

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG HELD DECEMBER 12, 2013 AT THE NETCONG MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 23 MAPLE AVENUE, NETCONG, NEW JERSEY COMMENCING AT 7:30 P.M.

Mayor Nametko presiding.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER – STATEMENT OF OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT:

Mayor Nametko called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

The Borough Clerk read the following statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act:

1. Adequate notice of this meeting as defined by the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided by:
2. Posting a notice of said meeting in the space provided for such announcements at the Netcong Borough Hall on January 4, 2013.
3. Publishing a notice in The Daily Record, the official newspaper of the Borough of Netcong on January 9, 2013 and mailing a copy to The Star Ledger on January 4, 2013.

ROLL CALL

Those present at this evening's meeting were Councilman Laureys, Councilman Hathaway, Councilman Sylvester, Councilman Still, Councilwoman Butler, Councilman Koster and Mayor Nametko. Also present: Cynthia Eckert, Borough Clerk, Ralph Blakeslee, Borough Administrator and Anthony Bucco, Borough Attorney.

PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING

The Mayor opened the meeting to the public for comments.

- Charles Cedro – 6 Allen St. – Requested a status of the water situation and the corresponding Trenton meeting.

The Mayor responded that he met with the DEP deputy while at the League of Municipalities. Within two days of that conversation, the Council's recommendations earlier were adopted regarding levels. Mr. Cedro expressed concern that nothing has "gelled." The Mayor, Anthony Bucco,

Bob Hathaway and Ralph Blakeslee provided details regarding the actions that have taken place as of today.

- Gina Thomas – Executive Director of Netcong Community Partnership – Asked the Council to support the Our Place America (art) Grant. She provided background information on the grant.

After discussion among Council, including where the funding was coming from, a Motion to Support Our Place America Grant for NCP was made by Councilwoman Butler and seconded by Councilman Hathaway.
Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

Seeing no more requests to speak, the Mayor asked for a motion to close the public session. A Motion to Close the Meeting to the Public was made by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Hathaway.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes were presented this evening.

ORDINANCE ADOPTIONS

1. **Ordinance 2013- 15** – An Ordinance Amending Chapter 75, Special Improvement District, by Revising the Existing Tier System and Establishing a New Assessment Rate in Schedule A and Amending Sections 75-5, District Management Corporation, 75-6, Budget and 75-10, Stabilization of the Sid Assessment of the Code of the Borough of Netcong, County of Morris and State of New Jersey

A Motion to Read Ordinance 2013-15 by Title Only on Second Reading and a Hearing Held Thereon was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Sylvester. Mr. Laureys stated he was abstaining until he could read the whole ordinance.

Roll Call: 4 Yes No: Councilman Laureys Abstain: Councilman Koster

The Mayor opened the meeting up to the public for comment.

- Frank Koval – Alternative Auto – 124 Allen St. – Mr. Koval objects to this increase in SID assessment. He has not received anything from SID in past 10 years and was disturbed to hear that there is an administrator on salary with this money. He does not feel he has to pay more. Councilwoman Butler requested that Mr. Koval attend the meetings to see how the money is spent. Councilman Still elaborated on how the SID was formed and what was done. Councilman Hathaway challenged some of Mr. Koval's comments because he is not certain how Mr. Koval would get this information without participating. Mr. Koval challenged whether the SID was self sustaining. The Mayor asked to qualify Mr.

Koval's statements as he felt they were not factual. A lengthy discussion continued between the Mayor, the Council and Mr. Koval. Councilman Laureys, the newest member of the Council asked some background questions.

- Winfred Ginter – 43 Maple Ave. – Has been involved with the SID since the days of Don Smart and Stewart Kopperweiss. Netcong has the smallest SID in the state. He stated his opposition to the SID and felt nothing seems to get done. He was uncertain why the businesses need to pay more money. He and Councilman Hathaway discussed the funds from the parking lot project.
- Barrie Palumbo – Palumbo Barber Shop – 15 Maple Ave. – Ms. Palumbo was the zoning officer 10 years ago and was an employee when SID was established. She felt that something fell apart. She asked where the collected money is going. She and the businesses don't want this increase.
- Joe Palumbo – Palumbo Barber Shop – 15 Maple Ave. - He also expressed his displeasure about the rate increase.

The Mayor stated that special notices went out to all the members to attend a meeting to discuss the rate increase. He noted low attendance and was surprised.

- Bob Kanapaux – Morgan Funeral Home – 31 Main St. – He stated that he never received notification of any meetings. He pays \$20,000.00 in property taxes plus extra \$600.00 for SID. These tax increases caused him to have to raise his prices. He urged the Council not to approve this ordinance.

Councilman Hathaway detailed the four times this issue was noticed to the public. He was uncertain why there would be any chance of the public missing this message.

Mr. Bucco and the Council discussed various ways to move forward.

Councilman Laureys noted that there were only 14 votes even though the public was properly noticed.

- Vic Pocarobba – President of NCP – Scotch Plains NJ- He attends all NCP (SID) meetings, hasn't seen too many of the faces present at this meeting tonight at the SID meetings. He urged business owners to be engaged and attend meetings. If the business people don't get involved, nothing will get done.
- Len Dresdale – Approved Auto – 120 Route 46 – Mr. Dresdale felt this was a simple yes or no answer. Small businesses don't have same luxury as larger businesses. Profit margins are going down while expenses are going up. He requested that the Council keep the rates as they are now, and reconsider an increase next year.

A Motion to Close the Public Hearing was made by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Hathaway.

Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Koster

The Mayor requested discussion and comment from the Council:

- Councilman Laureys did not feel that the Council should vote now. He recommended it be brought back to the SID for further review.
- Councilman Hathaway stated that the businesses had ample time and notice to determine what should be done. For those members who did come and did vote, negating what they have completed would be disrespectful.
- Councilman Sylvester was concerned that the SID members were not active in watching their own money.
- Councilman Still agreed with Councilmen Sylvester and Hathaway. Business owners need to come to meetings.
- Councilwoman Butler stated that she feels the same way. All the work is done. Members were noticed and chose not to attend meetings or vote. They have no right to complain.
- Councilman Koster is a member of the SID and therefore is abstaining from comment.

A Motion to Adopt Ordinance #2013-15 was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Sylvester.

Roll Call: 4 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys and Councilman Koster

The Mayor called for a five minute break at 9:10PM. The meeting resumed at 9:19PM.

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was presented at this evenings meeting.

BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Mr. Blakeslee highlighted certain parts of the Administrator's report that was provided to the Council earlier, including the 2014 Community Block Grant Application and the DOT. He also provided an update regarding the Quick Chek.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance & Insurance: E. Still J. Sylvester

Note: not presented but put on file due to the length of this meeting

In the month of November the Borough had total income in the amount of \$1,020,969.25 as compared to the previous year of \$ 1,546,532.16

Year to Date for the month of November:

Miscellaneous Revenue Not Anticipated (MRNA)

\$10,088.62 in 2012 vs. \$5,651.12 in 2013

November's municipal court receipts have not yet been received.

State Aid

\$54,275.30 in state aid received in 2012 compared to \$53,709.43 in 2013.

Grants in Aid

\$8,050.09 in 2012 vs. \$4,000.00 in 2013

The Borough received \$4,000 from the Click It or Ticket program.

Taxes Collected

\$ 1,473,037.15 in 2012 vs. \$ 956,748.50 in 2013.

Income Total Year to Date:

\$8,097,530.67 in 2012 VS. \$8,398,639.02 in 2013.

Economic Development: R. Hathaway E. Still

Councilman Hathaway noted that he and Mr. Blakeslee had a meeting with the developers. They expect a general proposal at the beginning of next year.

The NCP report was put on file due to the length of this meeting:

Media Relations: Feature story for the promotion of Small Business Saturday, November 30, 2013. This was featured in the Musconetcong News, Gonetcong.com and the NCP Facebook page. There was promotion of the Holiday Parade and Tree Lighting.

Website: Updated with Small business Saturday, the Holiday Events and the first draft of the Business Directory.

Facebook Page: We have 423 likes!! We have 136 visits to the Facebook page with 323 page views! People are talking about what we are doing downtown - our new visits this month are at 66.99%. Working on an initiative to link businesses to the page in a more collaborative and cohesive way.

Operations:

1. First cooperative advertising event was very successful. The ad ran and after following up with some local merchants, they did well on both Black Friday and Small Business Saturday.

2. Partnering with the Growing Stage for the Art Place grant the first - deadline is Friday November 13, 2013

3. Sustainable New Jersey grant has been discussed and we have started to partner with key stakeholders in the community and will approach the Council in the near future asking for support with the forming of a "Green Team"

Public Safety: J. Sylvester E. Koster
(Police, Fire, Rescue)

Councilman Sylvester reported that for the month of November, the Ambulance Corps had 70 calls 3 of which were out of town. They treated a total of 36 patients and made 36 trips to the hospital. The miles traveled were 887 miles and the hours volunteered were 197 hours and 12 minutes. There was 1 assist provided by the Netcong Fire Department.

The Netcong Fire Department report was unavailable at this time.

The Borough Police answered a total of 341 calls. They wrote a total of 66 motor vehicle summonses. There were also 4 local ordinance summonses. The police also received a grant for body armor.

Mr. Sylvester thanked Mr. William Koster for his service as Fire Chief for past 2 years. The Mayor also recognized Mr. Koster for his services.

Dept. of Public Works & Utilities: E. Koster R. Hathaway

Councilman Koster stated he would put the report on file due to the time of this meeting. He also welcomed Bob Olivo back.

Water Department:

- Read water meters
- Repaired a 6" water main break on Post. Rd.
- Installed a new water meter in the new home at 1 Koclas Dr.
- Installed NO TRESSPASSING signs at the old reservoir
- Performed utility mark outs as requested by NJ One Call

Road Department:

- Cleaned heavy leaves from the sides of the roads.

Buildings & Grounds:

- Assisted with installing the new Christmas tree at #1 firehouse
- Installed Christmas decorations throughout the town
- Set up for the Christmas tree lighting
- Trimmed the ornamental grass across from Shop Rite

- Set up and disassembled the council room for the election
- Performed fall clean up at all borough properties.

Recycling:

- Collected 77 loads of leaves and 6 loads of brush from the residents in November.

Other:

- Sent the new Senior van for a front end alignment and installed a new front tire.

Comments:

- 1 DPW employee was off ½ month of November and 1 DPW employee was off the entire month of November with disabilities.

Recreation:

P. Butler

C. Laureys

This report put on file due to length of meeting. She did note that some funding will not be received as planned. The Mayor stated he would figure out a way to work this out without spending any taxpayer money.

1. The holiday parade was once again a huge success with just under 30 participants. This year we added the Business Decorating contest with our first place winner- All in the Icing, 2nd place was Designs by Suzie Q, and third place the Growing Stage. We already have people looking to participate in next year's parade.
2. The Holiday House Decorating Contest will take place this Sunday, December 15th. We will award Shop Rite Gift Cards for 1st, 2nd, 3rd place winners.

Public Services:
(Human Services
Recycling & Solid
Waste Disposal)

C. Laureys

P. Butler

Councilman Laureys reported the following for the month of November:

Days of service: 18
Miles: 974
Number of stops: 80
Nutrition for 7 people: 49
Food shopping 24 people: 47
Number of Meals on Wheels: 15
Medical Appointments: 12
Other Appointments: 62
People Using Services: 44

Cancels: 27
Denials: 5
Units: 359
Hours: 102
Additional Notes: 2 new Disabled

OLD BUSINESS

1. Winter Parking

Mr. Olivo presented some of his findings and experience with the snow issues in the Borough of Netcong. Councilman Hathaway provided his experiences regarding snow covered roads and the efforts by the DPW to keep everyone safe. He provided a time of day alternate side of the road parking scenario.

After much continued discussion among the Mayor and Council regarding every aspect including review of the definition of a winter storm, a motion was made to leave the winter parking rule 'as is' by Councilman Koster and seconded by Councilman Still.

Roll Call: 5 Yes No: Councilman Laureys

2. Fire Dept. Task Force

The Mayor noted that there would be a special meeting regarding the fire Department Task Force on January 16, 2014. Councilwoman Butler wished to make a comment. She wished to report that the engine number two which is a 1983 model needed to be removed and/or replaced. She recommended that if the new engine discussed is purchased the others would not need to be replaced but would simply move on through attrition. The Borough does not have the finances to do much more.

Councilman Hathaway spoke with both fire houses and felt all agreed there was a unified desire for consolidation. All fire companies and personnel have to be in the same mindset with the same goals.

Councilman Sylvester advised that a considerable amount of storage space is required for all the apparatus used by the fire companies.

The Mayor and Council continued with considerable discussion regarding all aspects of the Fire Department, old equipment, new equipment, consolidation issues, leadership and future considerations.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Social Affair Permit – Hopatcong Wild Cats Cheerleading Association

A motion was made to grant this permit by Councilman Koster and seconded by Councilman Sylvester.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR TO THE COUNCIL

The Council President had no comment at this time.

Councilman Hathaway addressed a public safety issue at the school. There is a cut tree branch hanging in the vines by the playground. He is not certain who owns the property. Mr. Bucco suggests an email be sent to the Superintendent of the school explaining the potential danger. Mr. Blakeslee stated that he will take care of it. Councilman Hathaway also pointed out a maple tree that could pose a safety hazard at the school.

Councilman Hathaway also wished everyone a happy holiday.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

The Mayor had no comments at this time.

RESOLUTIONS

1. **Resolution 2013-104** –Authorizing the Award of a Contract to GAK Construction for the Purpose of Supplying and Installing a New Roof, Fascia, Soffit and Gutters on the Netcong Fire House Company #1

A motion was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway to approve this resolution.

Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Koster

2. **Resolution 2013-111** - Employee Stipends

A motion was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway to approve this resolution with the condition of minor wording adjustments by the Borough Attorney.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

3. **Resolution 2013-112** – Establishing a List of Towing Operators and Associated Towing Fees in Accordance with Chapter 262, Towing, of the Code of the Borough of Netcong

A motion was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway to approve this resolution with the condition of a dollar amount change.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

4. Resolution 2013-113 – Authorizing a Tax Refund to Joel Fernandez, 16 Amendola Dr.

A motion was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway to approve this resolution with the condition of minor wording adjustments by the Borough Attorney.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

5. Resolution 2013-114 – Endorsing the Adoption of Assembly Resolution No. 193

A motion was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway to approve this resolution.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

6. Resolution 2013-115 – To Redeem Tax Sale Certificate 11-00004

A motion was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway to approve this resolution.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

7. Resolution 2013-116 – Confirming the Costs for Abatement of Property Maintenance Code Violations by the Borough of Netcong

A motion was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway to approve this resolution.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTIONS

No ordinance introductions were presented at this meeting.

REPORTS

A Motion to Incorporate All Reports into the Minutes was made by Councilman Koster and seconded by Councilwoman Laureys.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

BILLS

A Motion to Pay All Bills When Funds are Available was made by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Sylvester.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session during this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilman Still at 11:02 PM and moved by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia Eckert, Borough Clerk