



**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM
March 24, 2020 VIRTUAL MEETING
6:45 PM EXECUTIVE SESSION (CLOSED)
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. The Notice of Change in Meeting Time and Meeting Format was given to the Daily Record and Star Ledger on March 19, 2020. Notice was posted on the bulletin board in the township offices, front door of Town hall and notice was filed with the Township Clerk.

2020-059 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing Discussion Without the Presence of the Public – Personnel Matter

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION (CLOSED)

REGUAR MEETING 7:30PM

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

RECOGNIZING NEW MEMBER

Chris Matioli has applied to be Senior Member at Brookside Engine Company #1.

COVID-19 – update reported by Stephanie Gorman and Kathy Basile, County Public Health Nurse.

Ms. Gorman reported that the NJ Department of Health has created a website for live data relating to the Covid19 spread which is Covid19nj.gov. Ms. Gorman reported on the current number of cases and she explained that in order to slow the progression of cases, social distancing is necessary. This will help 'flatten the curve' of cases and reduce burden on the health care system. Currently, PNC Art Center serves as the testing site for NJ residents with another to be set up soon in Morris County, restricted to Morris County residents. These sites are only for symptomatic residents with a doctor's prescription. Currently, the Governor's executive order to stay at home is being enforced.

Kathy Basile reported on the number of cases in Mendham Township. Currently there are seven reported cases, with only 5 listed in the state system. Morristown Hospital reports mostly mild cases. Ms. Basile has been doing a lot of case finding via the CDRS system, which is confidential. Ms. Basile commented that Mendham Township cases are currently below the standard of other towns, at this point. As testing continues, more cases will be reported.

Ms. Neibart clarified with Ms. Gorman and Ms. Basile that they reach out to anyone who has been in contact with a person who has tested positively within a 72-hour period according to CDC guidelines. Additionally, Ms. Gorman confirmed that people are most contagious when symptomatic, but since there are so many mild cases, it is possible that people view their symptoms as seasonal allergies yet symptomatic. For that reason, anyone who has been in touch with a confirmed case should contact their physician.

The Committee praised and thanked Ms. Gorman and Ms. Basile for their efforts.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Neibart announced that the budget workshop originally scheduled for tonight's meeting has been rescheduled for April 13th, and the budget will be introduced on April 28th.

Mayor Neibart announced that the Passover Seder has been cancelled due to the current health crisis circumstance. Ms. Duarte thanked all of the first responders and health care workers in the township. Chief Johnson requested that Ms. Duarte mention that it is important to drive carefully during this time since so many people are out walking. The Environmental Commission reminds everyone to check the Hike Mendham.org website and take advantage of trails, adhering to social distancing guidelines. Schiff Nature Preserve trails are also open. The Stigma Free Task Force initiated 'Chalk your walk' to invite children and adults to write inspirational messages. Ms. Duarte mentioned that for residents who may need emotional support, there are two confidential resources: NJ Mental Health Cares at 866-202-4357, and Second Floor at 1-888-222-2228 which services young adults. Ms. Duarte thanked the team working

on the Senior Outreach effort- First aid cadets Sofia Hu and Evan Abamoff, Diane Tolley, Janet Wood, Denise Bobinski and Mayor Neibart. The team checks in with senior residents to determine how they are doing and if they have any specific needs. Anyone who knows of a senior who could benefit from this resource can contact the team at outreach@mendhamtownship.org.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Ms. Duarte moved. Mr. Baio seconded the motion to open the meeting to the public.
All members present voted to open the meeting to the public.

Ryan Guthrie – 28 Cold Hill Rd – Mr. Guthrie advised that he has friends on Ironia Rd, namely Backer Farm, that is an open farm stand stocked with available items. Mr. Guthrie also thanked the committee for the hard work during this difficult time.

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

RESOLUTIONS

Personnel: The action taken in Executive session was to appoint Bob Casey as Interim Administrator to replace Deborah Bonanno, who has resigned and the meeting tonight is her last. Mayor Neibart expressed gratitude for Ms. Bonanno's service and that she will be missed.

Ms. Duarte moved to appoint Bob Casey as Interim Administrator at an hourly rate not to exceed \$70.00 as a part time contracted employee. **Mr. Baio seconded.**

Ms. Duarte commented that Mr. Casey has significant experience in various townships and will be a terrific Interim Administrator. Ms. Duarte added that Ms. Bonanno's departure is a loss for the township and wished her well. Ms. Bonanno replied that she will also miss everyone and appreciated the opportunity the township has afforded her. Mr. Monaghan added that he wishes Ms. Bonanno well and thanked her for her impressive work and service.

Mr. Monaghan moved to call a question. Ms. Duarte seconded.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2020-060 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Approval of the LOSAP Qualification List for the Ralston Engine Company No. 1, Brookside Engine Company No. 1, and Mendham Township First Aid Squad

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

Mr. Monaghan commented that as an active member of the First Aid Squad he would abstain from voting.

Ms. Duarte thanked all for their dedication.

Ms. Neibart read the names of all who qualify.

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

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve with the exception of Mr. Monaghan who abstained.

2020-061 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing the Township of Mendham to Establish a Commodity Resale System and to Enter Into a Commodity Resale Agreement with Mendham Township Board of Education

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

Ms. Bonanno explained that this resolution formalizes a previous informal agreement.

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

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2020-062 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Approving Settlements of Real Property Tax Appeals

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

Mr. Monaghan commented that these appeals are a huge loss to the township budget and something should be done to stem this tide. Ms. Neibart mentioned that pros and cons of these appeals will be discussed at end of April with the Tax Assessor.

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

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2020-063 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Approving Raffle License

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

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

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2020-064 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing the Payment of Bills

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

Mr. Monaghan mentioned he forwarded questions to Ms. Fornaro about the phone bill. Ms. Bonanno explained that the Vonage contract is expiring and other companies are being considered.

Motion to call the question made by Mr. Baio and seconded by Mr. Orlins.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2020-065 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing Bid Advertisement for the Improvements to Cold Hill Road – New Jersey Department of Transportation Project

Motion made by Mr. Baio and seconded by Mr. Monaghan.

Ms. Duarte asked for clarification of the project to which Ms. Bonanno explained that it is the completion of the prior road improvement.

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

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2020-066 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Appointing Sarah Neibart Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator

Mayor Neibart yielded to Deputy Mayor Monaghan.

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

Committee members voiced appreciation for the Mayor's work on Covid19 leadership.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve except for Mayor Neibart who abstained.

2020-067 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Amending Interest Rate-Delinquent Taxes and Sewer Fees

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

A discussion ensued as to whether delinquent taxes would become an issue. Ms. Neibart explained the intent is to provide temporary relief to residents during the pandemic crisis, and that the township is in a healthy financial situation to handle this due to the good work of Ms. Fornaro and Ms. Bonanno.

Motion to call the question 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. Baio.

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

Diana Orban Brown – Ironia Road. Ms. Orban Brown questioned via online text whether the committee was aware that the school district is proposing a 7.3% tax increase for the upcoming school year. Ms. Neibart explained that she is aware of the increase and will voice her disagreement with how the busses are funded with the superintendent. Committee members agreed that since the township is trying to keep taxes low that the board should be held accountable and the committee should voice disagreement and concern. Ms. Duarte commented that she will try to obtain more information at future meetings. Mr. Baio thanked Ms. Orban Brown for bringing this to the committee's attention. Mr. Monaghan mentioned that some mayors were requesting a referendum to bring school taxes up for a public vote. Mr. Orlins reported that he has had discussions with Ms. Holquist, the school board president, and he believes this could be a shared services opportunity. Ms. Orban Brown also mentioned that the public should be made aware that the state has a hold on the Homestead Rebate for May.

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

All members present voted to close public session.

DISCUSSION

LIAISON REPORTS

Construction – Inspections area being moved if there is no imminent closing date. For those with an imminent closing date, requirements are waived but inspections must be done within 30 days.

DPW- spring brush April 6th. Mulch will still be delivered. Free mulch also available.

Environmental Commission – New signs made for India Brook and Historic Preservation districts. Working with Mendham Borough on a tool to evaluate potential development. No meeting scheduled this month. Potential Zoom meeting next month.

Finance Committee – Budget with no additional taxes. Underlying operation budget up significantly. Major initiatives to address large operations such as to issue RFP's for work done by DPW.

Fire Department – run cards agreement by April 15th possible

First Aid Squad- working closely with local and county resources. 911 dispatcher may ask more questions than usual based on Covid19.

Historic Preservation- no update

Library - Stephanie Cotton will be retiring as director and Trish Paul will be new director effective April 1 as well as Rachel Harrison will be new program director. No fines on materials while library is closed both for the township and county; keep materials at home. Library can be accessed remotely. Wine with Friends event is postponed until fall.

Mendham Sewer East & West- no update

Mendham Township School District- students are e-learning and commendations mentioned for school district during the crisis.

Mendham TV- Rebroadcasting of governor briefings with ticker info on bottom of screen.

Planning Board – No meeting this month. Master plan subcommittee’s kick off is pushed back.

Police – Events are cancelled. Residents are asked to follow police guidelines. Delays for firearm permits.

Recreation Committee – Olympics are postponed. Patriots race may be postponed. Asking residents to maintain distance on trails. Golf and tennis clubs are closed however efforts are being made to request opening.

Regional School District – PPE was donated to Morristown Memorial.

Shared Court- no update

Stigma-Free Initiative - Chalk the Walk continues. Facebook will post resources for residents. Hosting Zoom webinar for volunteers’ brainstorm session. Proposed Autism awareness month proclamation for April.

Surrounding Town Outreach – no update

Tax Assessor- no update

Tree Committee – no update

Wildlife Management - Resolution proposed for their schedule.

Zoning Board- no update

Mayor Neibart updated the committee on Covid crisis and closures of buildings and encouraged social distancing and stay at home. Town Hall employees are working remotely and occasionally alternately in town hall. All buildings and vehicles were recently deep cleaned. PPE equipment has been ordered but still needed. Every Friday Covid telephone meetings are held with all stakeholders in town.

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