

The regular meeting of the East Amwell Township Committee was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Mayor Peter Kneski, Deputy Mayor Linda F. Lenox, and Committee members Patricia Cregar and C. Larry Tatsch. Committee member Timothy Martin was absent. Township Administrator Timothy Matheny was also in attendance.

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, Municipal Clerk Teresa R. Stahl announced that this is a regularly scheduled meeting, pursuant to the resolution adopted on January 4, 2009, and a meeting notice published in the Hunterdon County Democrat issue of January 8, 2009. A copy of the agenda for this meeting was forwarded to the Hunterdon County Democrat, Times of Trenton, Star Ledger, Courier News, posted on the bulletin board, and filed in the Clerk's Office on December 23, 2009.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

AGENDA REVIEW

Under Township Administrator's Update, the agenda item should read January 1 as a holiday, not a vacation day. As correspondence, add the following items: 12/26 email from Sue Parsons with Quarterly ANJEC Report; 12/22 ANJEC Matching Fund Contribution of \$1,400 for Conservation Easement Inventory Project; 12/23 Notice from Old York Cellars re: Right to Farm Hearing at CADB on 1/14/10; 12/28 Letter from Clerk to Hunterdon County Freeholders re: Interest in Cooperative Agreement for NJ Solid Waste Management Act mandated responsibilities; 12/23 NJ League of Municipalities Alert on Community Energy Meetings, COBRA Continuation, Division of Local Government Services, and FEMA Declaration for November 2009 Storm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Municipal Offices will be closed on December 31, 2009, in observance of New Year's Eve.

The East Amwell Township Committee will hold its annual reorganization meeting on Sunday, January 3, 2010, at 1 p.m. at the municipal building. A schedule of all other board and committee reorganization dates is located on the bulletin board.

There will be a recycling depot at the municipal building on January 2, 2010, from 8 - 11 a.m.

Christmas trees may be brought to the grit yard on John Ringo Road during the month of January 2010.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 10, 2009, Special Minutes (Interviews) were approved on a motion by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mrs. Cregar, and carried unanimously.

December 10, 2009, Regular Minutes were approved on a motion by Mrs. Cregar, seconded by Mr. Tatsch, and carried unanimously with corrections: on page 2, under Comcast, paragraph 2, line 1, add the word "issues" after "service"; on page 4, second to last paragraph, first sentence, change "Wolfe" to "Wolfgang"; and on page 7, correct a typo.

December 10, 2009, Executive Minutes (Litigation, Potential Litigation, Contracts, and Attorney Advice) were approved on a motion by Mr. Tatsch, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and carried unanimously.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC (for Comments from the Public for Items Not on the Agenda)

Edgar Griffith, 109 Mountain Road, commented on a sawmill operation at 157 Mountain Road in a residential zone with several people working on an operation during the day; he asked what

was going on. The governing body advised that this matter is being handled in the court system, including an agreement from Mr. Fiscor not to process any logs from off-site his property. Mr. Griffith continued about mud being dragged onto the road and the use of heavy equipment; the Mayor again commented on the municipal court matter and having the attorney looking into the forest management plan parameters regarding equipment use allowed.

Shawn Ricci, 120 Mountain Road, wanted the Township Committee to be aware of the problems of the lumbering operation, including causing a lot of noise being close to the road and being a hazard. He suggested that the governing body ride by the property to see the equipment being used 30 feet from the road, which he described in detail. He commented on his desire to install a motor cross track on his property, and if the operation is allowed on the Fiscor property, he would expect his track to be approved also. He concluded that the operation is too close to the road, does not want the operation in his neighborhood, and the operation is too loud.

Frances Gavigan, 123 Wertsville, Road, attended a Hunterdon County Freeholder's meeting, and there were discussions on changes to the allocation of the 2010 Open Space Trust Fund, i.e., municipalities may lose 5% of their farmland and historic preservation allocations so that this funding could be given to non-profit organizations.

Ms. Gavigan spoke about a meeting on January 16, from 9 a.m. to noon for a historic alliance forum, including representatives from Delaware Township, Raritan Township, County Freeholders, and Mr. Saunders from the NJ Historic Preservation Office to discuss historic aspects of bridges and working collectively to improve planning. She will provide a more formal agenda of the meeting to Mr. Matheny to put on the website. Ms. Gavigan also spoke about an OPRA request she made to the County for budget information.

Andrea Bonette, 17 Ridge Road, asked when the Fiscor complaint would be heard by the municipal court; she was directed to contact Court Administrator Hooven for docket information.

An unidentified resident asked to talk about the Wertsville Road item; he was advised that it was on the agenda later in the evening.

Toni Robbi, 144 Lambertville-Hopewell Turnpike, commented on his observations about Comcast. He felt that the service "was just awful," explaining his experiences with limited basic cable into his home and his inability to get certain channels, including no channel 2, no Philadelphia stations, and no PBS. He is switching to FiOS.

Mrs. Cregar commented that Rob Clifton of Comcast sent a serviceman to her house after the last meeting, and all wiring up to her house was replaced; she suggested that this might be Mr. Robbi's problem. Mayor Kneski also suggested that Mr. Robbi get a digital adaptor box, explaining specifics about them. Mr. Robbi concluded that Comcast "is a public utility doing a lousy job."

Motion by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mrs. Cregar, and it was carried unanimously to close to the public.

Mayor Kneski agreed that the information about the January 16th meeting could be posted on the website, suggesting that more information be obtained from Ms. Gavigan.

Glorianne Robbi, 144 Lambertville-Hopewell Turnpike, suggested that information on the court date for the commercial logging operation be put on the website rather than having residents call the court administrator. The Clerk will check on this, noting that the Court operation is separate from the municipality and abides by certain regulations.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES/PUBLIC HEARINGS - None

SPECIAL DISCUSSIONS - None

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

RECYCLING COMMITTEE

1) 12/17 Email from Will Harrison Regarding Advertising Recyclable Materials Picked Up at Curbside: The request from Mr. Harrison on whether or not information about a commercial supplier should be advertised was briefly discussed. Mr. Tatsch suggested that it should be up to Raritan Valley Disposal to notify its customers of what is recycled curbside, not the Township. Additionally, under the new state regulations, private haulers are responsible for notifying their customers twice a year about recycling. Mr. Harrison will be notified that it is up to the private hauler to notify its customers, not the Township.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

1) Request for Holiday on January 1, 2010: Since this holiday is not in the 2009 benefits resolution, a separate motion is required to provide the holiday prior to reorganization on 1/3/10.

Motion by Mr. Tatsch, seconded by Mrs. Cregar, and it was carried unanimously to declare January 1, 2010 a holiday for employees.

2) Update from Engineer O'Neal on Roads: Mr. O'Neal sent an email to follow up on two questions from the last meeting: regarding the section of Rocktown Road listed in the 5 year road plan, the section from Rocktown to Losey has chip seal already and is not the dirt and gravel part of the road (i.e., the dirt road is between Mountain and Losey). Additionally, the DPW Superintendent and the Engineer will update the road ratings annually in June or July and text will be updated annually.

APPOINTMENT OF CITIZEN GROUP TO DISCUSSION BRIDGE E-174 ON WERTSVILLE ROAD (See 12/10/09 Minutes for Background)

Mayor Kneski mentioned the possibility of a long term plan to discuss bridges in the future with a set committee and deciding on membership with all names provided by staff and Ms. Gavigan. Ms. Gavigan was asked to participate in discussions.

A lengthy discussion took place, with the following highlights: the County's letter asked for two governing body members and no less than 2 members of the public to meet with the county before the public hearing on the bridge at the County; having a larger group to do pre-work and familiarize themselves with the issues and send a smaller representation to the County may be a consideration; specific names were mentioned, also noting their proximity to the bridge repair; the Mayor called for a resolution to appoint an ad hoc committee for bridges; names listed included Frances Gavigan; Jamie Atkeson; Zvi Eiref, Bob Petrolino (who may also represent the Amwell Valley Trail Association as a member), Walt or Jenelle Ditzel, Joel Moore, Mary Pat Parkhill, Malcolm Lowenhaupt, Jim or Lisa Kelly, Todd or Karen Russo and Terry Ragolia (although neither the Russos or Ms. Ragolia have been able to be reached); perhaps one or two of the affected residents will attend the County meeting; and Mr. Tatsch and Deputy Mayor Lenox will represent the Township Committee.

Zvi Eiref, in the audience, asked specific questions about the county meeting and what was happening with the other bridge on Wertsville Road. Ms. Gavigan spoke with County Engineer John Glynn and commented on the Dutch Lane bridge being held up because of utility issues.

Mayor Kneski asked for a resolution to institute an ad hoc bridge committee constituting the nine names read into the record.

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RESOLUTION #164-09

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that they hereby institute an ad hoc bridge committee for Bridge E-174 on Wertsville Road, with the

following nine members: Frances Gavigan; Jamie Atkeson; Zvi Eiref, Bob Petrolino, Jenelle Ditzel, Joel Moore, Mary Pat Parkhill, Malcolm Lowenhaupt, and either Jim or Lisa Kelly; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Linda Fair Lenox and C. Larry Tatsch will represent the Township Committee on this committee.

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Mr. Tatsch, seconded by Mrs. Cregar, and it was carried unanimously to approve the resolution.

The Mayor noted that in the future, there may be a committee to become a "liaison" to discuss road issues and to work with the county on these issues.

CLAWSON PARK - 11/18/09 PROPOSAL FROM HOPEWELL VALLEY ENGINEERING - APPROVAL OF CONCEPTUAL PLAN PHASE AND DISCUSSION ON POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF CONSTRUCTION PLAN PREPARATION (See 12/10/09 Minutes for Background)

The Clerk explained that the engineer neglected to include item 2 in the approval at the last meeting, and he recommended that the conceptual plan phase be approved as a necessary follow up to phase 1. While item 3, Construction Plan, is important, there may be some more discussion with the DPW on whether to go out for bid or not. The Committee agreed that item 3 may also change, depending on how the conceptual plan develops.

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RESOLUTION #164-09

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that they hereby approve the expenditure for item 2 on the 11/18/09 Proposal from Hopewell Valley Engineering for the Conceptual Plan Phase of the Clawson Park Survey and Improvement Plan in the amount of an hourly expense not to exceed \$3,5000.00, to be paid out of the Open Space Trust Fund.

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Mrs. Cregar, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously to approve the resolution.

NEW BUSINESS

DRAFT 2010 REORGANIZATION MINUTES The minutes include all information necessary for the reorganization on January 3, 2010, and any comments or changes should be provided to the Clerk by December 30, 2009.

DISCUSSION ON HOLDING ONE REGULAR TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING PER MONTH IN 2010 Treasurer Jane Luhrs was present at this time.

A list of proposed dates for either one or two meetings per month was provided to the governing body. The Clerk noted that a resolution stating the meeting times must be approved at reorganization, and if the Township Committee was going to consider next year's schedule, it was important to decide this evening.

Mayor Kneski raised a concern about paying bills once a month. Mrs. Luhrs explained that the bills will be paid within 30 days, and she has authorization to pay leases, payroll, and time sensitive bills (i.e., schools, county, utilities, etc.) via a resolution approved at reorganization.

Some comments were made on the subject, including the following: one meeting a month may be more efficient, and a suggestion was made to try it for six months; a comment was made about having a fuller agenda, noting, however, that public comments would not be doubled, and the committee could act on all business in one meeting; Mrs. Luhrs explained that West Amwell Township is also switching to one meeting a month, after do so for a large portion of 2009 because of budgetary issues, and they had no problems last year with the once a month meetings; there will be additional special meetings for budget discussions early in the year; special meetings could be called if there was a need to do so; the Committee could always change back to a second meeting, if they saw a need; the Committee looked at holding the monthly meeting on the second Thursday of the month.

Mrs. Cregar made the motion to hold one regular meeting per month in 2010, seconded by Mr. Tatsch, and it was carried unanimously.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM GIVEN BY JOE SKUPIEN

Based on the decision to hold one meeting a month, there was a consensus of the Township Committee that Mr. Skupien be asked to attend a special meeting at 7 p.m. on February 11, prior to the regular Township Committee meeting.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Zvi Eiref, owner of a preserved farm on Wertsville and Linvale Roads and part owner of the Unionville Vineyard, spoke about a meeting with Hunterdon County six months ago about the Wertsville Road bridge at Dutch Lane. He spoke about the importance of the County in being sensitive to timing of the closure in relationship to his businesses and the hope that the County will keep the incentives to have the bridge closing brief. The Committee commented on land acquisition issues to be resolved. Frances Gavigan commented on the County's inability to do the work until the utility companies move wires from old to new poles; she will ask the County about lead time and pre-ordering planning, and incentives in the contract. She also commented on "promises of communication" from the County, yet being locked out of a meeting around Thanksgiving.

Ms. Gavigan will also check on the easement issues, noting that the County originally wanted to do the work during the summer when school was out, but this is a bad time for the vineyard. A recommendation was made to have Mr. Eiref provide the County with his list of activity dates so that they can coordinate timing with him. Mr. Tatsch reminded Mr. Eiref that the County did agree to provide detour signs to direct people back to his location. Mr. Eiref will contact Mr. Glynn and speak with Ms. Gavigan about his concerns.

Glorianne Robbi, 144 Lambertville-Hopewell Turnpike, mentioned state funding for the farmland property owned by Mr. Eiref, noting that the vineyard is also a commercial and agricultural operation. She noted that the County received state funding towards the preservation of the property, and a letter to the Freeholders from the Township Committee would be a good idea. The letter will mention the tremendous investment by the state, county and township, that keeping a local vineyard in continued operation is an important aspect, and working with the landowners with adequate notice, keeping road closings to a minimum, and including incentives for the contractor to complete the work as soon as possible are all very important items to consider.

Mr. Eiref asked about the long term future of Wertsville Road, i.e., the possibility of a scenic byway designation and providing his opinion about trying to keep the road "a classic country lane."

Ms. Gavigan commented on the meeting being held on January 16, and the possibility of Freeholder cooperation. She mentioned that the County must "buy into the scenic designation" since it is their road; it is an election year, and there may be more support from the Freeholders. Ms. Gavigan mentioned the Crossroads of the American Revolution and preserved hamlets as some good arguments to bring to the County. She suggested that when the Township writes the letter to the County about Wertsville Road, they include reference to the businesses and farms in the area, farms preserved with County funding, the importance of maintaining the character and integrity of Wertsville Road as a main artery and corridor road, and include reference to the potential for a scenic by-way.

The Mayor mentioned that the scenic by-ways designation has been discussed by the Historic Preservation Committee and the Planning Board, and it would be part of the Master Plan and needs County approval. Ms. Gavigan added that property owners must also give their approval for the designation.

Toni Robbi, 144 Lambertville-Hopewell Turnpike, suggested that having Hillsborough in Somerset County working with East Amwell on the scenic by-ways designation may be helpful, noting Long Hill Road as part of the Crossroads. Mayor Kneski was doubtful that working with another community in a different county would work.

Glorianne Robbi thanked the members of the Township Committee, Mrs. Stahl, Mrs. Luhrs, and Mr. Matheny for all of their work during the course of the year, noting her appreciation of the time and efforts of all. She felt that it was unfortunate that some residents resort to verbal abuse, and she "wanted to recognize the good work you do." She concluded by saying, "Thank you for all your efforts."

Motion by Mr. Tatsch, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously to close to the public.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

TREASURER LUHRS provided a transfer resolution.

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RESOLUTION #165-09

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-58 permits appropriation transfers during the last two months of the current fiscal year between line items of the municipal budget; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that certain line items are in excess of the sums needed and certain line items have insufficient funds to complete the operation of the fiscal year;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that the following sums be transferred as follows:

	From	To
Mayor & Council		
Other Expenses	\$ 420.00	
Financial Administration:		
Salaries & Wages	\$ 238.00	
Uniform Construction Code:		
Salaries & Wages	\$ 500.00	
Mayor & Council:		
Salaries & Wages		\$ 458.00
Financial Administration:		
Other Expenses		\$ 200.00
Uniform Construction Code:		
Other Expenses		\$ 500.00

Total \$ 1,158.00 \$ 1,158.00

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Mrs. Cregar, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously to adopt the resolution.

Bills of the evening were approved on a motion by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mrs. Cregar, and carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Resolutions:

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RESOLUTION #166-09

WHEREAS, the Public Works Superintendent of the Township of East Amwell has approved the refund of the following driveway bond;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of East Amwell that the Treasurer is authorized to issue a refund check to the following applicant:

Applicant	Amount of Refund
Joel Moore	\$2,500.00

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

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RESOLUTION #167-09

WHEREAS, it has been determined by the Board of Health of the Township of East Amwell that the following witness fees can be refunded;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell that the Treasurer is hereby authorized to refund the following amounts to the applicant:

Applicant	Amount Refunded
Henry Catennaci	\$ 70.00
Michael Dorio, Jr.	\$ 500.00
Denice Jefferson	\$ 520.00

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Mr. Tatsch, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously to approve the refund resolutions.

Mrs. Luhrs wanted to give the Township Committee a brief update about the budget, stating that preliminarily, the Township is hitting their revenues. Every board and committee maintained their budgets with very few transfers; the weather has been good, so there were less road expenses. Therefore, she was able to cancel a lot of appropriations to go into surplus, i.e., over \$115,000. Mrs. Luhrs noted that tax collection is strong, and the State will be providing the final CMPTRA payment today. She noted that the cancellation tonight will help in 2010, noting also a 16% increase in health benefits and 18% in pensions for next year. She concluded that everyone working to stay within budget and having the taxpayers keep their payments current "is a positive thing."

The Mayor asked about the cancellation of \$12,000 in Employee's group insurance. Mrs. Luhrs explained that money was budgeted for an extra roadman, which didn't materialize, and another employee left during the year; savings almost equaled a full month's insurance bill, which is usually \$13,000.

Mrs. Cregar commented on pension cuts at the state.

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RESOLUTION #168-09

WHEREAS, the following Current Fund budget appropriation balances remain unexpended:

General Government Salaries and Wages	4,500.00
General Government: Other Expenses	5,000.00
Municipal Clerk: Salaries and Wages	5,500.00
Municipal Clerk: Other Expenses	1,500.00
Financial Administration: Salaries & Wages	500.00
Revenue Administration: Salaries & Wages	250.00
Revenue Administration: Other Expenses	1,500.00
Tax Assessment Administration: Other Expenses	750.00
Legal Services: Other Expenses	15,000.00
Engineering Services: Other Expenses	6,200.00
Historic Sites Committee: Salaries & Wages	150.00
Historic Sites Committee: Other Expenses	1,500.00
Agricultural Advisory Committee:Other Expenses	115.00
Planning Board: Salaries & Wages	500.00
Planning Board: Other Expenses	10,000.00
Zoning Board of Adjustment: Salaries & Wages	350.00
Zoning Board of Adjustment: Other Expenses	1,000.00
Affordable Housing Agency: Salaries & Wages	420.00
Uniform Construction Codes: Salaries & Wages	700.00
Liability Insurance	4,000.00
Employees Group Insurance	12,000.00
Office of Emergency Management:Other Expenses	1,000.00
Streets & Road Maintenance: Other Expenses	15,500.00
Solid Waste Collection: Other Expenses	600.00
Buildings & Grounds: Other Expenses	8,000.00
Public Health Services: Salaries & Wages	2,000.00
Public Health Services: Other Expenses	4,000.00
Environmental Commission: Salaries & Wages	400.00
Environmental Commission: Other Expenses	700.00
Stormwater Permit:Public Health: Salaries & Wages	250.00
Stormwater Permit:Public Health:Other Expenses	1,500.00
Electricity: Other Expenses	1,500.00
Telephone: Other Expenses	1,000.00
Gasoline: Other Expenses	5,000.00
Recycling Enhancement Act: Other Expenses	43.00
Social Security: Other Expenses	1,680.00

Defined Contribution Retirement Program:	
Other Expenses	100.00
Matching Funds for Grants: Other Expenses	100.00
Municipal Court: Other Expenses	700.00
Public Defender: Salaries & Wages	154.00
Bond Interest	.50
Green Trust Loan	.03
 Total	 \$115,662.53

WHEREAS, it is necessary to formally cancel said balances so that the unexpended balances may be credited to Surplus;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of East Amwell, State of New Jersey, that the above listed unexpended balances of the Current Fund be canceled.

By Order of the Township Committee,

Peter Kneski, Mayor

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Motion by Mr. Tatsch, seconded by Deputy Mayor Lenox, and it was carried unanimously to approve the cancellation resolution.

CORRESPONDENCE

Deputy Mayor Lenox noted the American Heart Association campaign for Mayors to wear red dresses.

Mr. Tatsch noted information in the packets tonight about a community dispute mediation program, for which the Court provided some literature. The one page flyer explains the process of resolving neighbor disputes. He asked if the information could be posted on the website; the Clerk will check with the Court Administrator for approval.

Mr. Matheny commented on a recently approved bill regarding the Qualified Purchasing Agent (QPA). It was a conditionally vetoed bill, which makes it permissive to have a QPA and will take effect in 2011. If a municipality does not have a QPA, the bid threshold will drop to \$17,500, which is the same amount as Pay to Play. He noted that the municipality must approve a resolution to appoint him as QPA, and he credited the municipality for having the foresight to send him to classes.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion was made by Deputy Mayor Lenox, seconded by Mrs. Cregar, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Teresa R. Stahl, RMC/CMC
Municipal Clerk