

**BOROUGH OF NETCONG
MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 8, 2024**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG HELD AUGUST 8, 2024 AT THE NETCONG MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 23 MAPLE AVENUE, NETCONG, NEW JERSEY COMMENCING AT 7:30 PM.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Still 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 5, 2024.
2. Publishing a notice in the Daily Record, the official newspaper
of the Borough of Netcong on January 10, 2024 and emailing a
copy to the Star Ledger on January 5, 2024.

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None presented

PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING

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

Roll Call: 6 Yes

ORDINANCE ADOPTIONS

Ordinance 2024-20- An Ordinance Authorizing The Execution of a Tax Exemption Agreement With Rock Solid Built LLC For The Mixed Use Residential And Commercial Development Pursuant To The Five-Year Exemption And Abatement Law, N.J.S.A. 40a:21-1 Et Seq.

A Motion to Read Ordinance 2024-20- by Title Only on Second Reading and a Hearing Held Thereon was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Nametko.

Roll Call: 4 Yes No: Councilmen Albensi, Laureys, Morton

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

Roll Call: 5 Yes No: Councilmen Laureys

A Motion to Adopt Ordinance 2024-20 was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Nametko.

Roll Call: 4 Yes No: Councilmen Albensi, Laureys, Morton

CORRESPONDENCE

None Presented

BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Update on Allen Terrace: New contractor will be in town at the end of October to remill and pave. Mr. Blakeslee reviewed the progress of the letter from the borough engineer for 33 Allen St. Mr. Blakeslee will be hand delivering this letter and his escrow statement to settle this matter.

Rental Registration

July 2024 Report

43 rental inspections done

3 COH resale inspections done

Year-to-Date Report

476 rental units issued (216 non-apartment complex units issued)

511 rental units in-progress* (51 non-apartment complex units in-progress)

11 rental units never responded to 3rd requests. (all non-apartment buildings) (6 may be owner occupied and have not yet clarified with us)

8 Summonses sent out for failure to submit rental registration; 6 owners pled guilty; 2 owners didn't respond.

3 COH resales issued

*in-progress means that they have either been inspected and correcting issues, missing information, currently scheduled, or are currently under construction/renovation and spoken to us on their status.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance & Insurance: J. Nametko J. Sylvester

Councilman Nametko read the finance report. He also read highlights of the administrators report.

For the month of July 2024, the Borough had a total income of \$1,719,515.84 as compared to \$1,662,003.84 in 2023.

Miscellaneous Revenue Not Anticipated (MRNA):

In 2024 the Borough received \$7,126.98 compared to \$4,059.00 in 2023.

Other Licenses/Borough Clerk's Fees:

The Borough received \$27,258.01 in 2024 compared to \$31,443.47 in 2023.

State Aid:

There was \$9,477.00 received in both 2024 and in 2023.

Grants in Aid:

There was \$600.00 received in 2024 for Grants in Aid and nothing was received in 2023.

Taxes Collected:

The Borough collected \$1,602,552.30 in 2024 compared to \$1,584,563.88 in 2023.

Water and Sewer Utility:

The Borough collected \$44,078.68 in 2024 compared to \$32,060.49 in 2023.

Solid Waste Utility:

There was \$28,422.87 collected this past month.

Total Current Fund Year to Date:

The total Current Fund Income Year to date for 2024 is \$8,838,251.71 as opposed to \$8,385,063.62 in 2023.

Total Water and Sewer Utility to Date:

The total Water and Sewer Utility Income Year to date for 2024 is \$826,891.48 as opposed to \$844,897.58 collected in 2023.

Total Solid Waste Utility to Date:

The Solid Waste Utility collected Year to date is \$147,788.04.

Total of all Funds to Date:

Total collected from all funds Year to date is \$7,118,735.87 in 2024 compared to \$6,723,059.78 in 2023.

Economic Development: R. Hathaway J. Nametko

Councilman Hathaway stated 'Great news: there is nothing new.' All applications other than Rock Solid are stagnant at this time.

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

Councilman Sylvester read his reports. He highlighted that the Netcong Police seized 3/4th pound of cocaine and made the appropriate arrests. He also reported that Fire Chief Bock has been deployed to North Carolina with NJ Task Force One which is the Urban Search and Rescue Team.

Police Department

Selective Enforcement Traffic: 40

Radar: 96

Traffic Enforce/Stop: 165

Building/Property Check: 207

Total Calls: 823

The following is a list of all activities for Netcong Fire Department for the month of July, 2024.

Total Calls: 9

General Alarms: 97

Mutual Aid: 2

Total Members: 21

Time Volunteered: 22 Hours and 22 Minutes

Drills: 8

Total Members: 32

Time Volunteered: 164 Hours

Administrative Details: 7

Total Members: 36

Time Volunteered: 178 Hours

Monthly Total:

36 Members

364 Hours 22 Minutes

Ambulance Corps:

Total Calls: 61

Total Patients: 46

Total Hospital Trips: 33

Miles Traveled: 1,113

Hours Volunteered: 296 hours, 55 minutes

Fire Prevention

Total Inspections:18

Violations Found:38

Permits Issued: 5

Penalties Issued: 2, collected \$2500

Administration: 6

Bureau Monthly Hours: 43

Dept. of Public

Works & Utilities:

J. Albensi

R. Hathaway

Councilman Albensi read the DPW report. Councilman Hathaway asked about a sewage flow report. Councilman Sylvester stated it will be available next month. There was a brief discussion on this issue.

Road Department: Picked up 24 cy of grass and 16 cy of brush....Cut back overgrown stop signs....Knocked down weeds near flower pots across from ShopRite....Made repair to fire lane depression on Water St....

Sewer Department: cleared a sewer lateral at 11 Locust...

Buildings & Grounds: Filled up water pots twice and watered other areas twice a week....Performed weekly cutting of Borough properties....Weeded welcome to Netcong signs....Cut back brush and overgrowth at the recycle center....

Other: Provided support for St Cesario fireworks with delivery and removal of barricades and light towers....Assisted with weed compaction at the weed harvester dumpster....Employees attended a mandatory fall protection awareness class....

Water Report: pumped 4,336,500 gallons less than in 2023. The levels look where they should be.

Recreation:

T. Morton

J. Albensi

Councilman Morton reported that tomorrow night was supposed to be Taylor Swift Night in the park which may be rained out. National Night is rescheduled for this coming Tuesday. Plus, they are working on Netcong Day Sept. 1

Public Services:

T. Laureys

T. Morton

(Human Services

Recycling & Solid

Waste Disposal)

Councilman Laureys read the garbage and recycle reports and Dial a Ride Report. Councilman Sylvester asked if there is a way to get a breakdown on the monthly balance sheet on the garbage and recycle collections. There was a brief discussion on this issue.

Mr. Blakeslee provided detailed information regarding the dollar amount collected and the costs expended.

Dial A Ride Report for July

Days of Service:20

Miles:1051

Of Stops75:

Nutrition: for 1 person :13

Food Shopping:39

of Meals on Wheels:10

Medical Appointments: 42

Other Appointments:23

People Using Services:32

Cancels:7

Denials:0

Units:210

Hours:86

For the month of July there was 73.49 tons of garbage picked up in town. that included 33 bulk items that were also picked up during the month. Total Income year to date is \$176,210.91 and total expenses year to date is \$143,227.32

OLD BUSINESS

None presented.

NEW BUSINESS

Social Affair Permit for Netcong Day: Hilltop Fire Co. #2

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

Roll Call: 5 Yes Abstain: Councilman Sylvester

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR TO THE COUNCIL

The Council President had nothing to report at this time.

Councilman Albensi asked what was happening with the Firehouse parking lot. Councilman Hathaway gave details on the related meeting. Nothing has been heard back yet. Councilman Albensi asked for details on this plan. Councilman Hathaway stated the tree and memorial may be moved to make more parking space. He gave further detail on the discussions from the meeting. Councilman Laureys asked about the cost of the removal of the tree. Mr. Blakeslee stated there is over \$300,000.00 available for this project. Mrs. Albensi asked if we could still decorate this tree for the holiday parade.

Councilman Hathaway recalled previous discussions about the well property on Rt. 206. There was an offer of 1.5 million dollars made for this property. This had been held back because of the bid process. The mayor stated if someone buys this property it would need to be subdivided. Mr. Blakeslee asked if it would be advantageous to subdivide the property first. Councilman Hathaway said a 99-year lease might be advantageous. He feels we are missing an opportunity. There was discussion among the Council on the possibilities. Councilman Sylvester asked why not everyone has been involved in this decision. This is why Councilman Hathaway has brought this up tonight. There was further discussion on this issue among the Council. Mr. Blakeslee stated this is an interesting proposal. The mayor stated we will have Mr. Bryce discuss this lease proposal with Mr. Bucco. Mr. Blakeslee asked Mr. Brice what a subdivision would cost in this situation.

Councilman Hathaway was concerned about what happened at last week's meeting during the public portion. He would like to see the borough establish a decorum policy and have it available at the public meetings. There was brief discussion among the Council on this subject. Councilman Laureys stated he is all for free speech, but they should not be threatened. Councilman Hathaway is concerned about the racist statements that were entered into the public forum. Mr. Laureys is concerned about free speech. There will be a closed session on this subject this evening.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

The Mayor had no comment at this time.

PROCLAMATIONS

None presented.

RESOLUTIONS

1. **RESOLUTION 2024-94** - A Resolution of The Borough of Netcong, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Approving Change Order No. 2 To The Contract With Innovational Construction And Design, Inc. In The Amount Of \$2,000 For Replacement of Two Exterior Doors

Councilman Laureys asked why these doors needed to be replaced. There was a brief discussion regarding the issues with the doors.

A Motion was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Morton.
Roll Call: 5 Yes No: Councilman Laureys

2. **Resolution 2024-95-** Authorizing the Person-to-Person, Place-to-Place Transfer of Liquor License No. 1428-044-008-005 from Motion Liquors, LLC to Netcong Liquors, LLC

There was a brief discussion about this resolution. It was suggested that a hearing will need to be established.

A Motion made to table this resolution by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Morton.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

3. **Resolution 2024-96-** A Resolution To Award A Contract To AKRF For Trail Planning And Design Services.

Councilman Laureys asked what this resolution covers. He is concerned about the cost. Councilman Hathaway provided information regarding the cost and details on this project. He stated we have been discussing this since before the pandemic. He feels we need to get moving on this or it will not get accomplished. Councilman Sylvester explained this will lead to getting grants. Councilman Hathaway gave further explanation on this. Councilman Nametko gave several comments on this. There are certain steps needed to obtain grants. There was further discussion on this subject. Councilman Laureys asked about the contractor. Councilman Hathaway provided background details of the contractor. He stated that we are getting the best with this relationship. Mr. Blakeslee provided additional information about this planning and design firm.

A Motion was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Morton.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTIONS

1. Ordinance 2024-21 – Amending Chapter 217, "Parks", Section 9 "Acts Prohibited" And Section 10, "Hours of Operation" of The Code of The Borough of Netcong, To Prohibit Dogs In The Borough Parks And Revise The Hours of Operation.

Councilman Hathaway asked the Council to table this ordinance. He feels this needs to be stated more clearly. He included the reasoning for his opinion.

The mayor asked how the Council wants this worded.

A Motion to Table this Ordinance was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Sylvester.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

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 Nametko and seconded by Councilman Sylvester.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

PUBLIC PORTION OF MEETING

Mr. Matthew Eddy, 25 Flanders Rd., is concerned about the Quick Stop as it is not well maintained.

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

Roll Call: 6 Yes

CLOSED SESSION

A Motion to go into Closed Session was made by Councilman Sylvester and seconded by Councilman Hathaway at 8:22PM.

RESOLUTION

Whereas, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting under certain circumstances; and

Whereas, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Netcong, in the County of Morris and State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from the remaining portion of this meeting.
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:

Attorney Client Privilege: **Legal Advice**

3. As nearly as can now be ascertained, the matter or matters to be discussed at this time will be disclosed to the public when such matters are resolved.

The Council came out of closed session and resumed the regular meeting at 8:31PM.

ADJOURNMENT

A Motion to Adjourn the Meeting was made by Councilman Hathaway and seconded by Councilman Sylvester at 8:31PM.

Roll Call: 6 Yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia Eckert, Borough Clerk

ORDINANCE 2024-20

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A TAX EXEMPTION AGREEMENT WITH ROCK SOLID BUILT LLC FOR THE MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT PURSUANT TO THE FIVE-YEAR EXEMPTION AND ABATEMENT LAW, N.J.S.A. 40A:21-1 ET SEQ.

WHEREAS, pursuant to P.L.1991, c.441 (N.J.S.A. 40A:21-1 et seq.), known as the “Five-Year Exemption and Abatement Law,” the Borough of Netcong is authorized to grant an exemption or exemption and abatement of real estate taxes for certain improvements and new construction of residential and commercial properties in areas in need of rehabilitation within the Borough; and

WHEREAS, Rock Solid Built LLC (“Applicant”) has applied for a tax agreement providing for a five-year exemption of real estate taxes with respect to the construction of a mixed use residential and commercial development consisting of a ground floor retail space of approximately 6,280 square feet and an inclusionary affordable housing residential density of 50 total residential units, with forty-two (42) market rate and eight (8) affordable housing units, which affordable units are comprised of two (2) one-bedroom units; four (4) two-bedroom units; and two (2) three-bedroom units, on lands that are shown and designated on the official tax maps of the Borough of Netcong as Lots 29, 20, 31, 32 and 33 in Block 15 (the “Project”), and the Borough Council has reviewed the descriptions, plans, drawings, and other materials submitted by the Applicant; and

WHEREAS, upon review of the application materials, the Borough Council has determined that it is appropriate to approve a tax agreement with Applicant for the Project, on the terms stated herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Netcong, County of Morris and State of New Jersey as follows:

Section 1. Pursuant to the authority granted under Article VIII, Section I, paragraph 6 of the New Jersey Constitution, and the Five-Year Exemption and Abatement Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:21-1 et seq., this Ordinance authorizes a tax exemption agreement with respect to the Project.

Section 2. The Tax Agreement appended hereto and incorporated herein by reference is hereby approved, allowing for a five (5) year tax exemption for the Project on the terms set forth therein.

Section 3. The mayor is authorized to execute on behalf of the Borough the Tax Agreement substantially in the form attached hereto.

Section 4. Upon adoption of this Ordinance and execution of the Tax Agreement, a certified copy of this Ordinance and the Financial Agreement shall be transmitted to the Department of Community Affairs, Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

Section 5. The Tax Agreement herein authorized shall be subject to all requirements of the Five-Year Exemption and Abatement Law, and all applicable federal, State and local laws and regulations on pollution control, worker safety, discrimination in employment, housing provision, zoning, planning and building code requirements.

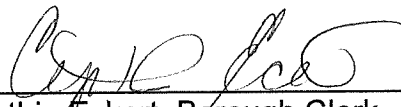
Section 6. For purposes of this Ordinance, any capitalized terms not defined herein shall have the meanings set forth in the Five-Year Exemption and Abatement Law.

Notice of Adoption of Ordinance

The foregoing Ordinance was adopted for first reading by the Borough Council of the Borough of Netcong, New Jersey, on July 11, 2024 and ordered published, and will be further considered before final passage at a public hearing on August 8, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. at the Borough Council Chambers, 23 Maple Avenue, Netcong, New Jersey. A copy of this Ordinance has been posted on the bulletin board upon which public notices are customarily posted on in the Borough Hall of the Borough of Netcong, and a copy (at no charge) is available up to and including the time of such meeting to the members of the public of the Borough who shall request such copies, at the Office of the Borough Clerk in said Borough Hall in Netcong, New Jersey.

Borough of Netcong

ATTEST:



Cynthia Eckert, Borough Clerk

By:



Elmer Still, Mayor

Introduced: 7/12/24

Adopted: 8/8/24

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF NETCONG, COUNTY OF MORRIS, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, APPROVING CHANGE ORDER NO. 2 TO THE CONTRACT WITH INNOVATIONAL CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,000 FOR REPLACEMENT OF TWO EXTERIOR DOORS

WHEREAS, it is the recommendation of the Public Works Superintendent and the Borough Administrator to replace two exterior doors to storage areas at the Arbolino Park restroom building; and,

WHEREAS, the current contractor renovating the restrooms has indicated that he can replace the doors at a cost not to exceed \$2,000, when considering a credit of \$3,000 for the Borough choosing not to install electronic locks; and,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Netcong, in the County of Morris, and State of New Jersey that the nature of the changes as described in the attached Change Order No. 2, dated July 29, 2024 for the contract entitled, Arbolino Park Restroom Project, be and the same are hereby approved, and the Borough Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to execute said Change Order on behalf of the Borough.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that said contract shall be amended to reflect an increase in the amount of \$2,000 for the installation of equipment as set forth in the attached Change Order recommendation.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

BOROUGH OF NETCONG

By:

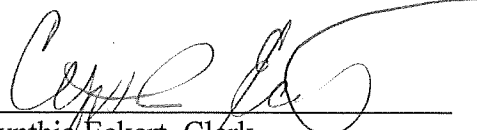


Elmer Still, Mayor

Dated:

CERTIFICATION

I, Cynthia Eckert, Clerk of the Borough of Netcong, do hereby certify that the foregoing to be a true copy of a Resolution adopted by the Borough at a meeting held on August 8, 2024.


Cynthia Eckert, Clerk

**A RESOLUTION TO AWARD A CONTRACT TO AKRF FOR TRAIL
PLANNING AND DESIGN SERVICES.**

WHEREAS, the Borough of Netcong is planning work to improve numerous trails throughout the Borough including but not limited to the Morris Canal Greenway Trail; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Netcong has a desire to obtain the services of design and permitting from a special engineer; and

WHEREAS, the Borough has received two proposals following a competitive contracting process; and

WHEREAS, AKRF is the low bidder, and has been determined to be qualified following an interview on July 31, 2024; and


WHEREAS, the Borough Council wishes to award the contract for trail design and permitting services to AKRF.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Netcong, in the County of Morris, and State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Contract for design and permitting services is hereby awarded to AKRF of 140 West Main Street, High Bridge, NJ 08829.
2. Any and all Borough officials are hereby authorized to take whatever actions may be necessary to implement the terms of this Resolution.
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

BOROUGH OF NETCONG

By:


Elmer M. Still, Mayor

Dated: 8/9/24

CERTIFICATION

I, Cynthia Eckert, Clerk of the Borough of Netcong, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of a Resolution adopted by the Borough at a meeting held on August 8, 2024.


Cynthia Eckert, Clerk