

BOROUGH OF NETCONG

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG HELD MAY 4, 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 Still, and Mayor Nametko. Also present was Mr. Blakeslee, Borough Administrator and Mrs. Eckert, Borough Clerk

PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING

NETCONG BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Netcong School Budget

Mrs. Walsh and Mr. Stabile stepped forward to present their budget. Mrs. Walsh thanked the Council for their time. Mrs. Dalesandro, Board President, could not be here this evening.

Mrs. Walsh described some of the accomplishments for this school year. She added that they received a grant from Rutgers University for reading. They are hoping to fill "gaps" early. This is the first normal school year since Covid. Things are going very well; there are many clubs, sports and music programs as well as regular lunch and recess time. She spoke of other improvements done including hot spots for students who do not have internet service as well as middle school elective programs. They were able to do presentations in Nashville and St Louis, Kentucky to present their success with their

programs. They have a therapy dog program and have held summer school the last 2 years. They continue to have their 2 full time nursery school classrooms with state funding. She discussed needs for next year. They are looking for an ESL or Spanish teacher to teach English to the Spanish populations. They are looking for full time security guards. Mr. Stabile reported about the financial condition of the school. He provided information regarding state aid. The school qualified for enrollment additional aid. Mrs. Walsh discussed detailed information on extraordinary aid for students who have needs that are not able to be met and must attend a different district. She gave detail on the shared services they use. They are seeking a shared service for a full-time physical therapist.

Mr. Stabile reviewed the grant and budget details. The number for grants and entitlements always fluctuates. He discussed the debt service and how some funds will be returned to the taxpayer for the debt service. He talked about their improvement plans. One of these improvements will be a new sign at the front of the building. They will be replacing a set of exterior stairs. They will also add outside storage in the back of the building. He gave details on the tax impact for residents. Mrs. Walsh provided final comments. Both speakers mentioned needs for additional funding.

Councilman Hathaway had a question about some of the budget goals and School Resource Officers. He stated he has shared with the council the school facilities assessment. In that assessment report he has not seen security cameras as a category one need. He feels they are hiring officers on sight so why do they need cameras. Councilman Hathaway stated he is glad they come to the Council to present their budget but he feels many of the needs at the school are not being tended to. One of these issues is the parking lot situation. He stated when your interface with the community is not tended to, this is an issue. He is also concerned about the keeping of the grounds. He knows a referendum is coming down the road, and he feels there needs to be consideration of what the community needs. He gave more details on the problems at the school. He feels it does not bode well to ask for more money when there are other important problems that need to be fixed. Mrs. Walsh said these comments are duly noted. Mr. Stabile stated the wall will be fixed in June as well as the repair of the stairs. They are also looking to replace the flag pole and light on the flag. He stated he has quotes to fix the worst areas in the parking lot. They will also be having someone come to take care of the poison ivy by the fence. He stated budget wise the capital budget is tight and the amount they can borrow is tight. Councilman Hathaway stated Mr. Stabile is a good administrator and some of the things he brings to the board of education is being ignored and the thought process is flawed. The mayor asked what is the enrollment adjustment that the state requires. Mrs. Walsh stated there is a formula the state uses to determine what they will fund. Mrs. Walsh stated the enrollment has increased from 281 to 303.

The mayor had a comment: the rotary has an early act group who comes and helps at the food bank and they do a great job! Mrs. Evans brings them once a month to help prepare things for the food bank. He gave details on what they do to help. He stated it is one of the best things he has seen the Rotary do. Councilman Hathaway added they were cleaning trash in town this evening. He asked about the preschool funding that will be available again. Mr. Stabile stated this is outside the budget. Councilman Laureys asked

about the cost of the security cameras and what was included in this cost. Mrs. Walsh provided the number and locations of the cameras. Councilman Laureys also asked about the 3-part time SRO's and the cost for them. Mrs. Walsh stated some comes out of the preschool budget and the rest out of the general budget. She added that is estimating on the high side. Mr. Morton asked about the type of cameras they are purchasing and are they leasing them. Mr. Stabile stated they are in a transition with their IT department. He is glad they are hiring SROs for the protection of our children. Councilman Still asked why they are not doing class 3 officers. They are using the same policy as the high school.

Mrs. Walsh mentioned she met with Mr. Blakeslee today to find out what type of building permits will be needed for these improvements and changing out the place where the dumpsters are and putting them on a concrete pad. They are also going to obtain a landscaper.

The mayor thanked them for their time. They thanked the Council for their time.

PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING

Mr. Pete Zoccolillo, represents Mt. Olive, Morris County Cubs and Indians Baseball Field. He is a high school coach who has been doing this for 17 years. He was a professional baseball player. He has been speaking with Mr. Blakeslee and attended the recreation meeting last month. He would like to do a partnership with recreation and the Morris County cubs. He stated they have played on this field about 10 years ago. He stated they are willing to redo the field and redo the clay, trim up baselines and till the field so it is playable. It would be a lot of time and money to make this field nice. In return they would like to have a long-term contract for the use of the field. He would be interested in a 5-6-year contract to use the field. He gave further details on the improvements they are willing to do. The mayor asked if they would need the field house. He stated 'no,' they could use porta johns. Mr. Morton stated the recreation committee is ok with this. The only other group using the field is soccer. He stated because this is a 5 year deal the recreation committee would like to get approval from the Council. There was further discussion on using Arbolino Field as well and the reason for using Indians. Councilman Hathaway asked how many Netcong residents are in this club. This is a private organization. He stated there will not be a lot of homeruns done at Arbolino Park. Councilman Hathaway asked why we would be reluctant on this. Councilman Morton will take care of the scheduling of the fields. Mr. Blakeslee feels this would be good for the town and the fields as they would then be used. He would make sure everything is done appropriately. Mr. Zoccolillo says this club is very professional and asked what the timeline will be. Mr. Blakeslee will try to get this prepared for next week's agenda. They will play 3 seasons per year.

A Motion to approve Mr. Blakeslee to move forward and complete an MOU was made by Councilman Morton and seconded by Councilman Albensi.
Roll Call: 5 Yes

Ms. Kathleen Walsh, the Netcong School Superintendent wanted to clarify that they have 13 choice students, not 33.

A Motion to close the public portion of the meeting was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Morton.
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 May 11, 2023.

1. **Minutes** – April 6, 2023
2. **Minutes** – April 13, 2023

A Motion was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Morton to approve the minutes.
Roll Call: 5 Yes

3. Introduction of the 2023 Municipal Budget

- a. **Ordinance Introduction – Ordinance 2023-6** - to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank

This ordinance was carried to the May 11th meeting.

- b. **Resolution 2023--** Introduction of the 2023 Municipal Budget

This resolution was carried to the May 11th meeting.

4. Public Hearing and Adoption of SID Budget

Public Hearing SID Budget

To be carried to the May 11th meeting.

Resolution 2023- – Approving the 2023 Budget for the Special Improvement District of the Borough of Netcong

To be carried to the May 11th meeting.

5. **Capital Ordinance Adoption - Ordinance 2023- 5** CAPITAL ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG, IN THE COUNTY OF MORRIS, NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASING OF A VEHICLE AND RELATED EQUIPMENT FOR THE NETCONG POLICE DEPARTMENT, APPROPRIATING THEREFOR THE SUM OF \$63,000 FROM THE RESERVE FOR POLICE OUTSIDE DUTY.

To be carried to the May 11th meeting.

6. Correspondence –None presented

7. Old Business – Review of Solid Waste and Recycling Ordinance

Mr. Blakeslee provided details of the draft ordinance and budget for this. The only undetermined factor is the tipping fees, which so far is less than our previous carrier. He is hoping to have it introduced next week and approved in June. He would like to start collecting the fees in October of this year. Netcong is in the process of creating ads to send out to residents to explain this will be coming out of the regular budget.

Councilman Hathaway asked for details about the billing process and how to establish this utility. Mr. Blakeslee explained it will be a utility bill just like water/sewer. If we are doing a utility, we do not need to get DCA approval. If it was an authority, it would. The mayor suggested we have a public meeting for the residents regarding this. Mr. Blakeslee stated there has been a large increase in utility budgets across the state with the major increases in solid waste collection fees. Councilman Laureys asked if the quarters will always be paid in advance. Mr. Blakeslee stated 'yes.'

8. New Business- 100% Disabled Veteran Ordinance- Time Limit on Tax Refunds

There was discussion about the differences and reasons for having this ordinance. Mr. Blakeslee spoke with our tax assessor to review the sample ordinance and the assessor felt this was a good ordinance. Councilman Hathaway is suggesting going back to the date of the letter to do the refunds. The Council agreed.

9. Resolution 2023- 45 - Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Professional Services to Perform Lead-Based Paint Inspection for the Borough

A Motion was made to approve this resolution by Councilman Albensi and seconded by Councilman Morton.

Roll Call: 4 Yes No: Councilman Laureys

10. Resolution 2023-46– Approval to Submit a Local Transportation Projects Fund Grant Application and Execute a Grant Contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the Jenny Lind Street Sidewalk Improvement Project

Mr. Blakeslee provided details on this resolution.

A Motion was made to approve this resolution by Councilman Albensi and seconded by Councilman Morton.

Roll Call: 5 Yes

11. Ordinance Introduction – None presented

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR TO THE COUNCIL

The Council President announced that he is happy with street sweeping.

Councilman Hathaway offered that we will be going forward with the Rock-Solid process for the downtown improvements. He feels we need to do the traffic study soon, utilizing the Highlands Council for this. Mr. Blakeslee will contact the Highlands Council to determine the process. Councilman Hathaway stated this will be outside the bidding process because we will be using our own professionals. He provided details of the process.

Councilman Morton announced that on May 21, the recreation committee will be having a bus trip to the casino in PA. So far there are 21 people signed up.

MAYORS COMMENTS

In June, we will be having a resident turning 100 and we will have a proclamation for her.

The mayor also wanted to remind the Council to check out the budget.

PROCLAMATION

None presented this evening

PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING

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

Roll Call: 5 Yes

CLOSED SESSION

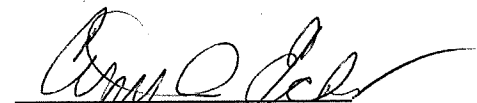
None

ADJOURNMENT

A Motion to Adjourn the meeting was made by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Hathaway at 8:41 PM.

Roll Call: 5 Yes

Respectfully submitted:


Cynthia Eckert, Borough Clerk