

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORK SESSION
THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2017
7:30 P.M.

The Franklin Township Committee held a work session at **7:30 P.M., Thursday, April 13, 2017** at the Municipal Building. This meeting has been properly noticed in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Mayor Kathryn Blew called the meeting to order and led the flag salute.

Roll Call: Diane Burgess PRESENT Craig Repmann PRESENT

Susan Soloway PRESENT Joseph Darocha PRESENT Kathryn Blew PRESENT

Also present: Katrina L. Campbell, Municipal Attorney

Some public present: Lt. Timothy Snyder, Lora Jones

Comments from the public: Lora Jones, Open Space Advisory Committee, addressed the Township Committee on proposed Farmland Preservation properties. She requested municipal support for the Dirt Capital Partners property, Block 41 Lot 17, 88 acres on Baker Road. Property is currently in a lease-purchase agreement with a farmer, Hector Perez, whose intends to purchase the property from the current owners. One appraisal is in and a second will be coming. Since this is a county project, the County is paying for the appraisals, survey and title. Application has already been approved by the State and the County. Lora Jones encouraged the Township Committee to support this purchase which has always been on the farmland preservation target list. The township's financial obligation would be about \$158,000.00 which represents a cost-share of 20%. Property is contiguous to Leon's Sod Farm and other preserved properties. The State will purchase Leon's Sod Farm direct if it comes on the market and is not preserved. If the Dirt Capital property is preserved, the monies will go to Dirt Capital which will reduce the cost of purchase to the current farmer. The Committee expressed concerns about insuring property must be farmed and did not want this to become another matter of litigation should the farmer violate the deed of easement. While there are no guarantees, the Municipal Attorney said the State has very strict rules regarding preservation which are tailored specifically to individual properties and the State of New Jersey is responsible for enforcement of the regulations. Dirt Capital has also preserved other properties; Alexandria Township for one.

Consent Agenda

All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Township Committee and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

Motion to Adopt all items listed under the Consent Agenda.

Moved Burgess

Second Darocha

- a. Approval of Bills for Payment (no formal bill list presented)
- b. Approval of minutes: March 23, 2017 Regular Meeting & Executive Session, March 30, 2017 Special Meeting & Executive Session
- c. Adoption of **Resolution 2017 – 08.1** Temporary 2017 Budget Appropriations raised one-twelfth
- d. Adoption of **Resolutions 2017 – 32 and 2017 – 33** Tax Sale Redemptions

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING

ORDINANCE 2017 – 01

AN ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK

Motion to open the public hearing on Ordinance 2017 – 01.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

All in favor. Motion carried.

Comments from the public: None

Motion to close the public hearing on Ordinance 2017 – 01.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion to **Adopt Ordinance 2017 – 01.**

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

Comments/Discussion by the Committee: None

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

- **Finance, Administration, Insurance, HR/Benefits: Soloway & Burgess**

Verizon Wireless: The township is in receipt of a proposal for locating a cell tower on municipal property – at the Municipal Building. They offered to pay the township \$18,000 a year and the

Municipal Attorney suggested requesting fees for co-locators to the tower if this is pursued. Since the Committee is interested, the Municipal Attorney will reach out to Verizon for additional information and maybe get some visuals on the location. The Committee would also like to know how much more a new tower will enhance service.

- **Public Safety (PD, Fire, EMS, OEM, Court, Health): Darocha & Blew**

Lt. Tim Snyder presented his monthly report which included investigations, arrests, motor vehicle violations, radio calls, etc. The Distracted Driving crackdown is on-going. The Committee noted overtime and comp time are not going down. Lt. Snyder said there was no overtime submitted for March, and regarding comp time, this is contract related and an officer can't be forced to use it.

- **Land Use (Land Use Board, Open Space, Planning, Zoning, Construction, Environmental): Burgess & Soloway**

The Committee discussed action needed for farmland preservation. Action to participate in the Sabo property has already been taken but the formal letter needs to be sent to the County. The Committee will need to take action to participate in the Dirt Capital property. The County provided their letter format to be submitted.

Motion to participate in the preservation of the Sabo Farm, Block 35 Lot 17, as discussed at the last meeting, and authorize the Mayor to sign the formal letter of response to be submitted to the County Agriculture Development Committee.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

Motion to participate with the County and the State in the preservation of the Dirt Capital Partners LLC project, Block 41 Lot 17, and authorize the Mayor to sign the formal letter of support to be submitted to the County Agriculture Development Committee.. If the Township's contribution exceeds \$160,000.00 the project will have to come before the Township Committee for approval.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

Motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the documents for the purchase of the Faith Chapel Wesleyan Church property consisting of three (3) acres on Lower Landsdown and Hamden Roads in the amount of \$18,000.00 for the Transco wetlands replacement.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

PIE: Committee Members Burgess and Soloway updated the Committee on the Sustainable Jersey Strategic PIE (Public Information & Engagement) Technology Assessment Program. Franklin Township is one of two municipalities chosen for a grant which will allow more efficient technology and better communications. Members of the Construction Department and Police Department will need to schedule an appointment with the representative for gathering their information. Committee Members Burgess and r Soloway and several staff members met as a focus group with a representative and a proposal will be received in a few weeks.

- **Finance, Administration, Insurance, HR/Benefits: Soloway & Burgess**

Form of Government: Committee Member Repmann just wanted to clarify that as a Township Committee all members are of equal votes and no one has more power than any other member. The Municipal Attorney said that under a Township Committee form of government every single decision needs to come before the Committee. However, in the past there was a resolution establishing a specific amount that a subcommittee was authorized to spend. If there was a resolution, a new one should be established by this Township Committee. There was some discussion about the authority to make decisions that deal with issues not related to funding.

The Township Committee discussed the issue of snow plowing the QFC lot. It became an issue during the last snowstorm when the DPW felt the roads were a priority. It was decided to revisit the agreement the township has with the fire company on an annual basis. The Committee felt there should be a specific expiration date to any agreement with a stipulation that it will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Township Committee would like to consider a resolution at the next meeting regarding setting an amount of funds a subcommittee may authorize in conjunction with a Department Head. \$1,000.00 was suggested.

Motion to **Adopt Resolution 2017 – 34** designating signatories on municipal checks, Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor; Jean Bahlman, Finance Assistant; and Ursula Stryker, Municipal Clerk.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

Budget: Committee Member Susan Soloway reported the budget is still being developed. Capital portion of the budget needs to be addressed. Because of capital and other expenses, in the process of preparing the budget we are using much of our surplus. Some department budget requests need to be reviewed and Committee Members Soloway and Darocha will meet with Lt. Snyder regarding his budget projections.

Quaker Hill/Woodland Roads: Committee Member Soloway reported that some of the homes in the area to the group home have had their assessment reduced by the Tax Assessor. Reductions are in the 10% - 15% range and the Committee would like to know which homes are involved and the impact on taxes due to a loss in ratables. This will be further discussed at the next meeting.

Tax Assessor: Committee Members Burgess and Soloway are in the process of interviewing candidates for the Tax Assessor position. Additional candidates will be interviewed next week. Mary Mastro, Tax Assessor, is also being consulted and participating in the interviews.

Tax Collector: Committee Member Burgess reported that Ella Ruta, Tax Collector, asked if she can have a laptop in order to access Vital. This matter will be further discussed in executive session.

Farm Animal Registration: The Township Committee has expressed no interest in this at the present time.

- **Department of Public Works: Repmann & Darocha**

No report.

- **Community, Business, School, Recreation, Seniors: Repmann & Blew**

The Easter Egg Hunt was held on April 9 and was a huge success. There was some discussion about the collection of recreation program fees and possibly looking into online payments.

BOARD OF HEALTH – No need for a meeting this evening.

Comments from the public: None

Comments from the Committee, non-agenda items and any other business to come before the Committee: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to enter executive session at 9:35 p.m. for discussion of matters pertaining to personnel.

Moved Burgess

Second Soloway

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motion to return to open session at 10:22 P.M.

Moved Burgess Second Soloway All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion to authorize signing the contract with P.M. Consultants LLC for professional services to be provided as Chief Financial Officer for Franklin Township.

Moved Soloway Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

Motion to authorize payment of bills to include payroll checks and \$18,000.00 payment to Faith Chapel Wesleyan Church.

Moved Burgess Second Soloway

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 10:30 P.M.

Moved Burgess Second Soloway All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Ursula V. Stryker, RMC
Municipal Clerk

DATE OF ADOPTION: _____