge
c: M&C, TEA, Post
- #34 - Township of Scotch Plains 10/1/18 Notice of Public Hearing on October 10, 2018 re: Master Plan Amendment and the Adoption of a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan c: M&C, TEA, Pl. Board
- #35 - Township of Scotch Plains 10/2/18 Notice of Public Hearings on October 29, 2018 re: Repealing & Replacing their Zoning Code, in its Entirety; and also An Amendment to their Planning Board Fees c: M&C, TEA, Pl. Bd.

CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS

Council President Gibbs moved the following resolutions as amended with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, Alberto, “aye.”

Prior to the vote Councilman Nehls requested R7 be pulled for separate discussion.

- R2:10/4/18 Purchases over \$2,000 – Fun Services (Rec – Harvest Fest Amusements)
MD Radio Services (FD- Communication Equipment)
- R3: Authorize Clerk to Issue (2) Raffle Licenses / Garden Club of Watchung
- R4: Award of Bid – Improvements to High Tor Dr. and Various Drainage Projects/ Reivax
- R5: Authorize Waiver of Bd. of Adjustment Administration Fee – Special
Meeting/BA 18-08
- R6: Authorize Update to Personnel Manual – JIF/MEL Requirements
- R7: Authorize Forest Health Evaluation – Raritan Valley Community College
- R8: Authorize Tax Sale Redemption Certificate #14-09 / 110 Bayberry Lane

Councilman Nehls thanked Council President Gibbs for allowing him to pull R7 for separate discussion and additional information. Councilman Nehls then requested Hans Juette of the Wildlife Management Advisory Committee to come forward to answer some questions.

Councilman Nehls asked Mr. Juette how many quotes were received for this study and Mr. Juette explained that another member of the Committee was asked to see if he could get additional quotes. A meeting of the Committee was held yesterday and the member came in with a few additional names. Councilman Nehls then questioned if the study will section areas off and Mr. Juette said they would be looking at certain areas. Councilman Nehls asked if these areas will be compared with pre-existing data already in place. Mr. Juette said yes and this study will be an initial forest evaluation then will do a secondary study later. He said this study must be done when there is still foliage on the trees. Councilman Nehls told Mr. Juette the Committee should keep in touch with the Environmental Committee. Mr. Juette also said the Advisory Committee has been trying to get the DEP to come to give further information. Mr. Juette said the Committee will be sending their recommendations to the Mayor and Council based on the data and count they have from last year and Doctor Kelly's count from this year. He said the Committee would prefer basing their recommendations on data received from professionals if the Borough can afford to hire them.

Council President Gibbs said we should continue to look for alternatives but it is to late this year but will consider for the future. He said deer are not the only issue, over building and invasive plant species are also factors. The purpose of this is to obtain data and make decisions based on science and facts. He said this is a good first step.

Council President Gibbs moved Resolution R7 with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Mobus, Sopko, Alberto, "aye", Nehls, "no."

NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Councilman Mobus moved the following resolution with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, Alberto, "aye;" Black, "Abstain."

R9:10/04/18 Waive Chapter 2-25.10 of the Code – Gray's Florist & Greenhouse

Proposed Ordinance OR:18/16 entitled: "AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, AMENDING CHAPTER XXVIII ENTITLED "LAND DEVELOPMENT", ARTICLE 900 ENTITLED "APPLICATION FEES, GUARANTEES, INSPECTIONS AND OFF-TRACT IMPROVEMENTS" OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG BY REPEALING SECTION 28-902 ENTITLED "GUARANTEES, START OF CONSTRUCTION PURSUANT TO AN APPROVED PLAN, AND INSPECTIONS" AND REPLACING WITH NEW SECTION 28-902 ENTITLED "IMPROVEMENTS, GUARANTEES, START OF CONSTRUCTION AND INSPECTIONS." was introduced.

Prior to the vote Mr. Cruz explained although the wording "fees" is used several times in the heading this has nothing to do with adopting or modifying fees. It just happens that is the heading of the section that is being modified. Earlier this year the land use law was amended to change the bonding or performance bonding that developers are required to maintain on a development within the Municipality on improvements that are to be made. He explained that this deals with the maintenance and performance guarantees the developers must post and is basically adopting the Municipal Land Use Law requirements have to be incorporated into the Municipal Code by way of an Ordinance. He reiterated this has nothing to do with decreasing or increasing fees.

Councilman Black moved Ordinance OR:18/16 be given its first reading. So ordered. Councilman Black moved the Ordinance be adopted on first reading and the Clerk be directed to publish the ordinance and notice of Public Hearing.

Councilman Black moved the following resolution with a second by Councilman Nehls and upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Black, Nehls, Mobus, Sopko, Alberto, "aye." Public Hearing to be held November 1, 2018.

R10: Introduction of Ordinance OR:18/16 – Amend Code / Land Development

Council President Gibbs moved the following resolution with a second by Councilman Nehls:

R11: Designating Property Fronting Bonnie Burn Road as An Area in Need of Non-Condensation Redevelopment

Prior to the vote on Resolution, R11, Attorney Cruz said before voting on this Resolution it should be open for public comment and then it would be appropriate to have a discussion and then a vote on it. However, before opening to the public he explained this Resolution. He said this Resolution is accepting the recommendation of the Planning Board that the property fronting along Bonnie Bun Road is an area in need of non-condemnation redevelopment. That recommendation by the Planning Board was based upon testimony by Borough Planner Marcia Shiffman, a preliminary investigation report, a public hearing and public comment. Mr. Cruz explained Resolution R11 is supported by that preliminary investigation report, Ms. Shiffman's power point presentation to the Planning Board and the Planning Board Resolution. He said if this Resolution is adopted it makes the designation that the Bonnie Burn Road property is an

area in need of redevelopment but does not grant any approvals. If this is adopted the next step would be a preparation of a redevelopment plan, which is a combination of a Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance for this property. This is in essence a mini master plan for that property. Mr. Cruz said the redevelopment plan remains to be prepared and once completed would be reviewed by the Council and the Planning Board with the public hearing before the Council.

Mayor Pote opened the discussion to the public.

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, asked what will happen if this project does not go through, in regards to the Borough's COAH obligation, and Mr. Cruz explained if this does fail the Borough would have to show we have done our best to comply. However, the Borough would still have their obligation and would have to find alternatives.

Councilman Black said he would vote no for this resolution for reasons he has previously stated, including deed restrictions on the lots, wetlands, endangered species, and mainly the sewer lines.

Mr. Cruz explained that the sewer lines in place are not exclusive to Weldon Quarry. They made the decision when the interchange was being built and made a proportionate contribution as did others. He also explained there has been no determination on where the sewage would go and there would be a need for wastewater management plan amendments which we part of future events and the normal process to development any property that is not in one particular service area; and regarding the deed restriction the Planning Board reviewed and that was the basis for them concluding this was an area in need of re-development. He explained that the deed restriction would not prevail in light of the need for affordable housing.

Mr. Butler, the Weldon Quarry Attorney, said this property is directly across from the Quarry. He explained that the twin dry sewer lines o to Weldon and he quoted from Ms. Shiffman's report of July 2018 that these two dry sewer lines are not in play for this project. Mr. Cruz said the overlay zone for Weldon Quarry would be repealed and the line is available and if anyone were to hook into that line would be required to pay a proportionate contribution.

Council President Gibbs made the statement that he continues to feel strongly that this is a tough decision for everyone but it is in the best interest of the Borough to protect against any legal actions or builders remedies. He said he has faith in the Planning Board process and appreciates all the input to date.

Councilman Sopko said the Planning Board voted unanimously to move forward with this project.

Councilman Black maintained that this site is deficient.

With no more comments from the Public and the Council, Mayor Pote asked for a roll call on Resolution R11 which was already moved and seconded. Upon roll call the vote was as follows: Gibbs, Nehls, Sopko, "aye"; Black, Mobus, Alberto, "no."

Mr. Cruz explained in the Borough form of government when there is a tie, which there is here, 3 for and 3 against the motion, the Mayor votes to break the tie. Mayor Pote stated his vote is "yes".

PUBLIC PORTION-GENERAL DISCUSSION

Linda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, asked the Council why there is concern now regarding the Park and Ride. She said Warren has been working for at least three years on this. Mayor Pote said the Borough has been in discussion with Warren for more than 2 years. He also said it is not known how many Borough residents used the Sears lot when it was active because there were people from other towns utilizing it also.

Councilman Sopko explained that the Park and Ride is a private bus company and the Sears location was temporarily set up by New Jersey Transit when the Pulski Skyway was closed.

Council President Gibbs said when Sears closed a realtor came to the council to discuss the need for a park and ride.

Tom Franklin, Wildwood Terrace, said he has concerns - one being the misinformation about the Library issue. He said the Chairman of the Republican Committee made comments that to build a new library it would cost approximately five million dollars, but the plans presented to the Borough did not amount to that. As far as what the County Library system is or is not going to do with regard to library services within a community center, the Director has made no promises and the County Library system would most likely not provide services to anything but a full service library.

Council President Gibbs said he has had conversations with architects with extensive experience with public buildings and the cost per square foot is approximately \$550, and approximate cost for a 7500 square foot building would be \$4.125 million.

Councilman Black said the comments from the Chairman of the Committee are his opinions and not those of the Council.

Mr. Franklin said due to the fact of the Chairman's position, people think these are statements from the Council.

Councilman Mobus said that the true potential cost of a new library at \$5 million is accurate because many of the renderings did not include a lot of items, including site work. He also stated the Borough of Watchung is not necessarily an ideal candidate to receive grant funds and we have no criteria as yet and the applications will be based on need.

Mr. Franklin stated there are better sites to build a library.

Mayor Pote said he has spoken with many including the State, and the Borough is a perfect candidate.

Pete Martino, Sunbright Road, asked what the Borough is doing to alleviate safety issues in town. He suggested that instead of having a police vehicle parked at the Best Lake parking lot it might be better if it were located at Crestwood Drive. He also suggests reducing speed limits on Valley Road and doing something on Hillcrest Road.

Council President Gibbs said the Police Department is well aware of the issues with Hillcrest Road and since the County put the special surface there has been a drastic reduction in the number of accidents. He also explained the police vehicle at Best Lake is there doing random license plate checks. Regarding the possibility of changing the speed limits, the State would do a study and then set at the prevailing speed.

Councilman Nehls said speed bumps are a very good option. He said the Borough has been talking with the County for years but the Borough has no control of Hillcrest, Valley Road, or Mountain Boulevard.

Hans Juette, Elisnore Drive, said the cost per square foot that Council President Gibbs stated is high. He also said it is disappointing that there have been no plans explained to the residents regarding the Community Center. Councilman Mobus said an architect's rendering will be available soon. Councilman Black said the Borough owns the land but the Exempt Firemen own the building.

Frank Bisignano, Jared Court, suggested checking the housing market in town. He said schools trump the Library and our schools are deteriorating, which directly affects the value of our homes.

Councilman Black asked Sue Tucker to come forward to discuss home values.

Sue Tucker, Valley Road and Real Estate Salesperson, said she recently did a study of property values the Borough, and yes- values are down. Warren's values are up.

Lynda Goldschein, Sherwood Drive, complimented Councilman Black on his recent interview with on the "Voices for a Better Watchung" site, saying he was very professional and she was very impressed. She said he mentioned sharing the Courts and also street sweeping with North Plainfield. She said for two years the sweeper came by and cleaned the streets. However, there has been no street sweepers for quite a while and when she called the Clerk's office she was told an agreement never existed regarding the street sweeping. Ms. Goldschein said he mentioned the overlay property for potential development for COAH and asked for an explanation of what this means. Councilman Black said this is when you designate property for potential site usage for low income housing for COAH. These are properties like Mount Saint Marys' and Liccardi Ford on Route 22. These are overlay zones.

Mr. Atkins explained that if a property in an overlay zone was ever to change use, as an example – Liccardi Ford, if they ever sold and it was no longer a car dealership, the overlay zone would be in place and take effect as a piece of property.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 P.M. to the Call of the Chair and to the next scheduled Council meeting Thursday, October 18, 2018 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

MaryAnn Hance, Deputy Clerk
Borough of Watchung