

## ***BOROUGH OF NETCONG***

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG HELD JUNE 3, 2021 AT THE NETCONG MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 23 MAPLE AVENUE, NETCONG, NEW JERSEY COMMENCING AT 7:30 PM.**

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

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

#### **STATEMENT OF OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

The Borough Clerk read the following statement:

Adequate notice of this meeting as defined by the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided by:

1. Posting a notice of said meeting in the space provided for such announcements at the Borough Hall on January 8, 2021.
2. Publishing a notice in the Daily Record, the official newspaper of the January 13, 2021 and mailing a copy to The Star Ledger on January 8, 2021.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Those in attendance this evening were Councilman Albensi, Councilman Hathaway, Councilman Koster, Councilman Laureys, Councilman Sylvester and Mayor Nametko. Also present were Mr. Blakeslee, Borough Administrator and Mrs. Eckert, Borough Clerk.

#### **PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING**

Mr. Timothy Grogan, 79 Stoll St, has a complaint about constant noise at the Tony Tank property. There is constant truck traffic, they work morning, nights etc. He wants to know if there is something that can be done about this. Mr. Blakeslee explained there is a noise ordinance in place. He stated there should not be noise between 10:00 pm and 8:00 am. Mr. Grogan stated this has been going on for years nights and weekends. It is constant noise which is very disruptive to the surrounding neighbors. Councilman Sylvester asked what the permitted usage is there. Councilman Hathaway stated there are unregistered businesses there. Mr. Blakeslee explained he does have a list of businesses that are there now. He will speak with the police officers. Mr. Grogan stated there are also band concerts there. The police told them they had to leave but there are people there with bikes and make a lot of noise late at night. Councilman Sylvester

stated we have to have a meeting with these business owners to let them know what they can or cannot do.

Councilman Laureys asked several questions on this issue. He wanted to know what the recourse is if they continue to play. Mr. Blakeslee stated the owner would be issued a summons. Councilman Hathaway stated a summons should have been issued if there was a violation. Councilman Hathaway feels what Mr. Grogan is asking for is very reasonable. Councilman Sylvester said we need to get the property owners involved. There was lengthy discussion among the council on this subject. Councilman Sylvester stated they are doing things on this property that are not permitted. Councilman Hathaway stated we should not even be entertaining these issues. Councilman Laureys asked when the concerts have taken place. Mr. Grogan stated he calls the police every time. There was further discussion on this issue among the council. Mr. Blakeslee stated the property owner should be the one to be summons. Mr. Blakeslee will set up a meeting with the property owner. Mr. Grogan asked to be notified when this meeting has taken place and the results. There was further discussion on this and that the owner should have to come in to the Planning Board for a site plan to specify what activities can take place. The mayor requested Mr. Bucco be notified he needs to have information available for next week's meeting on this subject. There was further discussion on this subject. Mr. Grogan is not looking for anyone to be kicked out of this place he just wants to have some restrictions on the noise. Mr. Grogan thanked the council for their time.

A motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Koster.

Roll Call: 5 Yes

## **AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

*The following items are for discussion purposes only. Any action on these items will take place at the meeting of June 10, 2021.*

### **1. Retired Chief James Blesson to Address the Council**

Mr. Blesson addressed the council. He thanked the council for everything. He read his letter to the council.

*Dear Mayor Nametko, Members of the Netcong Borough Police Department,*

*This decision to retire and start the second chapter of my life was not an easy one to make. Effective June 1, 2021 this will be my last day as the Chief of Police in Netcong Borough as my official retirement date.*

*I am writing to express my sincere gratitude to the employees of Borough of Netcong and the citizens and for the opportunity to serve as a police officer in the Borough of Netcong for almost 34 years. I have been extremely fortunate to have had an opportunity to serve the Netcong Borough Police Department in an area where I grew up and served in a variety*

*of roles, beginning in August 1987 as a Special Police Officer and culminating with my service as Chief of Police from 2010 until today.*

*When I reflect on the last 34 plus years, many moments come to mind. I picture events that will forever represent the tragedy, importance, and occasional humor of our work policing the Borough of Netcong.*

*Most importantly, those who do the increasingly challenging work of policing that is so essential and so often misunderstood and underappreciated and the family and friends who support them each day. You will always have my unwavering support, gratitude, and admiration. I am honored to have been fortunate enough to serve with them. At times this was the most difficult of jobs, I put the citizens of the Borough of Netcong and the members of the Netcong Borough Police Department first at the expense of my own family. You may not have agreed with every decision I have made but I felt it was in the best interest of the Borough and the brave men and women of the Netcong Borough Police Department.*

*Police work has evolved since I joined the Netcong Police Department in 1987. It has become a thankless job and extremely dangerous occupation. Given the recent events in our country especially in 2020, the pandemic, civil unrest and police reform. I will always be grateful of the support of the Governing Body and residents of the Borough of Netcong in rallying around our great police department.*

*To my uniformed and command staff thank you for your loyalty, hard work, dedication friendship and constant humor, together we experienced the greatest show on earth, you will always be my work family. I would also like to thank my administrative staff for your friendship and laughter. Thank you for your guidance, love and respect each and every day. To the Netcong Borough Council, Mrs. Cindy Eckert, Administrative Staff, Senator Anthony Bucco, the Borough Administrator, Mike Canfield and the DPW Staff and the Netcong Fire Company and to all the civilian employees, thank you making life that much easier. I truly appreciate your friendship and respect you bestowed upon me and the police department. You all will never be forgotten.*

*I wish you and your families, health, happiness and success during your law enforcement careers. Stay Safe and God Bless you all.*

*Sincerely,  
James Blesson, Chief of Police*

**Resolution 2021-54 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A SEVERANCE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG AND JAMES BLESSON, CHIEF OF THE NETCONG BOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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

Roll Call: 5 Yes

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- Minutes – May 6, 2021
- Minutes – May 13, 2021

A motion was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway to approve the minutes.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

**3. ANNUAL AUDIT**

**Resolution #2021-56** - Certification of the Annual Audit.

This will be carried to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Resolution #2021-57** -To Approve the 2020 Corrective Action Plan.

This will be carried to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- 4. Ordinance Adoptions** – Ordinance 2021-9 - AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 194 “LAND DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES” OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG TO MAKE CANNABIS ESTABLISHMENTS PROHIBITED USES WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG.

This will be carried to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- 5. Ordinance Adoptions** – Ordinance 2021-10 - AN ORDINANCE TO VACATE A PORTION OF WILTOP ROAD IN THE BOROUGH NETCONG, COUNTY OF MORRIS, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY.

This will be carried to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- 6. Ordinance Adoptions** – Ordinance 2021-11 - AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNED BY THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG, COUNTY OF MORRIS, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY, PURSUANT TO THE LOCAL LANDS AND BUILDING LAW.

This will be carried to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- 7. Ordinance Adoptions** – Ordinance 2021-12 - AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 105, ANIMALS, OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG TO INCLUDE A NEW ARTICLE IV ESTABLISHING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ANIMAL OWNERS AND PROHIBITING ANIMAL CRUELTY.

This will be carried to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- 8. Capital Ordinance Adoptions** – Capital Ordinance 2021-13 - CAPITAL ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG, IN THE COUNTY OF MORRIS, NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING THE FUNDING OF A PORTION OF THE COST OF

THE ACQUISITION OF A MASON DUMP TRUCK IN, BY AND FOR THE SEWER UTILITY OF THE BOROUGH, APPROPRIATING THEREFOR THE SUM OF \$41,000 AND PROVIDING THAT SUCH SUM SO APPROPRIATED SHALL BE RAISED FROM THE SEWER UTILITY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND.

This will be carried to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

9. **Bond Ordinance Adoptions** – Bond Ordinance 2021-14 - BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAKING OF VARIOUS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND THE ACQUISITION OF NEW ADDITIONAL OR REPLACEMENT EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY IN, BY AND FOR THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG, IN THE COUNTY OF MORRIS, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$350,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO APPROPRIATE A STATE GRANT, 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.

This will be carried to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

10. **Bond Ordinance Adoptions** – Bond Ordinance 2021-15 - BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAKING OF VARIOUS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND THE ACQUISITION OF A NEW AUTOMOTIVE VEHICLE, INCLUDING ORIGINAL APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT, IN, BY AND FOR THE WATER UTILITY OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG, IN THE COUNTY OF MORRIS, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$339,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO APPROPRIATE FEDERAL GRANTS, 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.

This will be carried to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

11. **Ordinance Adoptions**-Ordinance 2021-16 - AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 54 “POLICE DEPARTMENT” OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG AMENDING PROCEDURES FOR HIRING AND PROMOTIONS IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

This will be carried to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

12. **Correspondence** – Mark Sylvester, Fire Inspector – Letter of Resignation

A motion was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Koster.

Roll Call: 5 Yes

### 13. Old Business – 2021 NJDOT Local Aid Application

Mr. Blakeslee stated he sent the email out from our engineer and gave the details of this email. He explained the water in Koclas Dr. is coming up from ground water and would hope the council will decide to do this road project with a DOT grant. Mr Sylvester asked if they can create a solution. Mr. Blakeslee stated "yes," it can be fixed and gave some details on how it can be resolved. Mr. Blakeslee also listed the benefits and detriments with moving forward.

Councilman Koster made a motion to grant this application. Councilman Hathaway seconded the motion.

Roll Call: 5 Yes

Councilman Koster asked if we can do something with the problem on Railroad Ave as well. Mr. Blakeslee stated they may be able to tie into the back of a catch basin. Councilman Hathaway stated we did not give them permission because the catch basin is not on their property. There was continued discussion among the council. Mr. Blakeslee stated we could have added a catch basin by their property to negate the drainage issue. Mr. Blakeslee stated we can revisit this issue to see if we can resolve this issue. Councilman Sylvester asked if there are easements for us to go on these properties. Councilman Hathaway noted the issue on Koclas Dr. is similar to the Railroad Ave. issue. He is concerned we are opening up a can of worms with this. Councilman Koster stated we need to revisit the Railroad Ave. issue. Councilman Sylvester asked if we can sublet to them. Mr. Blakeslee will go back and look at the record to see if there is some other way for us to address the Railroad Ave. issue. Councilman Hathaway's concern is we create a condition that will not be resolved without going on someone else's property. There was further discussion on this matter among the council. Councilman Hathaway is trying to point out that in the winter the water is coming into the road and leaving a sheet of ice. The engineers' ideas are not a solution to this problem. Mr. Blakeslee reiterated he will do the research and contact the borough engineer on this issue. Mr. Blakeslee stated the previous borough engineer and DPW superintendent walked the Railroad Ave. property and did not see water coming from Netcong Heights. There was discussion about other areas in town with the same situation. The Mayor asked if we are opening up Pandora's box by starting this. Mr. Blakeslee stated we would only resolve these issues in areas that projects are already being done. Councilman Hathaway stated we need to require homeowners to negate drainage issues and a neighbor should not be able to deny someone from putting drainage on their property. At this time, the Council decided they will go forward with the project and re-research this issue.

**14. New Business- Social Affair Permit – Our Lady Feast of the Assumption**

A motion to grant the permit was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Albeni.

Roll Call: 5 Yes

**15. New Business – Adler Sewer Transmission Agreement**

Mr. Blakeslee asked for this to put on the agenda for discussion only. He gave explanation on this issue. It has conditions and must be vetted by Roxbury. Adler has purchased an easement with Netcong Heights to accomplish this. It will be going under the railroad. Mr. Blakeslee stated they will pay the borough \$150,000.00 to do this. Mr. Blakeslee wanted the full council to be aware of what the details of this project are. Councilman Hathaway asked if we would be getting rate-ables for this as it will ease the burden on the residents. Councilman Sylvester stated this will also be good for the system to keep things moving.

**16. Resolutions – Resolution 2021-55- To Appoint Andrew Taveras as Class II Special Police Officer**

A motion was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Koster.

Roll Call: 5 Yes

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR TO THE COUNCIL**

Councilman Laureys: Shred Event April 24<sup>th</sup> low turnout, may we consider doing this once per year instead twice to save money? The Council discussed this topic.

Councilman Koster: Emergency Services and Crown point.

There was a meeting at Crown Point today about sporadic spots in the buildings.

Regarding the fire end – fire ground radios will work but the communication with the county is a problem for the PD and EMS. He stated there will need to be a study to see how this can be rectified and how an amplification system may help solve the problem. The new county system which is currently in installation mode, may be better, but cannot be tested at this time. Councilman Hathaway asked if they can continue to have temporary CO's. There has been progress on this issue.

Councilman Hathaway: Summer hours transition was handled poorly. He thought this would be enacted by the council this week. There was no notice to the public. He received a phone call from a resident who was upset about these unexpected hours. He feels there should be someone here during normal business hours. There was discussion between Mr. Blakeslee and Councilman Hathaway on this issue. He does not have a problem with this policy but how it was enacted.

Councilman Hathaway stated he would also like to discuss the speed bump issue as it is a public safety issue.

Councilman Hathaway made a motion to put two speed bumps in front of Arbolino Park, two in front of Direnzo Park and two on Allen Terrace

A motion was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Albensi.  
Roll Call: 5 Yes

**MAYORS COMMENTS**

The Mayor had no comments at this time.

**PROCLAMATION**

None presented.

**PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING**

Mr. Anthony, 24 Dell Ave., he understands the speed bump issue but did anyone take into consideration the comments of the residents. Councilman Hathaway stated we must do this because it is a public safety issue. He stated everyone wants better enforcement. Mr. Anthony wants to know why a survey was put out if the wishes of the residents are different. Councilman Hathaway stated "that was in error." Mr. Anthony would like to be sure they are placed in the proper places. He thanked the council for their time.

A Motion to Close the Meeting to the Public was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway.  
Roll Call: 5 Yes

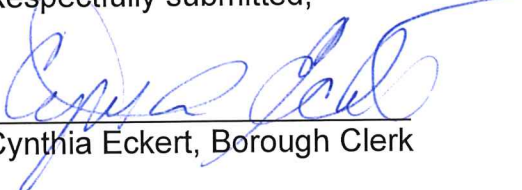
**CLOSED SESSION**

No closed session was held during this meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A Motion to Adjourn the Meeting was made by Councilman Hathaway, seconded by Councilman Albensi and passed by unanimous voice vote at 8:33.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Cynthia Eckert, Borough Clerk