



**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM  
March 9, 2020 VIRTUAL MEETING  
7:30 PM REGULAR MEETING  
Meeting Minutes**

**ROLL CALL:**

Mr. Baio	Present
Ms. Duarte	Present
Mr. Monaghan	Present
Mr. Orlins	Present
Mayor Neibart	Present

Also, present:

Deborah Bonanno, Township Administrator  
John Mills, Township Attorney  
Maria Coppinger, Township Clerk

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

**STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE**

Adequate Notice of this meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was given to the Observer Tribune and Daily Record on January 3, 2020. Notice was posted on the bulletin board in the township offices and notice was filed with the Township Clerk.

**MORRIS COUNTY OFFICE OF HEALTH MANAGEMENT** – Stephanie Gorman, Assistant Health Officer

- Coronavirus Update - Ms. Gorman assured the residents that they are working closely with the state health department and local partners to monitor and prepare. She noted that as of 6:00 PM this evening, Governor Murphy issued a State of Emergency which gives state authorities executive powers and safeguard for preparedness in response to the COVID-19 virus. This will allocate specific funding and resources to local health agencies and healthcare systems for their needs. Ms. Gorman provided additional information on the number of cases/deaths from the virus, funding, and testing availability. She also commented on the reasonable precautions that should be taken and the testing protocols.

**PROCLAMATION** – Recognizing and Congratulating the Rotary Club of the Mendhams for its Annual Spring Antiques and Art Show – Ms. Duarte presented the presentation to Mr. Bill Connelly, President of the Rotary Club.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Neibart made the following announcements:

- Tuesday, April 14 – The Mendhams will host their Annual Seder at the Brookside Community Club
- The Township’s website will have a link to the state’s health department and CDC to receive the most up to date information on COVID-19

Mr. Monaghan made the following announcements:

- March 27<sup>th</sup> – Police Department will host a Bagels and Badges event at the Wicker Basket

Ms. Duarte made the following announcements

- Acknowledged International Women’s Day
- March 21<sup>st</sup> - Art in the Atrium open
- Mendham TV launched a new series “Anything Mendham”
- Provided an overview on the Energy Aggregation Program since there has been questions from the public.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**Ms. Duarte moved. Mr. Orlins seconded the motion to open the meeting to the public.**

**All members present voted to open the meeting to the public.**

Joan Baker – 4 Woods End Road – Ms. Baker would like to know if Woods End Road is on the list to be paved. Susan Green and Kathy Ungar of Wood End Road were also present and noted the road needs to be paved not resurfaced. Mr. Orlins noted that he will look at the plan on when the roads get paved and will provide a response to Ms. Baker.

Jack Curtis – 4 Michael Road – Mr. Curtis noted that he complained a few years ago on the \$265,000 grant that Corey Lane received for road improvements which in his opinion did not need to be paved. He also commented on the Energy Aggregation Program noting that he received a letter regarding the change in supplier which was misleading. He made a suggestion to put a green (street) sign over the historic street markers for visibility. He commented on the Farmland Assessment Program and made several suggestions on how to improve the program.

Bob Flynn – Jersey Central Power & Light – Mr. Flynn provided an update on the increased vegetation management.

Diana Orban Brown – Ironia Road – Ms. Orban Brown asked for clarification on bills pertaining to Jersey Central Power & Light. She also mentioned the payment of \$2,074,528 to the Mendham Township School District (Elementary & Middle School) noting that residents of Mendham Township need to attend the board meetings to express their concerns on the increase in the school's budget.

Ms. Bonanno note that the Township completed an energy audit and several energy efficient upgrades will be made to several municipal buildings.

**Ms. Duarte moved. Mr. Monaghan seconded the motion to close the meeting to the public. All members present voted to close the public session.**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Regular and Executive Session Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2020  
Motion made by Ms. Duarte and seconded by Mr. Monaghan.  
Motion to call the question made by Ms. Duarte and second by Mr. Monaghan.  
Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.
- Executive Session Meeting Minutes of February 25, 2020  
Motion made by Ms. Duarte and seconded by Mr. Monaghan.  
Motion to call the question made by Ms. Duarte and second by Ms. Baio.  
Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

**2020-051** Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Approving Settlements of Real Property Tax Appeals

Motion made by Mr. Baio and seconded by Ms. Duarte.

Motion to call the question made by Mr. Baio and second by Ms. Duarte.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

**2020-052** Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Amending Personnel Policies and Procedures of the Employee Handbook

Motion made by Ms. Duarte and seconded by Mr. Monaghan.

Motion to call the question made by Mr. Baio and second by Ms. Duarte.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

**2020-053** Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Designating Human Resources Officers for the Township of Mendham - Maria Coppinger and Joseph Guanill

Motion made by Ms. Duarte and seconded by Mr. Monaghan.

Motion to amend resolution to include Joseph Guanill made by Ms. Duarte and second by Mr. Monaghan.

Motion to call the question made by Mr. Baio and second by Ms. Duarte.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

**2020-054** Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing 2019 Budget Appropriation Transfer

Motion made by Mr. Monaghan and seconded by Ms. Duarte.

Motion to call the question made by Ms. Duarte and second by Mr. Orlins.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

**2020-055** Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Approving Issuance of Social Affair Permit for Mendham Township Library

Motion made by Mr. Baio and seconded by Ms. Duarte.

Motion to call the question made by Ms. Duarte and second by Mr. Monaghan.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

**2020-056** Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing the Chief Financial Officer to Solicit Request for Qualifications from Architects and Engineers for Renovation of the Municipal Office Building and Police Facility

Motion made by Mr. Baio and seconded by Ms. Duarte.

Motion to call the question made by Ms. Duarte and second by Mr. Orlins.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

**2020-057** Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing Discussion Without the Presence of the Public – Contract Negotiations and Personnel Matters

Motion made by Mr. Baio and seconded by Ms. Duarte.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

**2020-058** Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing the Payment of Bills

Motion made by Ms. Duarte and seconded by Mr. Baio.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

### **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**Motion to open public comment was moved by Ms. Duarte and seconded by Mr. Orlins.**

**All members present voted to open the meeting to the public.**

Bruce Flitcroft – 23 Tingley Road - mentioned that the average homeowner in the United States pays \$3,498 in property taxes. He noted that New Jersey is the highest state in the country where we pay \$10,507 on average, almost three times the national average. Morris County is the 9<sup>th</sup> highest in the United States for property taxes, Mendham Township is the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in Morris County and 12<sup>th</sup> in the State of New Jersey. In Mendham Township residents pay \$19,195 in property taxes which is about 6 times the national average. He expressed that at some point the services and the capabilities of towns in places like Morris County & Bergen County are not that much different than they are in the rest of the county. He expressed that there has to be a longer-term strategy in the town to address the outlier effect.

Jack Curtis – Michael Road – he expressed that the problem is that New Jersey is the #1 donor state in the United States. He explained that every year New Jersey sends a dollar in taxes to Washington and New Jersey receives \$0.61 back and New Jersey has been 50<sup>th</sup> in what we get back. He suggested that the Township Committee should send a letter to the local representatives and ask that they look into the issue.

Ms. Bonanno commented that Mendham Township, in addition to the farmland assessments, has exempt properties that make of 25% of the Township.

Sam Barsa – 20 Conifer Road – He expressed that the problem is the expenses of the town; the Township Committee keeps spending money. He noted that in the last 20 years the budget increased by 400% and the population only increased by 400 residents. He asked for zero based budgets and asked the Township to stop spending money.

**Motion to closed public comment was moved by Ms. Duarte and seconded by Mr. Monaghan.**

**All members present voted to close public session.**

Mayor Neibart commented that Township Administrator Debbie Bonanno will be leaving Mendham Township for an exciting professional opportunity. Ms. Bonanno expressed that it has been a pleasure serving the residents and Township Committee.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### LIAISON REPORTS

##### Construction – Mr. Baio & Mr. Monaghan

No report

##### DPW - Mr. Monaghan

- Continued to repair catch basins
- Dave Read and Joe Guanill are working with Karen Fornaro on the Request for Proposals to outsource a lot of the functions in DPW

##### Environmental Commission – Ms. Duarte

- They filed there 2019 report
- They will attend an Earth Day Cleanup with Mendham Borough

##### Finance Committee- Mayor Neibart and Mr. Orlins

- Mr. Orlins expressed that the Finance Committee has a set of experience and very talented individuals which include two former Mayors Frank Cioppettini and Diana Orban Brown, two new talent Bruce Flitcroft and Ryan Guthrie, experienced and talented Bob Wock, Ms. Bonanno and Ms. Fornaro.
- Request for Proposals for every major function in DPW

- Decisions were made to freeze the operating budget for DPW and Police
- Library, Ralston Fire Company, Recreation presented their budget.
- Decisions were made on MAST, Historic Presentation and they will look into Brookside Engine Company

Fire Department – Mayor Neibart

- Fire Department presented their budget
- The siren at Ralston has been fixed

First Aid Squad – Ms. Duarte

- Closely monitoring the Coronavirus situation and they are working with the County and local OEM
- Recruited a few new members and new driver

Historic Preservation – Mr. Baio

- Discussed ways to fund the seed house renovations at Pitney
- Discussed fundraising options
- Discussed the historical signs at Pitney

Library – Mr. Monaghan

- Stephanie Cotton, the Library Director for the last 13 years is retiring effective March 31<sup>st</sup>
- Library will be closed for renovations – Thanked the generous support of their patrons for making the refresh possible
- Wine with Friends event – May 1, 2020 at Backer Farm – Tickets are available
- Openings on the Board of Trustees

Mendham Sewer East & West – Mayor Neibart

- The Township sent letters to the 9 residents of Drakewick who were identified to be the possible reason of the excessive flows. Inspections will take place.

Mendham Township School District – Mr. Orlins

- Meeting scheduled with the Superintendent Sal Consentino was cancelled

Mendham TV – Ms. Duarte

- Several new students have volunteered
- Seeking new Board Members

Planning Board – Mr. Baio & Mr. Monaghan

No report

Police – Ms. Duarte and Mr. Monaghan

No report

Recreation Committee – Mr. Orlins

No Report

Regional School District – Mr. Monaghan

No Report

Shared Court – Mayor Neibart

No Report

Stigma-Free Initiative – Ms. Duarte

- The Youth Mental Health First Aid Training has been scheduled for April 18th. Thanked David Guida for his assistance with Community Pass.
- Working with the high school students (seniors) to recognize Mental Health Awareness Month

Surrounding Town Outreach – Mr. Orlins

- Continues to have discussions with officials in the surrounding towns, in particular, there is a proposal being evaluated by the Borough's Finance Committee Finance Committee to potentially do something together with the police departments.

Tax Assessor – Mayor Neibart

No Report

Tree Committee – Mayor Neibart

Mayor Neibart will conduct drive-thru, with Brian Hays, on the trees.

Wildlife Management – Ms. Duarte

- Will attend her first meeting this week

Ms. Duarte thanked Ms. Bonanno for her years of services.

Zoning Board – Mr. Baio

No Report

Executive Session – 9:08PM

Motion was made by Ms. Duarte and second by Mr. Orlins to enter into Executive Session.

All members present voted in favor.

**ADJOURN**

Motion made by Ms. Duarte and second by Mr. Baio.

All members present voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Distributed: 05/21/2020

Approved: 05/26/2020

Maria F. Coppinger  
Township Clerk