

## ***BOROUGH OF NETCONG***

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG HELD FEBRUARY 9, 2023 AT THE NETCONG MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 23 MAPLE AVENUE, NETCONG, NEW JERSEY COMMENCING AT 7:30 PM.**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Nametko 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 6, 2023.
2. Publishing a notice in the Daily Record, the official newspaper  
of the Borough of Netcong on January 11, 2023 and emailing a  
copy to the Star Ledger on January 6, 2023.

#### **ROLL CALL**

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

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

None presented.

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

A Motion to Close the Meeting to the Public was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Albensi.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

#### **PROCLAMATIONS**

Eagle Scout- Caleb Joseph Clegg

The mayor invited Caleb to the front to present his proclamation. He commended Caleb for doing the project on his own. He went on to say Caleb built bat houses to be placed

in town. He gave details on his future endeavors. The mayor congratulated him. Caleb thanked the borough for all the help of the Council and employees. The mayor congratulated him again on his achievement.

*For the record, Mr. Bucco arrived at 7:32 PM.*

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **Robert Goldsmith and Paul Philips - Area in Need of Rehabilitation**

Mr. Goldsmith and Mr. Philips stepped forward to present. Mr. Goldsmith began the presentation about rehabilitation areas. He stated these give the borough great control and flexibility on what this rehabilitation will be. He gave an example of how the borough would be able to require new builds to fit into the current décor that could not be done under regular land use law. The only pitfall is you cannot do a long-term abatement and have no power of eminent domain. He provided an example of this situation. However, short term abatements are allowed. He gave further details of the benefits to the borough. He directed the Council to a handout showing the details of this subject. He gave several examples of other municipalities that have taken advantage of this avenue. Mr. Goldsmith stated an area of rehabilitation is much easier to achieve than an area of redevelopment. He stated it is a 2-step process, a study would be done first. If criteria are met a resolution would be done. Step 2 would be to create a redevelopment plan that would then go to the planning board for consistency to the master plan. He gave further details on the redevelopment agreement. He also provided details on the possible abatement and loan opportunities for the town center property owners. Mr. Philips gave examples of projects they had been involved in. One was Epstein's in Morristown and the need for a rehabilitation plan. He stated if the borough considered it for the borough center zone, they would be able to make improvements if desired but they do not have to go forward with any projects and neither would the property owners. The area of rehabilitation plan gives the borough control over the development because that mechanism would be in place and could be used if desired. Councilman Hathaway asked if this would be an advantage because it would not have to be deemed an area in need of redevelopment and property owners would only need to come to the Council for improvement. He asked if this would step on the toes of the SID. Mr. Philips asked if the SID is only downtown. Councilman Hathaway is concerned if some of the SID properties lie outside the area in need of rehabilitation, they would have issues with that. Councilman Hathaway also asked if homeowners could take advantage of this as well as business owners. Mr. Philips stated yes.

Mr. Blakeslee asked if there could be several different areas of rehabilitation (not contiguous). Councilman Hathaway stated this discussion began at the EDC meeting trying to find a way to improve our downtown. He noted that in years past there was a façade incentive for business owners. He gave several comments on this issue. He stated this would give more control for the Council and it would be an incentive for other businesses to improve their building and business. The abatement incentive is a maximum of a 5-year period. Mr. Goldsmith stated in Westfield this was an incentive for businesses. Councilman Sylvester stated what we want for this town. We are changing

the feel of the town already. How many more rentals do we want? Councilman Hathaway stated this mechanism being discussed has nothing to do with rentals. Councilman Sylvester asked, are we going to become a bedroom community? He understands the mechanism being discussed. He is not happy with the direction we are taking. There was discussion between Councilman Hathaway and Councilman Sylvester on the possible project at St. Michaels. Councilman Hathaway stated we must have development in order to be able to provide services to our residents. The mayor thanked Mr. Philips and Mr. Goldsmith for their time.

#### Borough Auditor and CFO – Bond Ordinance

Mr. Gabloff and Mrs. Dolan stepped forward. Mr. Gabloff stated while reviewing the ordinance for the fire truck there are some issues. He stated purchasing the fire truck at this time would double the debt. He brought up a spreadsheet showing the current debt. He went on to explain the details of the current ordinances that have not yet been issued and the pay schedule for the current debt. He showed how we are still paying on the truck purchased several years ago. He then proceeded to show the debt schedule including the unissued ordinances and the new fire truck. With the current model this does not fit. He stated this would cause tax increases. There is a revenue stream needed in order to afford this truck. Councilman Sylvester stated the truck will not arrive until 2025. Mr. Gabloff stated the timing is an issue. More time will be needed to work out the details. Mrs. Dolan stated regular capital improvements are not included in this worksheet. They have been working at several different scenarios to try to make this work. Councilman Hathaway asked if the future PILOT money is being considered in this model. He stated to be clear that the 34 bank PILOT money is already being used for the budget. Mr. Blakeslee stated yes. Mr. Bucco stated these are 10-year notes. Another question asked was can a bond be used? Mr. Gabloff noted a fire truck only has a value of 10 years of useful life according to the law to borrow money. There was discussion regarding this issue. Mrs. Dolan stated they would have liked to bond but it was not possible. The mayor asked what the bottom line was. Mr. Gabloff stated that to do it today it is not affordable. If the ordinance is done this month, the clock starts when you borrow the first dollar. If the first payment is needed in 2024 for the truck this will be an issue. The timing on this is very critical. Delivery would be mid to late 2025. There was further discussion on this issue of timing and timeline for deposit, and taking of delivery. Mr. Bucco asked about the lease purchase. It was stated this causes issues with the budget restraints because it comes out of the operating costs. Mrs. Dolan stated they need more time to find the best way to handle this. Mr. Bucco asked if you can take out a bond anticipation note and then use it to lease. Mr. Gabloff stated if the delivery will be late 2025 it may be possible. But they want to review carefully to be sure this will work. They still have to consider regular capital projects. Councilman Sylvester stated the reason this is on the agenda tonight is because the cost of the truck will go up in April. Councilman Still stated once the ordinance is done and the 20-day estoppel is past we must sign the contract and we are locked in. Mr. Blakeslee gave the timeline for the funding of this. Mr. Blakeslee stated he asked the CFO and auditor to come tonight to provide details on the debt situation. The mayor again asked if this ordinance can be introduced tonight. Again Mrs. Dolan stated they need to do a further study on this. Councilman Hathaway stated without additional revenue this will be a stretch. The mayor again asked if this ordinance is introduced tonight the funds

will be available to pay for this. Councilman Laureys had several questions about this subject and Mr. Gabloff responded. The mayor asked a question about the county bonds. Mrs. Dolan stated they bundled debt to save. She stated Netcong will have to be rated and should acquire an official statement. Mr. Blakeslee asked Mrs. Dolan to walk through the process for this. She stated a financial advisor should be hired to prepare all the documents needed for this long-term plan. Mr. Bucco stated the last time for long term bonds was when the new municipal building was done. Mrs. Dolan gave further comments on this. Councilman Still asked that all pertinent information be given to Mr. Blakeslee. He asked for an explanation on the changes with the cap. She explained there is a one year say on insurance, gas, pension and workers comp will have 3% outside the cap. Budgets should be cut because this will only be for 1 year. Debt service is outside the cap. Mr. Bucco stated this is how they fool the public. He stated they give money at the state level but it dribbles down to the municipality and the public ends up paying. Mr. Blakeslee stated the budget is not looking too bad. The mayor asked if trash will become a utility. It will be put in place for 2024. Mr. Blakeslee explained the trash utility timeline. There was a brief discussion about the dumpsters at the firehouses. The mayor asked if there were any other questions and thanked them for their time.

### **ORDINANCE ADOPTIONS**

1. **Ordinance 2023-1** –An Ordinance to Vacate and Extinguish Any and All Public Rights in and to West Street Located in the Borough of Netcong, County of Morris and State of New Jersey

A Motion to Read Ordinance 2023-1 by Title Only on Second Reading and a Hearing Held Thereon was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

A Motion to Close Public Hearing on Ordinance 2023-1 was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

A Motion to Adopt Ordinance 2023-1 was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

None presented

### **BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Mr. Blakeslee stated several grants have been submitted. He named each one and the amounts requested.

Judge Levine has retired and has proposed Glen Gavin be appointed as judge for Mt. Olive. A resolution is required in March to appoint him to the court. He added that we will have to appoint a new back up lead inspector who must be a contractor. New

stormwater Tier A permit requirements have been issued. A tree removal ordinance will need to be established. The mayor asked when this would take place. Mr. Blakeslee stated it must be done before the end of the year.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE REPORT  
JANUARY 2023

INSPECTION

106 ALLEN ST  
102 MAIN ST  
26 BARONE ST  
106 ALLEN ST  
102 MAIN ST – REINSPECT  
29 WILTOP — 4 UNITS  
1 WATER ST  
NETCONG HEIGHTS – 5 UNITS/CHANGE OF TENANTS  
5 BRITTON ST  
15 RAILROAD AVE  
100 STOLL ST-2 UNITS  
2 WATER ST  
8 UNION ST - 4 UNITS  
19 CHURCH ST  
8 WATER ST  
6 WATER ST  
25 CAROLYN WAY

MAINTENANCE ISSUES

5 HILLSIDE AVE – GARBAGE  
27 PROSPECT - OVERGROWN HEDGES  
3 BRITTON ST.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Finance & Insurance:                      E. Still                                      J. Sylvester

Councilman Still put his report on record:

For the month of January 2023, the Borough had a total income of \$907,730.86 as compared to \$661,900.02 in January 2022.

For the month of January 2023;

Miscellaneous Revenue Not Anticipated (MRNA):

In 2023 the Borough received \$2,897.50 compared to \$1,732.00 in 2022.

Other Licenses/Borough Clerks Fees:

The Borough received \$43,231.72 in 2023 compared to \$20,192.95 in 2022.

State Aid:

There was no state aid in either 2022 or 2023.

Grants in Aid:

There was \$167,550.74 received in Grants in Aid for 2022 and \$972.07 in 2022.

Taxes Collected:

The Borough collected \$694,050.90 in 2022 compared to \$639,003.00 in 2022.

Income Total Year to Date:

The Total Income Year to date for 2023 is \$907,730.86 as opposed to \$661,900.02 in 2022.

Economic Development:            R. Hathaway            E. Still

Councilman Hathaway provided an update on the parking lot issue for the bank property. They will be submitting a plan to the next planning board meeting. There was brief discussion on the details of this project including sidewalks.

Public Safety:                            J. Sylvester            T. Laureys  
(Police, Fire, Rescue)

Councilman Sylvester read his reports and requested that the police do a study of speeders on Flanders Rd.

Police Report:

Radar: 53  
Traffic Enforcement/Stop: 140  
Building/Property check: 115  
Total Calls for service: 748

Fire Department for the month of January 2023:

Total Calls: 10	
General Alarms: 10	
Squad Assists: 0	
Mutual Aid: 0	
Total Members: 26	Time Volunteered: 35 Hours & 10 Minutes
Drills: 4	
Total Members: 27	Time Volunteered: 94 Hours
Administrative Details: 8	
Total Members: 40	Time Volunteered: 164 Hours & 28 Minutes
TOTAL MEMBERS: 42	Total Time Volunteered: 293 Hours & 38 Minutes

**D.P.W. Monthly Report January 2023**

**Road Department:** Removed all Christmas decorations from Main St, Maple Ave, Ledgewood Ave, Borough Hall, and FH 1 Christmas Tree....Cleaned leaves and debris alongside retaining wall on Rt 206 south.... Performed weekly clean ups of curb line debris on Main and Maple....Picked up and chipped 83 Christmas Trees.....Picked up new Mason Dump truck cab and Chassis from Ciocca Ford and brought it to A&K for body and snow equipment installation.... Cold patch potholes around town....

**Water Department:** Repaired service line leak to 140 Ledgewood Ave....

**Buildings & Grounds:** Closed out Fire inspection abatements.... Mobility elevator was in to perform first bi annual service to FH 1 elevator.... Made repairs to rusted generator at FH 2....Installed no idling signs at Borough Hall

**Snow:** Performed salt runs on Jan 9th and 25th.....

**Recycling Department:** Met with Dutchman Contractors to go over Recycle Center pole barn installation details and mark outs, tentative construction date is mid to late March....

**Other:** Hired new DPW employee Andrew DiRenzo....DPW watched multiple safety training videos including new employee training....

Councilman Albensi brought up the subject of the well rehabilitation. Mr. Hess, Asst. Superintendent, license water/sewer operator stepped forward to relate details. He stated that the last rehab was done in 2018. He stated well #1 has been declining steadily. He detailed the issues with the wells. An emergency rehab was done in 2018 which brought it back up. At this point the function is declining. The course of action in this quote is the same as what has been done in the past. If anything, more aggressive is done, it may fail totally and the well would need to be shut down. He went on to give details on the necessary course of action which may need to go out to bid. He gave additional details on the quote given and changes that may be able to be done. The mayor asked in layman's terms what they will be doing. Mr. Hess gave details of the process that will be performed and how it will eat away at the minerals that are causing the low flow of water. The mayor asked if they measure what is taken out. Mr. Hess stated they will haul away the materials removed. Councilman Sylvester asked if there is a certain amount of money that can be used for emergencies. Mr. Blakeslee stated there is money in the 2023 budget for this. There was discussion on the cost. Councilman Hathaway stated this will only buy time, this well will eventually fail. The mayor asked if this is a silting problem. Mr. Hess gave an answer to this. It seems to be re-mineralization.

Councilman Still asked about PFOS. Mr. Hess stated we are good; we are at about half of the allowed amount. He said the treatment for this is charcoal and is hazardous waste when no longer usable. Councilman Albensi asked if we can set up the geologist to come.

A Motion to hire geologist to do a study for a new well was made by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Hathaway.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

Recreation: T. Morton J. Albensi

Councilman Morton noted that Kristen Polster was named vice president during the Reorganization. He also stated that there will be a St. Patrick's Day brunch at Netcong School and paint and sip in March.

Public Services: T. Laureys T. Morton  
(Human Services  
Recycling & Solid  
Waste Disposal

Councilman Laureys filed his Report

Dial a Ride for January 2023:

Days of service: 21

Miles: 942

Number of Stops: 65

Nutrition for one person: 11

Food Shopping: 34

Number of Meals on Wheels: 16

Medical Appointments: 42

Other Appointments: 20

People Using Services: 32

Cancels: 6

Denials: 7

Units: 182

Hours: 75.5

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None presented

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Appointment of David McLagan Firefighter for Fire Co. No.2

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

Roll Call: 6 Yes



## **PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR TO THE COUNCIL**

Councilman Albensi discussed Prospect St: Someone came up the one-way, Councilman Albensi almost got hit head on. A line of cones will be placed on the side of the road that is one way to encourage compliance.

Councilman Hathaway stated that there has been an issue with crossing guards and the police have done a stellar job in providing crossing guards and the police are doing a great job in this area.

## **MAYOR'S COMMENTS**

The mayor had no comments at this time.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

1. **Resolution 2023-29-** Authorizing the Award of a Contract to American Asphalt & Trucking, LLC for the Koclas Drive Road Improvement Project in the Borough of Netcong, Morris County, New Jersey.

A motion was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

2. **Resolution 2023-30-** Authorizing the Award of a Contract to Hillside Avenue Water Main Improvement Project in the Borough of Netcong, Morris County, New Jersey.

A motion was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

3. **Resolution 2023-31-** A Resolution Authorizing the Submission of An Application to The Morris County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program

A motion was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

## **ORDINANCE INTRODUCTIONS**

1. **Ordinance 2023-2-** An Ordinance Authorizing the Chief of Police to Execute an Application for A Charitable Solicitation Permit for Netcong Volunteer Fire Company No. 1's "Coin Drop" On Memorial Day Weekend and Columbus Day Weekend at The Intersections of Allen Street and Ledgewood Avenue and Main Street and Route 46 And Route 183 In the Borough of Netcong, County of Morris, State of New Jersey

A Motion to Introduce Ordinance #2023-2- and Read by Title Only was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

A Motion to Pass Ordinance #2023-2- on First Reading was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Albensi.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

2. **Ordinance 2023-3-** An Ordinance Authorizing the Police Chief to Execute an Application for A Charitable Solicitation Permit for American Legion Ambulance Corp of Stanhope/Netcong's "Coin Drop" On June 9<sup>th</sup>, June 10<sup>th</sup> 2023 and On September 8<sup>th</sup>, And September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at The Intersections of Allen Street and Ledgewood Avenue and Main Street and Route 46 In the Borough of Netcong, County of Morris, State of New Jersey

A Motion to Introduce Ordinance #2023-3- and Read by Title Only was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Albensi.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

A Motion to Pass Ordinance #2023-3- on First Reading was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Albensi.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

3. **Bond Ordinance 2023-4-** Bond Ordinance to Authorize the Acquisition of a New Pumper Fire Engine, Including Original Apparatus and Equipment, In, By and For the Borough of Netcong, In the County of Morris, State Of New Jersey, To Appropriate the Sum Of \$900,000 To Pay the Cost Thereof, 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.

Councilman Still asked if he can vote on this since he is the president of the fire department. Councilman Sylvester is also a member of the department. Mr. Bucco stated we need 4 votes. He suggests they abstain.

A Motion to Introduce Bond Ordinance #2023-4- and Read by Title Only was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Albensi.  
Roll Call: 4 Yes      Abstain: Councilmen Still and Sylvester

A Motion to Pass Bond Ordinance #2023-4- on First Reading was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Albensi.  
Roll Call: 4 Yes      Abstain: Councilmen Still and Sylvester

## **REPORTS**

A Motion to Incorporate all reports into the minutes was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway.  
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

**PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING**

A Motion to Close the Meeting to the Public was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

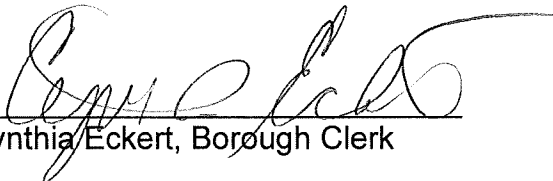
**CLOSED SESSION**

No closed session was held.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A Motion to Adjourn the Meeting was made by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Hathaway at 9:15PM.  
Roll Call: 6 Yes

Respectfully Submitted

  
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Cynthia Eckert, Borough Clerk