

MINUTES
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORK SESSION
THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2017
7:30 P.M.

The Franklin Township Committee held a work session at **7:30 P.M., Thursday, April 13, 2017** at the Municipal Building. This meeting has been properly noticed in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Mayor Kathryn Blew called the meeting to order and led the flag salute.

Roll Call: Diane Burgess PRESENT Craig Repmann PRESENT

Susan Soloway PRESENT Joseph Darocha PRESENT Kathryn Blew PRESENT

Also present: Katrina L. Campbell, Municipal Attorney

Some public present: Lt. Timothy Snyder, Lora Jones

Comments from the public: Lora Jones, Open Space Advisory Committee, addressed the Township Committee on proposed Farmland Preservation properties. She requested municipal support for the Dirt Capital Partners property, Block 41 Lot 17, 88 acres on Baker Road. Property is currently in a lease-purchase agreement with a farmer, Hector Perez, whose intends to purchase the property from the current owners. One appraisal is in and a second will be coming. Since this is a county project, the County is paying for the appraisals, survey and title. Application has already been approved by the State and the County. Lora Jones encouraged the Township Committee to support this purchase which has always been on the farmland preservation target list. The township's financial obligation would be about \$158,000.00 which represents a cost-share of 20%. Property is contiguous to Leon's Sod Farm and other preserved properties. The State will purchase Leon's Sod Farm direct if it comes on the market and is not preserved. If the Dirt Capital property is preserved, the monies will go to Dirt Capital which will reduce the cost of purchase to the current farmer. The Committee expressed concerns about insuring property must be farmed and did not want this to become another matter of litigation should the farmer violate the deed of easement. While there are no guarantees, the Municipal Attorney said the State has very strict rules regarding preservation which are tailored specifically to individual properties and the State of New Jersey is responsible for enforcement of the regulations. Dirt Capital has also preserved other properties; Alexandria Township for one.

Consent Agenda

All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Township Committee and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

Municipal Attorney suggested requesting fees for co-locators to the tower if this is pursued. Since the Committee is interested, the Municipal Attorney will reach out to Verizon for additional information and maybe get some visuals on the location. The Committee would also like to know how much more a new tower will enhance service.

- **Public Safety (PD, Fire, EMS, OEM, Court, Health): Darocha & Blew**

Lt. Tim Snyder presented his monthly report which included investigations, arrests, motor vehicle violations, radio calls, etc. The Distracted Driving crackdown is on-going. The Committee noted overtime and comp time are not going down. Lt. Snyder said there was no overtime submitted for March, and regarding comp time, this is contract related and an officer can't be forced to use it.

- **Land Use (Land Use Board, Open Space, Planning, Zoning, Construction, Environmental): Burgess & Soloway**

The Committee discussed action needed for farmland preservation. Action to participate in the Sabo property has already been taken but the formal letter needs to be sent to the County. The Committee will need to take action to participate in the Dirt Capital property. The County provided their letter format to be submitted.

Motion to participate in the preservation of the Sabo Farm, Block 35 Lot 17, as discussed at the last meeting, and authorize the Mayor to sign the formal letter of response to be submitted to the County Agriculture Development Committee.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

Motion to participate with the County and the State in the preservation of the Dirt Capital Partners LLC project, Block 41 Lot 17, and authorize the Mayor to sign the formal letter of support to be submitted to the County Agriculture Development Committee.. If the Township's contribution exceeds \$160,000.00 the project will have to come before the Township Committee for approval.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

Motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the documents for the purchase of the Faith Chapel Wesleyan Church property consisting of three (3) acres on Lower Landsdown and Hamden Roads in the amount of \$18,000.00 for the Transco wetlands replacement.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

PIE: Committee Members Burgess and Soloway updated the Committee on the Sustainable Jersey Strategic PIE (Public Information & Engagement) Technology Assessment Program. Franklin Township is one of two municipalities chosen for a grant which will allow more efficient technology and better communications. Members of the Construction Department and Police Department will need to schedule an appointment with the representative for gathering their information. Committee Members Burgess and r Soloway and several staff members met as a focus group with a representative and a proposal will be received in a few weeks.

- **Finance, Administration, Insurance, HR/Benefits: Soloway & Burgess**

Form of Government: Committee Member Repmann just wanted to clarify that as a Township Committee all members are of equal votes and no one has more power than any other member. The Municipal Attorney said that under a Township Committee form of government every single decision needs to come before the Committee. However, in the past there was a resolution establishing a specific amount that a subcommittee was authorized to spend. If there was a resolution, a new one should be established by this Township Committee. There was some discussion about the authority to make decisions that deal with issues not related to funding.

The Township Committee discussed the issue of snow plowing the QFC lot. It became an issue during the last snowstorm when the DPW felt the roads were a priority. It was decided to revisit the agreement the township has with the fire company on an annual basis. The Committee felt there should be a specific expiration date to any agreement with a stipulation that it will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Township Committee would like to consider a resolution at the next meeting regarding setting an amount of funds a subcommittee may authorize in conjunction with a Department Head. \$1,000.00 was suggested.

Motion to **Adopt Resolution 2017 – 34** designating signatories on municipal checks, Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor; Jean Bahlman, Finance Assistant; and Ursula Stryker, Municipal Clerk.

Moved Soloway

Second Burgess

Roll Call Vote: Burgess AYE Repmann AYE Soloway AYE Darocha AYE Blew AYE

Motion carried.

