

**BOROUGH OF NETCONG
MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
October 12, 2023**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG HELD OCTOBER 12, 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 Administrator 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, Councilman Sylvester, and Mayor Nametko. Also present was Mr. Blakeslee, Borough Administrator.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None presented

BEST PRACTICES REPORT

Mr. Blakeslee reported that every year all municipalities have to produce a best practices report. Netcong scored 839 which was a good score.

PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING

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

Roll Call: 6 Yes

ORDINANCE ADOPTIONS

1. **Bond Ordinance 2023-14** - AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNED BY THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG, MORRIS COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, NOT REQUIRED FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:12-13, ET SEQ.

A Motion to Read Bond Ordinance 2023-14 by Title Only on Second Reading and a Hearing Held Thereon by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Morton.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

A Motion to Close Public Hearing was made by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Albensi.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

A Motion to Adopt Bond Ordinance 2023-14 was made by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Morton.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

2. **Ordinance 2023-15** - AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNED BY THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG, MORRIS COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, NOT REQUIRED FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:12-13, ET SEQ.

A Motion to Read Ordinance 2023-15 by Title Only on Second Reading and a Hearing Held Thereon was made by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Sylvester.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

A Motion to Close Public Hearing was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Still.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

A Motion to Adopt Ordinance 2023-15 was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Still.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

3. **Ordinance 2023-16** - AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 194 "LAND DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES" OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG.

A Motion to Read Ordinance 2023-16 by Title Only on Second Reading and a Hearing Held Thereon was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.
Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

A Motion to Close Public Hearing was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.
Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

A Motion to Adopt Ordinance 2023-16 was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.

Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

4. **Ordinance 2023-17-** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 252, "TAXATION," OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG TO INCLUDE A NEW ARTICLE CONCERNING CANNABIS SALES TAXATION.

A Motion to Read Ordinance 2023-17 by Title Only on Second Reading and a Hearing Held Thereon was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.

Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

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

Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

A Motion to Adopt Ordinance 2023-17 was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.

Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

5. **Ordinance 2023-18** - AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING CHAPTER 122, "CANNABIS SALES, USE AND LICENSURE," OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG FOR THE LICENSURE OF CANNABIS ESTABLISHMENTS AND REGULATION OF CANNABIS SALES AND USE.

A Motion to Read Ordinance 2023-18 by Title Only on Second Reading and a Hearing Held Thereon was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.

Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

Comment from the public:

Michael Downing objected to the way the ordinances limited the number of retail cannabis licenses to just one in town. The mayor noted how the ordinance was 'determined.' A brief discussion among the Council ensued.

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

Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

A Motion to Adopt Ordinance 2023-18 was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.

Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

6. **Bond Ordinance 2023-19** - BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE UNDERTAKING OF IMPROVEMENTS TO JENNY LIND STREET IN, BY AND FOR THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG, IN THE COUNTY OF MORRIS, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$312,500 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO APPROPRIATE A STATE GRANT, 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.

A Motion to Read Bond Ordinance 2023-19 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 A Motion to Read Bond Ordinance 2023-19 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 Adopt Bond Ordinance 2023-19 A Motion to Read Bond Ordinance 2023-19 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

CORRESPONDENCE

None was presented.

BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Councilman Hathaway had a question about the traffic light at Maple and Stoll Street. He wanted to know when the Council gave approval for it as he thought they were supposed to approve some drawings first. The rest of the Council stated it was approved by most last year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance & Insurance: E. Still J. Sylvester

For the month of September 2023, the Borough had a total income of \$280,152.57 as compared to \$383,817.69 in September 2023.

For the month of September 2023:

Miscellaneous Revenue Not Anticipated (MRNA):

In 2023 the Borough received \$2,495.50 compared to \$2,683.60 in 2022.

Other Licenses/Borough Clerks Fees:

The Borough received \$31,519.65 in 2023 compared to \$22,570.64 in 2022.

State Aid:

The Borough received \$130,967.65 in state aid in 2023 and \$123,853.11 in 2022.

Grants in Aid:

There was \$3,141.62 awarded for Grants in Aid in 2023 and \$136,770.00 awarded in 2022.

Taxes Collected:

The Borough collected \$112,028.15 in 2023 compared to \$97,940.34 in 2022.

Income Total Year to Date:

The Total Income Year to date for 2023 is \$9,044,863.59 as opposed to \$8,977,350.80 in 2022.

Economic Development: R. Hathaway E. Still

Councilman Hathaway reported that there was a meeting with the current owner of the Compact property, which is that property on the train station parking lot behind Main Street. They provided us with drawings which everybody would be pleased with. They're not asking for any assistance and are willing to work within the current zoning, so they don't need any variances. They're not going to change the building at all. The conceptual drawings appeared tasteful. Regardless of what they are proposing, we won't have a say about it because they don't need any variances.

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

Fire Department

18 Calls
10 General Alarms
18 Mutual Aid Assists
24 Total Volunteers
79 Hours And 1 Minute Total Time
2 Drills
5 Administrative Drills
48 Members Volunteered
192 hrs

Fire Prevention

32 Total Inspections
26 Violations
12 Safety Permits
\$7,000 Penalty Money Issued
\$1,400 Penalty Money
4 Penalties Issued

5 Follow Ups with the Fire Department

Netcong Police Department

770 Calls for Service

57.3 hours for the Radar Log

59 Interactions

66 Motor Vehicle Summonses Written

Ambulance Corp.

61 Total Calls

39 Patients

28 Hospital Trips

918 Miles

289.12 Hours

Dept. of Public

Works & Utilities:

J. Albensi

R. Hathaway

Road Department: Picked up 20 cy of grass and 16 cy of brush....Moved recyclables from the attic for shred event at Netcong Recycle Center...

Water Department: Performed water line service repair at 25 College Rd....Repaired a water line service at 12 Water St....Repaired a damaged water box at 23 Rt 206....Repaired a damaged water box at 2 Post Rd....Support Gray Supply during gas main installations with mark outs and repairs....Prepared notifications for October hydrant flushing...

Buildings & Grounds: Cut grass at all Borough properties....Took down American flags for the season....Accurate Pest control in for monthly treatment
We pumped two million, 844 thousand, six hundred gallons more this year than we did in 22. Well one has been rehabbed and is online. Tom, the assistant superintendent, stated that the well rehab came out better than expected. He provided additional details about the well situations in Netcong. There was some discussion by the Council after receiving this information.

Recreation:

T. Morton

J. Albensi

- The Halloween house judging will be on October 25th after the recreation meeting.
- We are working on the parade that will be on December 3rd.
- The first Sunday is when we will have the tree lighting.
- We're are getting ready to purchase the playground equipment for the park

Public Services:

T. Laureys

T. Morton

(Human Services

Recycling & Solid

Waste Disposal

Dial A Ride, September 2023

20 Days of Service

995 Miles.

87 Stops

12 Nutrition for One Person

32 For Food, Shopping,

14 Meals on Wheels And

61 Medical Appointments

28 Other Appointments

32 People Using Services

6 Cancellations of Service.

0 Denials of Service

247 Miles

82.25 Hours

OLD BUSINESS

None presented.

NEW BUSINESS

None Presented

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR TO THE COUNCIL

Councilman Sylvester wanted to talk about numbers of students regarding the St. Michaels Project. He felt there were some numbers being thrown around that were inaccurate. The numbers of students from Netcong Heights are now at an historic low. Councilman Sylvester continued by providing a very thorough detail of numbers of students along with financial figures and housing structure from all sections of Netcong and one area in Hopatcong. He commented on forecasting and how the numbers can be wrong. He stated that just thinking logically and rationally, the numbers might be more accurate. Members of the Council discussed this topic for several minutes discussing their take on the numbers and financial projections for the pilot.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

The mayor added his comments regarding the 'privilege of the floor' discussion above, which included the texts he gets about picking up the trash and that a building is not sinking. This information was spread on social media.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolution 2023-91- To Appoint DPW Laborer – Zachary Leader

A Motion to approve this resolution was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

2. Resolution 2023-92- To Appoint Water/Sewer Clerk – Debbie Mai

A Motion to approve this resolution was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

3. Resolution 2023 -93 – Authorizing the Purchase of Playground Equipment for DiRenzo Park

A Motion to approve this resolution was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Still.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTIONS

1. Ordinance 2023-20 - AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 194 "LAND DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES" AND CHAPTER 98 "ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES" OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG AND SETTING DISTANCE REQUIREMENTS BETWEEN ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE AND RETAIL CANNABIS LICENSED PREMISES.

Mr. Ruitenbergh, representing borough attorney provided details regarding what this ordinance entailed for the Council.

A Motion to Introduce Ordinance #2023-20 and Read by Title Only was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway.
Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

A Motion to Pass Ordinance #2023-20 on First Reading was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Sylvester.
Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Laureys

REPORTS

A Motion to Incorporate All Reports into the Minutes was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman 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 Laureys.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING

Mr. Ben Dellamo, 123 Ledgewood Ave. Netcong had comments regarding the adopted and introduced ordinances related to cannabis regulations. He provided documentation along with explanations of areas he was concerned about. He felt there was an assault on his liquor license. He stated this made his license "useless." Mr. Dellamo and Councilman Sylvester argued about this statement. Mr. Dellamo mentioned his intent to pursue his concerns further. The Council and Mr Dellamo continued this discussion for several minutes. Mr. Dellamo did make an apology to the Council for some of his heated comments, noting he was corrected by the group discussion.

Mrs. Michele Ruocco, 75/35 Main Street, thanked Mr. Blakeslee for his letter, then spoke about a situation developing with four neighboring property owners and a conflict with access to the rear of several main street properties. She did thank them for reaching out earlier.

Mr. John Parks -26 Hilts Lane -spoke in regard to the status of Hilts Lane and its private status. Mr. Blakeslee discussed the situation with him. Mr. Ruitenberg provided clarity regarding the ordinances. The Mayor and Councilman Hathaway provided additional information for Mr. Parks.

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

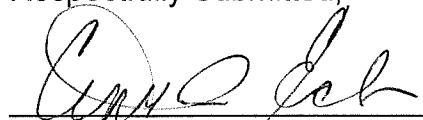
CLOSED SESSION

No Closed Session this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

A Motion to Adjourn the Meeting Was made by Councilman Still and seconded by Councilman Hathaway at 9:02PM.
Roll Call: 6 Yes

Respectfully Submitted,


Cynthia Eckert, Borough Clerk