

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 6, 2023

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: Mayor Ronald Jubin called the meeting to order at 7:31 P.M. and stated the following: *"This meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. 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 the Annual Meeting Notice to the Courier News, Echoes Sentinel, the Star Ledger, posted at Borough Hall and on the Borough's website. No public comment shall be allowed to be made virtually or accepted in writing and read into the record. All writings received shall be acknowledged and accepted by the Council as regular correspondence. The Borough may broadcast its meetings virtually for public viewing as a courtesy."*

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

ROLL CALL

Ead [P] Hayeck [P] Dahl [P] Fischer [P] Marano [P] Abi- Habib [P]

PROCLAMATION

Mayor Jubin read the following proclamation onto the record.

❖ National Volunteer Month

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Council President Ead presented the community service award to Alice Olejar.

❖ Community Service Award to Alice Olejar

Diane Fammy and Former Mayor Steve Pote provided comment on the impact Alice has had to the borough and the many other lives.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION

R15: Authorizing the Appointment of Patrol Officer Christopher Monrroy

Motion to Adopt above by Marano/ second by Ead

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH

Mayor Jubin administered the oath of office to Officer Monrroy.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 6, 2023

1. Administration & Finance – Councilman Fischer noted that in addition to the submitted report, our CFO has been working with the state budget examiner regarding the submission of our 2023 introduced budget. The State had a few questions and all documentation regarding shared services and grants was supplied. The CFO received the state’s approval this week to move forward with the public hearing and adoption of the budget at the April 20, 2023 meeting. This was the quickest and smoothest state exam Watchung has had in a long time. At the next agenda we are going to be putting on the a few more dedications by riders like the ones we did last month, this was one of the State’s recommendations.
2. Police – Councilman Marano mentioned the Officer was hired via the Somerset County Scholarship program. He discussed installing cameras in the Watchung Lake parking area, Mobus field, and Library parking lot for added security. Discussions also occurred with the Board of Education regarding the Student Resource Officer and school security.
3. Public Works / Buildings and Grounds – Council President Ead noted that in addition to the report submitted, there was a water main break today and noted it was a good thing that school was out on spring break. April 24th will be a day of paving and milling and notices will be sent out. Discussions also occurred relating to improvements to Mobus Field, reviewal of the grant application and the 2023 paving project.
4. Public Affairs:
 - Environmental – Councilwoman Abi-Habib reminded all about the upcoming Operation Pride Borough event scheduled for April 22nd. at the Texier House. She mentioned the Committee will be giving away 300 tree saplings on a first come first serve basis from 1:00 to 3:00 PM and also mentioned the Commission will be by the stream on the East side of Best Lake and they are seeking volunteers.
 - Recreation – Councilman Dahl mentioned opening day for little league is scheduled for April 29th followed by the first annual Watchung Spring bash which is the Police Department, Fire Department, Rescue Squad, Department of Public Works and Council playing softball on Grant Field. He also highlighted the successful Easter Egg Hunt event done by Linda Monetti which had between 200-500 attendees and had over 4,000 eggs.
 - Historical – Councilman Fischer reminded all the hours of operation for the Texier House and mentioned the Committee is having discussions regarding the upcoming 100th anniversary of Watchung.
 - Board of Health – Councilman Marano mentioned the Board of Health set a date for an upcoming meeting in the month of October. Mayor Jubin inquired on ideas from the Committee for the Mayors Wellness Campaign.
5. Fire – Councilman Dahl advised the Committee is scheduled to meet this upcoming Tuesday and they are still working through a possible grant with the North Plainfield Fire Department.

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 6, 2023

6. Laws/Ordinances – Councilman Hayeck mentioned the Committee is having discussions relating to the outdoor dining Ordinance, Recreation services Ordinance, and lastly the Committee is working on public safety ordinances.

REPORTS OF BOROUGH OFFICERS

7. Engineer – Borough Engineer Jason Cline reported on the storm water grant funding application the Borough is submitting for \$25,000.00. He also discussed updates relating to Ness Farm, proposals for the Library Bridge and Phillips Bridge and repairs to various culverts.
8. Police Chief – Police Chief Hart reported on the numbers for the month of March, 48 summons issued on Hillcrest Road, 20 radar posts issuing 18 summons and 13 warnings on Valley Road, Hill Hollow Road, and Ridge Road. He also provided comments regarding the beautiful ceremony the Mayor and Council held on March 27th recognizing four amazing women and one of them being Anita Nappa from the Police Department.
9. Fire Chief – The Fire Department submitted a written report.
10. Fire Official – Fire Official Chris Chuba was unable to attend.
11. Rescue Squad – The Rescue Squad provided a written report.
12. Emergency Management – OEM Coordinator Carolyn Solon provided details regarding the two Emergency Operation Center exercises conducted.
13. Attorney – Attorney Sordillo had no report.
14. Finance – CFO Bill Hance submitted a written report, read earlier by Councilman Fischer.
15. Clerk – Clerk Edith Gil reported that approximately 12 Radon kits are still available for residents. She also provided a status update on CivicPlus. She advised that Deputy Clerk Regina and her held their 3rd meeting with them this week and we are in the stages of testing out the agenda generating side of the module as well as sending them our agenda packets and minutes of the past 3 years to ensure compliance with best practices. The next call will involve the minutes module and integrating our zoom meetings to test out the timestamping feature which will allow the public to jump to specific points in time of a Council meeting.
16. Administrator – Administrator Damato provided detailed comments on the next steps of moving forward with the library renovation proposals.
17. Youth Services – Councilman Dahl noted there was nothing further to add to the submitted report.
18. Planning Board – Mayor Jubin noted that the last few meetings have been canceled.
19. Municipal Alliance – No report submitted.

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 6, 2023

20. Library Advisory Committee – Councilman Fischer thanked the Department of Public Works and Council President Ead for setting up the chairs and beautifying the library area.
21. Traffic and Beautification – Council President Ead discussed the winter banners coming down and the welcome banners going up, beautifying multiple areas around the Borough, and volunteers for Operation Pride.

PUBLIC PORTION / AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

No one appearing

DISCUSSIONS

❖ Watchung Walks

Mayor Jubin advised Watchung Walks will start back up this upcoming Monday at 6:00 PM in the Mobus parking lot.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Motion to open Public Hearing on below by Fischer, second by Hayeck

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

Adoption of OR 23/01

**ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET COST OF LIVING
ALLOWANCE AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK WHEN THE COLA IS EQUAL TO
OR LESS THAN 2.5 PERCENT CALENDAR YEAR 2023 (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)**

R1: Authorizing Adoption of Ordinance 23/01 To Exceed the COLA and Establishing a CAP Bank
When COLA is Equal to or Less Than 2.5 Percent

No one appearing wishing to speak on this Ordinance

Motion to close Public Hearing and adopt above by Fischer, second by Abi- Habib

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

NEW BUSINESS

REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE:

Acknowledging Receipt of the following Borough Reports:

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 6, 2023

Environmental Commission Minutes	February 27, 2023
Fire Prevention Bureau Monthly Report	March 2023
Library Advisory Committee Minutes	January 18, 2023
Recreation Commission Minutes	February 1, 2023
Rescue Squad Monthly Report	March 2023
Youth Services Commission Bylaws	Revised February 22, 2023

#6: Township of Warren, Notice of Introduced Ordinance 23-07, Repealing Section 15-10A, “Flood Damage Prevention” to Adopt a New Section 15-10A titled “Floodplain Management”, recv’d 3/17/23, cc: M&C, JD, JC

Motion to Adopt above by Ead/ second by Fischer

RC Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

CONSENT RESOLUTIONS

R2: Authorizing Purchase Orders over Allowed Threshold – *Spatial Data Logics*
Foveonics Document Solutions

R3: Authorizing Access and Indemnification Agreement Between Round Top Swim and Tennis Club and the Borough of Watchung for the 2023 Summer Camp Program

R4: Authorizing Field and Facility Permit Application for Watchung Little League from April 29, 2023 through November 2023

R5: Authorizing Field and Facility Permit Application for the use of Best Lake Parking Lot by the Garden Club of Watchung on May 13, 2023

Motion to Adopt above by Ead/ second by Abi- Habib

RC Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

NON-CONSENT RESOLUTIONS

R6: Authorizing Appointment of Dmitry Gukhman as Fire Volunteer

Motion to Adopt above by Dahl/ second by Ead

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

R7: Authorizing Salary Adjustment for Joseph Buro as Public Works Driver/ Operator Step A

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 6, 2023

Motion to Adopt above by Fischer/ second by Ead

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

R8: Authorizing Salary Adjustment for Harrison Werner as Public Works Driver/ Operator Step A

Administrator Damato commented Harrison and Joseph are volunteer firemen.

Motion to Adopt above by Fischer/ second by Ead

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

R9: Authorizing the Appointment of Tammy Vetuschi as Part-Time Board Clerk to the Planning and Board of Adjustment

Motion to Adopt above by Fischer/ second by Hayeck

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

INTRODUCED ORDINANCE

OR 23/02: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, 2003, TO REPEAL CHAPTER 22, FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION, IN ITS ENTIRETY AND TO ESTABLISH A NEW CHAPTER 22, "FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS" AND ADOPT FLOOD HAZARD MAPS, DESIGNATE A FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR, AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

R10: Introducing Ordinance 23/02 to Repeal Chapter 22, Flood Damage Prevention and Replace with Chapter 22, Floodplain Management Regulations

Motion to Introduce and Adopt above by Ead/ second by Hayeck

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

OR 23/03: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, 2003, CHAPTER 3, POLICE DEPARTMENT, TO AMEND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

R11: Introducing Ordinance 23/03 Amending the Organization of the Police Department to Increase the Number of Police Officers

Motion to Introduce and Adopt above by Marano/ second by Dahl

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

OR 23/04: ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE VII OF CHAPTER 2 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, ENTITLED "FEES FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES" TO UPDATE AND INCORPORATE THE BOROUGH'S RECREATIONAL FEES

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 6, 2023

R12: Introducing Ordinance 23/04 Amending Chapter 2 to Update and Incorporate the Borough's Recreation Fees

Motion to Introduce and Adopt above by Hayeck/ second by Fischer

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

Councilman Hayeck noted that the Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce was an advocate of the following ordinance and how this would allow businesses in Watchung to continue with their outdoor dining which started as a result of the pandemic. He stated a last-minute revision was done to this ordinance and the revision was to strike language in section five so it just reads "outdoor dining may be permitted on a private sidewalk" this was immediately succeeding the sentence regarding public sidewalks. Noting said revisions, Councilman Hayeck proceeded to introduce the below, to which Attorney Sordillo confirmed could take place.

OR 23/05: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG, 2003, CHAPTER 28, LAND DEVELOPMENT, SECTION 28-401, ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS TO ADD A NEW SECTION TO ALLOW OUTDOOR DINING AS A PERMITTED ACCESSORY USE TO FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS THROUGHOUT THE BOROUGH

R14: Introducing Ordinance 23/05 Amending Chapter 28-401, Zoning District Regulations, to Allow Outdoor Dining

Motion to Introduce and Adopt as amended above by Hayeck/ second by Fischer

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

Discussions occurred relating to the next steps of the adoption procedure and Councilmembers also provided comments fully supporting the above.

PUBLIC PORTION - GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mayor Jubin commented that the ribbon-cutting of Bob's store in Blue Star Mall was last Friday.

Council President Ead reminded residents about the Food Stock Challenge and commented on all the drop off locations.

R13: Authorizing Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Matters and Litigation Matters

Motion to Adopt above by Ead / second by Hayeck

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

Mayor and Council entered Executive Session at approximately 9:01 P.M. and returned to open session at approximately 10:33 P.M.

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
MAYOR & COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 6, 2023

Motion to return to open Session by Ead / second by Hayeck

RC: Ead [Y] Hayeck [Y] Dahl [Y] Fischer [Y] Marano [Y] Abi- Habib [Y]

ADJOURNMENT

Upon there being no further business, the meeting ended to the Call of the Chair at 10:34 P.M. The next meeting of the Mayor and Council will be Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Regina Angelo
Deputy Borough Clerk

Approved: May 4, 2023