

**MINUTES
WOOLWICH TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 18, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Craig Frederick at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Frederick made the following statement:

The December 18, 2023 meeting of the Woolwich Township Committee is being called to order. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Roll Call: Matthias: PRESENT Minhas: PRESENT Nocentino: PRESENT
Callahan: PRESENT Frederick: PRESENT

Also present on the dais were Solicitor DeMarcanonio, Deputy Clerk Mignogna and Administrator/Clerk DiBella.

Those present saluted the American Flag.

Deputy Mayor Callahan moved for a consent agenda for resolutions R-2023-259 through and including R-2023-266, Committeewoman Matthias seconded. All were in favor.

R-2023-259 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Making an Appointment to the Position of Deputy Police Chief

R-2023-260 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Making an Appointment to the Position of Captain

R-2023-261 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Making an Appointment to the Position of Lieutenant

R-2023-262 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Making an Appointment to the Position of Detective

R-2023-263 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Making an Appointment to the Position of Sergeant

R-2023-264 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Making an Appointment to the Position of Corporal

R-2023-265 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Making an Appointment to the Position of Corporal

R-2023-266 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Authorizing the Hiring of Matthew Motto to the Position of 9th Class Patrolman within the Woolwich Township Police Department

Deputy Mayor Callahan moved to adopt resolutions R-2023-259 through and including R-2023-266. Committeewoman Minhas seconded.

Roll Call: Matthias: YES, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: YES, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES

Mayor Frederick read from the Book of Galatians 5:22 which reads "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith" stating that these attributes are what Officers demonstrate day in and day out. He then administered the Oath of Office to:

Patrolmen Marino, Motto and Oullette;
Deputy Chief Daniels, Captain Verrilli, Lt. Beckett, Detective Rucker, Sergeant Agresta, Cpl. Sturgis and Cpl. Petroski.

Chief Morgan noted that it is a historic night, and thanked the Committee for their unwavering support.

Mayor Frederick called a recess at 6:43 p.m.

The meeting reopened at 6:50 p.m.

Committeewoman Minhas moved to open the meeting to public comment. Committeeman Nocentino seconded. All were in favor.

Henry May, residing at 38 Willow Pond Court approached the Committee as to the warehouse construction at Oak Grove and Rt. 322, voicing his concerns as to truck traffic impacts, trailer parking near wetlands, turns from Oak Grove Road and appealed to the Committee to not approve any further warehouse projects.

Elizabeth Benjaminson, 33 Willow Pond Court agreed with Mr. May and voiced her further concerns as to the safety of the community, transient nature of trucking, strain on law enforcement, crime and the potential for increased accidents.

Gretchen Gallagher, 16 Willow Pond Court further agreed and added that she has protected the wetlands abutting her property and asked why the Township is not protecting the wetlands. She stated that the township should be looking out for the citizens and not the best interest of developers of commercial warehousing.

Ron Hessen, 54 Belfiore also addressed the Committee protesting warehouse construction.

John Guarneri, 44 Willow Pond Court advised that he moved here because he loves the township. He urged Committee to re-think their vote.

Jeff Labbree, 62 Belfiore Drive advised the Committee that he worries for the safety of children, neighbors and well water impacts and said that the Committee should be looking at the best interest of residents.

Ryan Sweeney, 39 Willow Pond Court advised that his back yard is a watershed leading to the creek and voiced his concerns regarding contaminated run off from the warehouse parking lot.

Hearing no further comments, Deputy Mayor Callahan moved to close the public portion. Committeewoman Minhas seconded. All were in favor.

Mayor Frederick noted that some of the concerns brought forth in the public session will receive a response during consideration of resolutions.

Mayor Frederick read the following Ordinances by title only upon second reading:

2023-31 An Ordinance Providing for Local Enforcement of the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code

Motion to open the public hearing: Callahan Second Minhas All in favor

No public comment

Motion to close the public hearing: Callahan Second: Minhas All in favor

Motion to adopt: Callahan Second: Minhas

Roll Call: Matthias: YES, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: YES, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

2023-37 An Ordinance of the Township of Woolwich, Amending Chapter 143, Property Maintenance

Motion to open the public hearing: Minhas Second Callahan All in favor

No public comment

Motion to close the public hearing: Callahan Second: Minhas All in favor

Motion to adopt: Callahan Second: Minhas

Roll Call: Matthias: YES, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: YES, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

2023-38 An Ordinance Making Salary Ranges for Certain Officials and Employees of the Township of Woolwich in the County of Gloucester for the Year 2024

Motion to open the public hearing: Callahan Second Minhas All in favor

No public comment

Motion to close the public hearing: Callahan Second: Minhas All in favor

Motion to adopt: Callahan Second: Minhas

Roll Call: Matthias: YES, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: YES, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

Mayor Frederick requested a consent agenda for resolutions R-2023-267 through and including R-2023-282. So moved Callahan, second: Minhas.

Committeeman Nocentino asked that resolutions R-2023-272, R-2023-280, R-2023-281 and R-2023-282 be removed from the consent agenda. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Committeewoman Minhas and seconded by Deputy Mayor Callahan to adopt resolutions R-2023-267 through R-2023-282 with the exception of R-2023-272, R-2023-280, R-2023-281 and R-2023-282.

Mayor Frederick noted a clerical error in resolution R-2023-275.

Roll Call: Matthias: YES, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: YES, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

R-2023-267 Resolution Authorizing the Release of Maintenance Bond 837067231M as Posted for the Development Known as Center for Family Services

R-2023-268 Resolution Authorizing the Release of Maintenance Bond CM100853M as Posted for Villages I, Section 6.1, Development known as Pepper Farm Townhouses

R-2023-269 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Authorizing the Release of Villages I, section 6.3 Streetlight Guarantee Cash Bond

R-2023-270 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Authorizing the Purchase of Security Cameras and Equipment Not to Exceed \$5,200

R-2023-271 Resolution of Township of Woolwich Authorizing the Acceptance and Filing of Performance Surety Bond #CM101224 that will Replace Current Letter of Credit #22-11 Filed on Behalf of Villages II, Section 2.4

R-2023-273 Resolution Authorizing the Tax Collector to Transfer, Refund/Cancel Overpayment of Taxes

R-2023-274 Resolution Authorizing Budget Appropriation Transfers During the Last Two Months of the Current Year for the Township of Woolwich, County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey

R-2023-275 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Making an Elevation Within the Woolwich Township Police Department

R-2023-276 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Authorizing the Refund of C.O.A.H. Fees Paid for Block 36, Lot1.05

R-2023-277 Resolution Authorizing Refund of Permit Fees for Uniform Construction Code

R-2023-278 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Authorizing Renewal of a Lease Agreement for Farming Purposes on Municipally Owned Lands Known as Block 3, Lot 6, Block 5, Lot 4 and Block 5, Lot 3 to Gary Stecher in the Total Amount of \$3,250.00 for the Year 2024

R-2023-279 Resolution Authorizing Cancellation of Municipal Certificate of Sale

Roll Call: Matthias: YES, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: YES, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Callahan and seconded by Committeewoman Minhas to approve resolution **R-2023-272 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Making an Appointment and Hire Within Woolwich Township's Administrators Office**

Committeeman Nocentino advised that upon review of prior resolutions, he found that the current Township Administrator had received appointment at the annual reorganization meeting, and asked why the Township should be appointing an Administrator outside of the start date.

Mayor Frederick responded that when the Committee first discussed and appointed the Deputy Administrator, the Committee focused on salary and terms, while this resolution puts forth the intent to hire a full time administrator upon the retirement of the current Administrator/Clerk.

Committeeman Nocentino said the he feels it is unusual to hire someone to a future position and said that it leads him to believe that it is being done in the event that a future administration may not make the appointment.

Committeewoman Matthias asked if there was a contract that should be included with the resolution. Mayor Frederick replied that there is no contract.

Roll Call on R-2023-272:

Roll Call: Matthias: NO, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: NO, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

Committeewoman Minhas moved to approve resolution **R-2023-280 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Authorizing the Quote of Alaimo Group for Engineering Towards the FY2023 NJDOT Municipal Aid Project for Russell Mill and Back Creek Road in the “Not to Exceed” Amount of \$55,000.** Deputy Mayor Callahan seconded.

Committeewoman Matthias wished to clarify what exactly is being proposed by the resolution.

Mayor Frederick advised that the resolution authorizes the engineers to proceed with the design, survey and public bidding for the FY2023 NJDOT grant project, but that if engineers change in 2024, the seated Committee and new engineers can proceed with project construction and inspection.

Roll Call: Matthias: NO, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: NO, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

Deputy Mayor Callahan moved to approve resolution **R-2023-281 Resolution of the Township of Woolwich Authorizing the Quote of Alaimo Group for Engineering Towards Oakview Terrace Roadway Improvements in the “Not to Exceed” Amount of \$33,000.** Committeewoman Minhas seconded.

Roll Call: Matthias: NO (Due to funds coming from 2024 budget), Minhas: YES, Nocentino: NO, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

Committeewoman Minhas moved to approve resolution **R-2023-282 Resolution Authorizing Execution of Redevelopment Agreement with 2024 Oak Grove Road, LLC for Block 11, Lots 6, 6.01, 6.02, 6.03, 6.04, 7, 11, and 11.01.m** Committeewoman Matthias seconded.

Mayor Frederick advised that the Committee has negotiated with the developer over many months and that certain changes have been made to the proposed agreement such as the elimination of left hand turns into the property when traveling east; prohibiting left hand turn from the property onto Oak Grove Road (as well as a left out of the property); and building height. The Mayor further noted that the Township has no jurisdiction over NJDEP or EPA as to wetlands and environmental issues.

Committeeman Nocentino advised that the Township has no incentive to build warehousing. He also noted that it is unlikely to see truck traffic on Oak Grove Road due to the township’s requirements for physical barrier placement.

Solicitor DeMarcantonio agreed that the Township has no jurisdiction with NJDEP or EPA and added that the Land Use Board makes the requirements towards approval. She added that the Redevelopment Agreement incorporates the Township’s concerns.

Committeeman Nocentino then advised of the Township’s efforts to obtain funding other than residential tax to pay off capital sewer debt.

Roll Call: Matthias: YES, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: YES, Callahan: NO, Frederick: YES Motion carried

The following reports were submitted for the month of November:

Tax Collector: \$8,910,840.48 remitted

Woolwich Fire Company: Monthly Report

Deputy Mayor Callahan noted that the Fire Chief has failed to attend any Township Committee meetings since October; that he has not answered any e-mails or provided any requested budget information or requested 5 year capital plan or answered any questions raised to him by Committee. The Deputy Mayor stated that this is unacceptable.

Police: Monthly Report

Chief Morgan thanked the Committee for their support of the department and said that he is happy to have the department fully staffed.

Township Engineer: Monthly Report

Swedesboro Avenue project is complete. High Hill Trail Phase 3 estimate has been completed. Preliminary work scheduled for the Viereck Road project, consideration of training for MS4 Tier A compliance training; pickle ball court electrical repairs are pending.

Mayor Frederick advised that the township is looking at various alternatives for replacement of the Center Square Road pathway, and holding the project in the event grant funds may be available for the project. The Mayor further advised of the NJDOT Grant for Garwin Road, advising that there are certain decisions that need to be made as to the project area.

Committeewoman Matthias questioned the status of CO on the Tavistock affordable housing project. Dep. Administrator Marino advised that he will reach out to the Michaels Group in the a.m.

Administrator's Report: Monthly Report

The Administrator/Clerk presented her report as self-explanatory, but noted that the Clerk's Office will be recommending an increase in fees for certified copies of vital records and for dog licensing.

Deputy Administrator's Report: Monthly Report

The Dep. Administrator noted that repairs to dugouts 5 and 6 are complete. Traffic beacons are ordered and await delivery. Security cameras have been ordered. Received quote for court room recorder in the amount of \$72,000 (more to come on that). South State has received the sewer install punchlist. Aqua has received all approvals for the water tank. Working on path forward for pump station for the affordable housing project on Kings Hwy. OEM has accepted a grant. Shelving was installed in the vault and planning office.

Committeewoman Matthias asked if legal advise is needed as to the affordable housing pump station and what the township is obligated to do.

The Dep. Administrator that Special COAH Counsel is working on that.

Municipal Services: Monthly Report

The following liaison reports were provided:

Committeewoman Matthias: Solid Waste/Recycling
369 tons of trash collected; 19 extra cardboard, 87 metal and 231 bulk collections-month of November.

Committeewoman Minhas: Municipal Alliance; Recreation
No Report

Committeeman Nocentino: Municipal Services; Env. Commission; Social Media/IT;
The Environmental Commission met recently. The Boro was awarded grant funding for the Glen Echo boat ramp/park. The Commission seeks new members. Two code violations were issued in November. All park winterization is completed.

Deputy Mayor Callahan: Educational Partners (SWSD/KRSD); Resident
Communications; Park Utilization
Swedesboro-Woolwich District hired a new superintendent. Kingsway High School had an appearance in the Thanksgiving Day Parade. National Honor Society is holding a Trunk or Tree event which will serve as a food drive. Kingsway Field Hockey team was named top team in NJ.

Mayor Frederick: Administration; Public Safety; JLUB; Special Projects
The Mayor advised that a PILOT review meeting was held that day. There should be \$3.8 million in surplus at the end of this year. Team is trying to forecast where we will be in 3 years.

Under old business, Mayor Frederick advised that a meeting was held regarding the proposed truck route and the township awaits approval from NJDOT. Ordinances are pending for 2024. Ordinances will also address jake breaks, idling and parking.

Mayor Frederick also advised that the Liberty warehouse developer has been asked to look at the sound wall for visual improvements and additional landscaping. The Russo developer has been requested of the same. The High Hill Road warehouse developer has offered \$10,000 towards the High Hill Path project and plans are further being discussed for a mural on the warehouse wall facing fields H and I. Mayor will meet to discuss pickle ball court signage.

Under new business, the Committee accepted the resignation of Officer Luke Trifilletti.

Also under new business, Mayor Frederick advised that he has spoken with Committeewoman Matthias regarding providing a \$100 gift card to employees.

The Mayor then moved to allow the purchase of \$100 gift cards to non-represented employees NTE \$3,000 from budget. Committeewoman Matthias seconded.

Roll Call: Matthias: YES, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: YES, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

Committeeman Nocentino moved to open the meeting to public comment. Committeewoman Minhas seconded. All were in favor.

Henry May, 38 Willow Pond Court requested that the Township include a prohibition of truck diesel generators in their traffic ordinances. Mayor Frederick replied that Mr. May can look for those ordinances in the 1Q 2024.

Committeeman Nocentino added that the Committee has no intention to develop any type of space that will allow overnight sleeping.

Mr. May and Committee further discussed maximum building height that was specifically added to the Redevelopment Agreement.

Committeewoman Matthias also advised that next year, the Committee will require developers to present projects to the Township Committee prior to their appearance at JLUB.

With no further public comment, Committeewoman Minhas moved to close the public portion. Committeewoman Matthias seconded. All were in favor.

Committeewoman Minhas moved to approve the minutes of November 20th Regular Meeting and Executive Session and December 4th Regular Meeting and Executive Session. Deputy Mayor Callahan seconded.

Roll Call: Matthias: YES, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: YES, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

Mayor Frederick noted that he wished to abstain from resolution R-2023-270 after voting yes. It was so noted.

Committeewoman Minhas moved to approve the bills and purchase orders. Deputy Mayor Callahan seconded.

Roll Call: Matthias: YES, Minhas: YES, Nocentino: YES, Callahan: YES, Frederick: YES Motion carried

With no further business, motion was made by Committeewoman Minhas and seconded by Committeeman Nocentino to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane DiBella
Administrator/Clerk

Minutes not verbatim
Audio Recording on file