

TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON
BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

PUBLIC PORTION/CONFERENCE MEETING

MAY 21, 2012

The Township Council held a Public Portion/Conference Meeting in the Municipal Building, Pascack Road. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Council President Richard Hrbek with the Clerk leading the salute to the flag. Members present: Glenn Beckmeyer, Steve Cascio, Joseph D'Urso, Fred Goetz, Richard Hrbek. Also present: Janet Sobkowicz, Mayor; Kenneth Poller, Attorney, Catherine Navarro-Steinel, Administrator.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, this meeting was noticed with the Ridgewood News, posted on Municipal Bulletin Board and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Mr. D'Urso, seconded by Mr. Beckmeyer to approve the March 26, 2012 Public, Conference and Closed minutes of the Township Council.

Ayes: Councilpersons Beckmeyer, Cascio, D'Urso, Goetz, Hrbek

Nays: None

PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

A motion was made by Mr. D'Urso, seconded by Dr. Cascio to open the Public Discussion.

Ayes: Councilpersons Beckmeyer, Cascio, D'Urso, Goetz, Hrbek

Nays: None

David Snyder, 91 Windsor Circle – Mr. Snyder said that he is disturbed about what is going to happen to the property values of the homes surrounding the approved convenience store.. He said that the Township needs to think about doing a new tax evaluation. He said that he was disturbed about the editorial from the Chief of Police of Woodcliff Lake who implied that the Township is a second-class town. The township should take legal action against Woodcliff Lake to make them change the Exit 171 traffic pattern to include right hand turns.

Rosa D'Ambra, 423 Colonial Blvd. – Mrs. D'Ambra said that the topic of dispatching was on the last Council Agenda and she asked several questions about the HMUC option. Will Pascack Valley force dispatch to leave at a future date if the hospital needs more room? Who will pay the dispatchers? How much will the new equipment cost to start up and run? How much will the rent to HMUC be? How will the ambulances be dispersed? Why does the hospital want to rent the space? She said that she is not happy with the County Dispatch Center plan and does not know much about NW Bergen Dispatch Center. Is it better to stay small or merge? Mr. Hrbek said that NW Bergen information has not been made formal but hopefully will be available soon. He spoke about the number of options that are being studied. All of her questions will be taken into consideration when making a decision. Mrs. D'Ambra said that she was disappointed that the convenience store application passed.

Julie Lipnick, 184 Finnerty Place – Mrs. Lipnick showed Mayor and Council that her mortgage papers list her house as Westgate Road although the Township changed the name of her street to Finnerty Place in 2002. The confusion has caused serious problems for her family, especially in affairs regarding her daughter's job and volunteer work. Deliveries do not get dropped off at her house because the delivery services cannot find her street. She said that the Mayor told her that she would check into the matter and the situation would be corrected. Mrs. Lipnick stated that she has waited years for the problem to be fixed and she wants the original name of her street reinstated officially. She suggested that the circle in front of town hall be named Finnerty

Place to honor the Township resident and soldier who lost his life during wartime.

Raymond Bernroth, 838 Crest Place – Mr. Bernroth congratulated the Council on putting up the No Parking signs on Ridgewood Road. He said that he thinks the Council made a wise decision in the vote at the last meeting in regards to the Memorial Field project. He said that although the vote was close it shows that the Council is thinking of all of the residents. Senior residents will not benefit from the field renovation and he is glad that the residents who used intimidation ploys did not sway the vote.

Michael Ullman, 2 Clark Avenue – Mr. Ullman asked if the Township Risk Manager has reviewed Ordinance #12-10 which is scheduled to be introduced tonight and what his opinion was. He asked if the JIF recommends an indemnification ordinance and if the state recommends certain wording. Mr. Hrbek said that the Council discussed the wording in the ordinance at the last meeting with the Township Attorney. Mr. Ullman asked what sports are going to be scheduled on Memorial Field during different seasons and if people will be able to use the walking track during practices and while games are being played. Mr. Hrbek gave a rundown of sport seasons. Mr. Beckmeyer stated that there will be high permanent fencing around some areas which would allow the track to be used. Mr. Ullman asked if the proposed picnic area shown in Option 1 is on town-owned property. Mr. Hrbek said no, land acquisition is being discussed, and that the potential land purchase has not been added to the Memorial Field project cost at this time. Mr. D'Urso stated that no plan has been voted on by Council yet and more discussion is needed before a decision is made. Details such as the pavilion and lighting will be part of the discussion. Memorial Field Option 1 shows the entire field done with artificial turf. Mr. Ullman asked questions in regard to a retaining wall and crowd control on Memorial Field. He asked if there is a timeline to make a decision.

Sandy Phillips, 321 Hudson Avenue – Ms. Phillips asked if there is a new company in charge of the environmental cleanup on municipal property. Mr. Hrbek said that the Township had the opportunity to select a secondary company to monitor the site. Mayor Sobkowicz said that a new clean-up plan is now going forward and records will be available when things are done. Mrs. Phillips asked if there are steps a citizen can take to obtain municipal records that are not being made available by the municipality. Mr. Poller said that after a thorough search of municipal records is done and a document is not found, the records may be sought and be available through the county. A discussion of a municipal property deed ensued. Ms. Phillips asked if the generator at the municipal building is a rental and what happened when the township went out to bid. Ms. Steinel stated that the generator bids came back over the cost threshold and the township will now go out to bid again with adjusted specifications.

Scott Spezial, 780 Washington Avenue – Mr. Spezial said that many residents are misinformed about the field project. He said that the Council can ask the recreation board any questions they may have about the project. The recreation board is not bullying the Council; they are concerned about the safety of the field. The plan approved by the rec board is flexible. He said that one bonus of a modernized facility will be realized in Township property values. It is used now and will continue to be available to many groups and events.

Bea Napier, Hudson Avenue – Mrs. Napier said that she would like to state the importance of having the Township of Washington Volunteer Ambulance Corp's ambulance continue to be dispatched from the Ambulance Building if the township goes into a shared dispatching agreement.

Eamon Twomey, 187 Devon Road – Mr. Twomey asked what bonds are going to be maturing next year. He asked if the Council can talk about the

rotating field plan mentioned at the last meeting. He said that time is of the essence to get the field project done now. He said that the auditor stated at the last Council meeting that this is a good time for the Township to do the field project. Mr. Hrbek said that bonds get rolled together so that it is difficult to say what the bonds that are maturing were specifically used for 15 years ago. The rotating field program involved using some of Westwood's and the high school's fields for the lacrosse program. Mr. Twomey said that the lacrosse program has been using the Westwood fields and the high school fields this year. He said that most of the field use for Township soccer has been on Westwood fields. He said that if the Township goes out to bond for the project than it will hopefully be paid off in 15 years when the field may need to be redone again. A discussion about the need to have money available to do major road repair as well as other major projects ensued. Mr. Hrbek stated that the Township needs to prioritize major projects including the salt shed, fire house, DMF building, and equipment needed by DMF. Mr. Twomey said that the recreation board is looking for a 10 to 15 year solution plan for Memorial Field. He stated that roads will need to be done if the field project is approved or not. He said that it will cost 300 dollars per household per year for 15 years for the field project funding proposed by the recreation board.

Being no further comments or questions from the public, a motion was made by Mr. D'Urso, seconded by Dr. Cascio to end the public portion of the meeting.

Ayes: Beckmeyer, Cascio, D'Urso, Goetz, Hrbek

Nays: None

ORDINANCE:

The clerk read Ordinance 12-10 entitled: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP TO PROVIDE LEGAL COUNSEL AND INDEMNIFICATION FOR OFFICIALS, EMPLOYEES AND APPOINTEES OF THE TOWNSHIP IN CERTAIN ACTIONS BROUGHT AGAINST SAID OFFICIALS, EMPLOYEES AND APPOINTEES.

A motion was made by Mr. D'Urso, seconded by Dr. Cascio to introduce and pass Ordinance 12-10 at first reading by title.

Ayes: Councilpersons Cascio, D'Urso, Goetz,

Nays: Councilpersons Beckmeyer, Hrbek

The following resolution was presented and adopted on a motion by Mr. D'Urso, seconded by Dr. Cascio.

Ayes: Councilpersons Cascio, D'Urso, Goetz

Nays: Councilpersons Beckmeyer, Hrbek

WHEREAS, Ordinance 12-10 entitled: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP TO PROVIDE LEGAL COUNSEL AND INDEMNIFICATION FOR OFFICIALS, EMPLOYEES AND APPOINTEES OF THE TOWNSHIP IN CERTAIN ACTIONS BROUGHT AGAINST SAID OFFICIALS, EMPLOYEES AND APPOINTEES was introduced and passed at first reading by title at a meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Washington on the 21st day of May 2012.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that further consideration for final passage and public hearing of said ordinance shall be held on the 11th day of June, 2012 at 7:30 o'clock in the evening, prevailing time, or as soon thereafter as said matter can be reached in the Municipal Building, Pascack Road, Township of Washington, NJ at which time and place all persons who may be interested will be given an opportunity to be heard concerning said ordinance;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Clerk is authorized to advertise in the Ridgewood News a newspaper circulated in this Township, the

introduction and notice of further consideration for final passage and public hearing of this ordinance as required by law.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Items # 2 and 4 were removed from the Consent Agenda. After a brief explanation about the Tax Lien resolution, #2 was put back on the Consent Agenda.

The following resolutions were part of the Consent Agenda and were made available to the Governing Body and the Public prior to the meeting.

The Consent Agenda was presented and adopted on a motion by Mr. D'Urso, seconded by Dr. Cascio.

Ayes: Councilmen Beckmeyer, Cascio, D'Urso, Goetz, Hrbek.

Nays: None.

WHEREAS, the Township of Washington ("Township") issued and served a notice to Edward Bonner on May 9, 2012 for violations under Section 173-7C of the Code of the Township of Washington occurring at property commonly known as 508 Ridgewood Boulevard North, Township of Washington (Block 2303, Lot 17); and

WHEREAS, Edward Bonner failed to comply with such notice; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 173-24 of the Code of the Township of Washington, a Tax Lien Certificate dated May 21, 2012, was issued by the Township's Code Enforcement Official in the amount of \$3,287.34, which is attached to this resolution, for approval by the Township Council;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Washington that the Township Council hereby approves the Tax Lien Certificate dated May 21, 2012 attached hereto; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Council hereby authorizes the Township Treasurer to take all appropriate action to impose on the property commonly known as 508 Ridgewood Boulevard North, Township of Washington (Block 2303, Lot 17), a municipal lien in the amount of the Tax Lien Certificate, whereupon such amount shall become a municipal lien on such property, and said amount shall be added to and become and form a part of the real estate taxes assessed and levied upon said property, the same to bear interest at the same rate as real estate taxes, and to be collected and enforced by the same officers and in the same manner as real estate taxes.

WHEREAS, Michael and Valerie Pomerantz posted engineering escrow on premises known as Block 4321, Lot 2, 435 Mountain Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the Construction Code Official has issued approval dated March 26, 2012, C.O. No. 11-377,

WHEREAS, there are no outstanding invoices due the Township Engineer as per his letter dated May 3, 2012,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Treasurer of the Township of Washington is authorized to refund the balance of the escrow money in the amount of \$262.00 to the above.

Raffle License #858 and #859 for Our Lady of Mercy Has was approved by the Township Council of the Township of Washington.

A motion was made by Mr. D'Urso, seconded by Dr. Cascio to approve the following resolution:

Ayes: Councilpersons Beckmeyer, Cascio, D'Urso, Hrbek

Nays: None

Abstain: Councilpersons Goetz.

WHEREAS, the Township of Washington ("Township") implemented a provision in the Township's Personnel Manual/Employee Handbook which provides that background checks are required of all candidates, whether for paid or volunteer positions, working directly or indirectly with children/youth/minors; that background checks will also be administered for each employee or volunteer that works directly or indirectly with children/youth/minors every three years; and that the Police Chief will perform or initiate background checks and be the recipient of reports from outside agencies or contractors; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council agrees with the provisions for such background checks as provided for in the Township's Personnel Manual/Employee Handbook, and wishes to facilitate the implementation of such background checks;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Washington that the Township Council hereby endorses the provisions for background checks as provided for in the Township's Personnel Manual/Employee Handbook; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Council hereby authorizes the Police Chief to perform or initiate background checks, including fingerprinting, with respect to all candidates, whether for paid or volunteer positions, working directly or indirectly with children/youth/minors, and to notify the Mayor and Superintendent of Recreation of information that would disqualify any person from working with children/youth/minors.

Mary Ann Ozment, Township Clerk

Richard Hrbek, Council President

CLOSED

May 21, 2012

A motion made by Mr. Beckmeyer, seconded by Mr. D'Urso to go into Closed Session.

Ayes: Beckmeyer, Cascio, D'Urso, Goetz, Hrbek

Nays: None

Police Contract - Mayor Sobkowicz, Ms. Steinel and Mr. D'Urso reported on the ongoing police negotiations. Discussions included negotiating salary increases over a four year period ranging from 1.0 in the first year to 1.5 in the fourth. The police team countered asking for a three year contract. Annual percentage increases are going to be an ongoing discussion. Terminal leave as it is done now could be changed through negotiations. Changes to the program would give police with good attendance records an accrued annual payout, with a maximum of 5 days; to be paid out at current year's rate is on the table. There was a discussion of adding two additional steps to the contract for future hires which will save the township money in the long run. The police would not compromise on unlimited sick time. Mr. D'Urso said that over a million dollars has been spent on sick time. Longevity was discussed. In the present police contract longevity gets paid out in January of each year prior to the officer's anniversary instead of on the date of hire anniversary as is done in most towns. Ms. Steinel stated that both parties may be close to an agreement and called the negotiations productive. Issues of compromise include the steps, terminal leave payouts and salary increase percentages. Mr. D'Urso said that tours of duty were discussed. In accordance with the Chief's Bill of Rights, scheduling patrol tours is a managerial duty. The police were adamant about not decreasing the amount of officers on any tours.

Property Acquisition - Mr. Poller stated there has been no further contact with the owners of the properties adjacent to Memorial Field at this time.

Walnut and Hickory Street Properties - Mr. Stickle has shown interest in buying the entire town owned parcel of land if his neighbors do not want to divide the site. Mr. Hrbek said that a meeting at the site is scheduled for this coming Wednesday.

A motion was made to close the closed session. All in favor.

End of Closed Session.