

The Work Session Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Washington was called to order by Mayor Short at 7:34 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comm. Kennedy, LiaBraaten, Roehrich, Tobin, Mayor Short

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Jansen, Administrator/Acting Clerk Burd, Office Manager Coppola, Deputy Clerk DiGregorio

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Adequate notice of this meeting was sent to the Observer Tribune and the Daily Record on January 9, 2012 and was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building on the same date. This meeting is being held at the Washington Township Municipal Building, 43 Schooley's Mountain Road, Long Valley, New Jersey. Notices of this meeting were sent as there were requests.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

PRESENTATION – MORRIS COUNTY – MIDDLE VALLEY REPAIR - Steve Hammond, Chief County Engineer gave an overview to the Township Committee regarding repairs to the Middle Valley Bridge. Morris County will reconstruct the bridge. T.Y. Lin International is the design engineer, Cherry Weber & Associates is the resident engineer and Konkus Corporation is the bridge contractor. Representatives from each firm except Konkus gave a power point presentation to the Committee regarding the phases of the project, the project purpose, existing conditions, historical considerations, the construction traffic plan, the proposed structure, roadway improvements, time schedule and the project benefits. A copy is annexed hereto and made a part hereof. A discussion followed among the Committee and the various presenters.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Short opened the meeting to the public pertaining to the Middle Valley Bridge repair.

Bill Leavens, 359 W. Mill Road, asked if the trusses in the bridge are decorative or structural. He was advised that the trusses are structural. Mr. Leavens also asked, given that there will be a lot of heavy equipment used during the construction phase, on which side of the bridge will it be staged. He was advised that the staging area will be the contractor's decision and it has not yet been determined if it will be north or south of the bridge.

Fred Vance, 14 Abedim Way, asked if it is possible to find a property nearby where this machinery can be staged. Mr. Vance stated that there is a two acre lot on the right hand side of the bridge.

A Resident on Middle Valley Road asked if the road coming up to the bridge on both sides would be elevated. He was advised that there will be very little change in elevation. He asked why the contractor was not present at the meeting. He was advised that the contractor does not really come into the picture for at least another month and still has work to finalize. He also advised that anyone who has a question during the process can come to the site, approach one of the project representatives, introduce himself and have a discussion.

Allison Getz, 382 W. Mill Road, stated that she is concerned about the engineering of the bridge; if the water flowing under the bridge was considered to be the same at all times. Ms. Getz further wondered if project representatives were aware that, in heavy rains, the stream backs up and flows over Middle Valley Road. She feels that the approach being taken will push the water even further up Middle Valley Road and that flooding is already a serious challenge in that area. She was advised that a flood survey was taken and submitted to the NJDEP along with their proposed approach. The NJDEP approved the approach after consideration of the flooding problem.

Ed Gessling, asked if the bridge will be higher off the street than it is now. He was advised that the bridge will be no higher off the street as the approaches will hardly change, however, the sag in the center of the structure will be evened out. Mr. Gessling asked about the flood survey, and was advised that it is a mathematical study used by the engineers that had to conform to NJDEP regulations before permits were granted. Mr. Gessling also asked about the placement of the sidewalk and was advised that it would remain on the same side.

A resident asked, given that the bridge was replaced 28 years ago, are we going to go through the process of bridge replacement again in 28 years. He was advised that 28 years ago a temporary structure was erected. The new bridge is intended to be a permanent structure.

Chris Steffen, 11 Mallard Cove Road, stated that she is concerned about emergency services coming in/out of the construction area, as well as vehicles for plowing in the case of snow, as the detour is 10 miles. **Comm. Tobin** advised her that emergency services are aware of the detour and have made provisions, as has the DPW. She was also advised that the project will hopefully be completed before the winter season.

A resident asked if the bridge will be Hunter Green. He was advised that the name of the color is Foliage Green, which was decided upon in conjunction with the Historical Commission.

A **resident** stated that about one month ago a bunch of trees were taken down. He was advised that JCP&L had permits for that work from the NJDEP. The tree removal had to be done by a certain date because of bat nesting.

There being no further comments or questions, Mayor Short closed the meeting to the public.

Comm. Tobin asked what the normal hours of construction will be. He was advised that normal hours will be 7AM – 3:30PM, Monday through Friday, with possible Saturdays starting no earlier than 8AM. The Police Department and schools have been advised of these hours.

Mayor Short asked **Mr. Hammond** to provide comments on two subjects; **Schooley's Mountain Road and the crosswalk.**

SCHOOLEY'S MOUNTAIN ROAD - Mr. Hammond stated that the County awarded bids for the stabilization of the embankment of a portion of the road where serious erosion has occurred. A pre-construction meeting will take place in about a week with construction beginning after Memorial Day. It will involve some lane closures and the County will work with the Police to minimize inconvenience. Mr. Hammond stated that a different material is being considered for the surface of Schooley's Mountain Road. The material is a colored concrete over asphalt and it has been used successfully in Bergen County for its friction and visual effects. Mr. Hammond would like to have further discussions with the Committee regarding this suggested material.

CROSSWALK - Mayor Short also inquired about the Columbia Trail crosswalk which needs to be addressed as it is dangerous and has significant traffic. Mr. Hammond explained that where there is a crosswalk, an ADA complaint ramp needs to be placed at the termination point. The Park Commission is working to set up a contractor to get this done as soon as is possible. Mr. Hammond will pass along the urgency that Mayor Short expressed to the Park Commission.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Short opened the meeting to the public regarding the crosswalk.

Walt Cullen, 9 Laurel Drive, commented that he has seen a white light installed at a crosswalk which flashes when people are standing there, sending a warning to motorists.

Gregg Forsbrey, 78 Naughtright Road, stated that there is no way to cross Schooley's Mountain Road from one side to the other. Mr. Forsbrey read into the record a statement in which he emphasizes the danger of the lack of a crosswalk by Columbia Trail, as well as by W. Maple and W. Mill Roads. As the summer comes, more pedestrian traffic will exemplify this danger. Mr. Forsbrey asked how long it will take for the County to take care of the crosswalk. Mr. Hammond stated that he was advised that it would take 30 to 45 days.

Joe Keyes, 216 Beacon Hill Road, stated that he has a presence at the Long Valley Green Market. Mr. Keyes stated that he has seen some scary situations and wanted to emphasize the importance of getting the crosswalk done as soon as possible.

There being no further comments or questions, Mayor Short closed the meeting to the public.

Comm. Tobin asked if there are bicycle crossing signs. **Mr. Hammond** advised him that there are bicycle/pedestrian crossing signs that will be erected by the County.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Short again opened the meeting to the public. **There being no comments or questions, Mayor Short closed the meeting to the public.**

ORDINANCES

BOND ORDINANCE – FIRE TRUCK - The Township Committee will consider an ordinance entitled, "**BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ACQUISITION OF A NEW FIRE TRUCK BY THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, IN THE COUNTY OF MORRIS, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$450,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$385,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR FINANCING SUCH APPROPRIATION,**" at the May 21, 2012 Regular Meeting.

MAINTENANCE GARAGE CONSTRUCTION ORDINANCE - The Township Committee will consider an ordinance entitled, "**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MAINTENANCE GARAGE ON PROPERTY LOCATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, COUNTY OF MORRIS, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO BE FUNDED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON AND AUTHORIZING THE LEASE OF THE MAINTENANCE GARAGE TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON FOR NOMINAL CONSIDERATION,**" at the May 21, 2012 Regular Meeting.

DISCUSSIONS

NARROW BANDING CHANGE – **Ray Kenny, Municipal IT**, stated that the previous requirement for narrow banding (T Band) no longer exists. This will not affect the Police Department, however, it will affect the DPW, Emergency Services, schools, etc. **Mayor Short** commented that the Township spent tens of thousands of dollars to comply with the requirement to use narrow bands. Mayor Short asked if the new radios purchased can be adjusted outside of the narrow band parameters. Mr. Kenny stated that DPW's radios have a very wide frequency range. Mr. Kenny provided a copy of a five page letter written by another municipality to the Federal Communications Commission outlining concerns regarding the change in legislation, which he feels can be used as a model by Washington Township to send such a letter to our legislators.

FAIRVIEW/NAUGHRIGHT FLOODING ISSUES – **Township Engineer Leon Hall** provided the Township Committee with a report regarding the Fairview/Naughtright flooding issue. The Township applied to the NJDEP for an emergency permit so that work can begin to correct the flooding issue. The NJDEP responded with a few items that need to be addressed. **Mayor Short** explained that if the special permit process is used, then follow up work by the engineers will be required at a cost of around \$8,000. Mayor Short asked if the Township gets rights-of-way and clears the stream, does this set a precedent for other work being done on private property. **Attorney Jansen** explained that the Township can justify doing work if it is for a public benefit (keeping the water off of Fairview Ave and allowing the traveling public to continue to use the roadway). Attorney Jansen further stated that every action taken sets a precedent. The Committee expressed concern about the Township's liability. **Joan Viggiano, 268 Fairview Ave,** stated that she believes that Morris County put in Dry Brook to protect the bridge. She called the County and was told that if it can be proved that the County did indeed put in Dry Brook, it is responsible for its maintenance. The Township Committee approved the application for a permit and indicated that if a temporary construction permit is secured, the stream will be cleared by the DPW. **Ms. Burd, Township Administrator**, will contact Leon Hall for a plan and its cost. **Comm. Kennedy** will contact the DPW to ascertain if it has the availability and resources to address the clearing of the stream.

BENKENDORF LANDSCAPING – This discussion will be tabled until the June Work Session.

TAX APPEAL REFUND RESOLUTION – A resolution was provided to the Township Committee from Senator Bucco supporting legislation that is intended to lessen the tax appeal burden on the municipality. The resolution will be considered at Monday's Regular Meeting.

UNDERGROUND WATER STORAGE TANK - A 10,000 gallon underground fiberglass water tank at the end of Stony Brook Road is leaking and needs to be repaired. The warranty on the tank expired long ago and the repair is not covered by insurance. The tank was installed for fire fighting purposes. To replace the tank would cost \$40,000 plus, while repairs would cost \$3,000 - \$5,000. One quote has been received and at least one more will be solicited.

NEW JERSEY NATURAL GAS CONSERVATION PROGRAM – “See the Light” is a free natural gas conservation program offered through New Jersey Natural Gas. The program includes data monitoring software, fliers and energy savings tips for employees in the workplace and at home. What is required is the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding and an estimated 3 to 6 hours per month. Participation in this program can also earn the Township 10 Sustainable Jersey points. New Jersey Natural Gas will have a table at the Green Festival and also has programs for seniors and children. The Township Committee agreed to try the program for a year.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING EXPENDITURES – **Office Manager Coppola** explained that \$150,000 needs to be spent by July 17, 2012. Habitat for Humanity and Community Hope have approached the Township for funds to make purchases in Washington Township and another special needs housing partnership is also an option.. **Mayor Short** commented that he would rather see these organizations purchase foreclosed houses and renovate them. Mayor Short will check with legislators to see if the July 17, 2012 deadline is going to be extended before the Committee authorizes the commitment of more money.

PLANNING BOARD RESOLUTION RE: ADOPTION OF THE HIGHLANDS CHECKLIST ORDINANCE – The Planning Board passed a resolution opposing the vote for adoption of the Highlands checklist ordinance. The Planning Board states in its resolution that it “...feels the Township is being coerced into the adoption of the Highlands Checklist Ordinance as a condition of approval of the WMP...” and that it is “...inconsistent with the existing Master Plan...” **Attorney Jansen** quoted the relevant statute and explained that a resolution needs to be prepared for the Regular Meeting that gives the reasons why the Township would proceed with the adoption of the Highlands Checklist Ordinance. His office will prepare a resolution, with the assistance of Mr. Banish, for consideration at the regular meeting..

EVIDENCE MODULE – POLICE RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – **Police Chief Bailey** stated that a new records management system was implemented in May through County Dispatch. During this process, it was discovered that the County CAD system does not allow for accessing the QED system for evidence tracing. CSI, the company that has been hired to make our system work with the County, has offered an evidence module that will address this issue at a

discounted cost of \$15,000. The evidence module will move all the information taken from the dispatchers, police officers and detectives making the process more effective and efficient. If the Township does not take advantage of this program now, it will cost the Township \$30,000 for the program next year. The Committee is in favor of the project. CFO Lifer will be asked if the money is available. It was noted that CFO Lifer will not be available for comment for a few weeks. Administrator Burd will see what she can find out.

AMBULANCE BID – One bid were received for the purchase of a new ambulance. The bid exceeded the amount that was budgeted, however, the First Aid Squad is prepared to make up the difference in cost. The Committee would like to see more competition. **Comm. Tobin** will contact the First Aid Squad for their input. This issue will be further discussed in June.

SHARED SERVICE/OUTSOURCING OPTIONS: IT DEPARTMENT – **Comm. Tobin** stated that he would like to pursue opportunities in IT shared services with other municipalities, or outsourcing, or a combination of both. The Committee agreed that Comm. Tobin should investigate the Township's options.

SOLAR PANELS – The Middle School and Bus Facility would like to install solar panels for partial energy generation. It was discovered, however, that the Middle School's new roof is not strong enough to support the panels. **Liz George, K-8 District Business Administrator**, asked if the Board of Education could use a couple of Township owned acres adjacent to the Middle School to erect these panels. There would be a benefit to the taxpayers in the reduction of energy costs. **Administrator Burd** will contact Liz George to obtain information on savings and what is involved. A lease or land swap were discussed.

EAGLE SCOUT CEREMONIES – **Comm. Tobin** stated that many Eagle Scout ceremonies are approaching and he asked if there is a complete list of the ceremonies. Mayor Short provided him with the list. Comm. Tobin and Comm. LiaBraaten will represent the Committee at the ceremonies.

FIRE CHIEF'S MEETING - **Comm. Tobin** stated that it was brought up at the Fire Chief's Meeting whether the Township would consider going to a Fire District. **Attorney Jansen** explained that a Fire District is a separate taxing entity. The Fire District issue will be further discussed with the Fire Chief at the June Work Session. **Comm. Kennedy** mentioned that the new laptops were discussed at the Fire Chief's Meeting. Monetary constraints need to be considered.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Short opened the meeting to the public. There being no comments or questions, Mayor Short closed the meeting to the public.

RESOLUTION #R-53-12 - EXECUTIVE SESSION – LAND ACQUISITION: East Valley Brook Road

The Executive Session discussion was tabled until the May 21, 2012 Regular Meeting.

Motion was made by Comm. Roehrich, seconded by Comm. Tobin to adjourn the meeting. Motion was carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Comm. Kennedy, LiaBraaten, Roehrich, Tobin, Mayor Short

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: None

The meeting adjourned at 10:51 P.M.

Deborah Burd, Acting Township Clerk