



**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM
April 13, 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:

John Mills, Township Attorney
Bob Casey, Interim Administrator
Maria Coppinger, Township Clerk

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 Format was given to the Daily Record and Star Ledger on April 3, 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.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

PROCLAMATION

- **Supporting and Honoring our Healthcare Workers, First Responders, and Essential Employees**
Mayor Neibart introduced Captain George Budd who thanked the Committee, and he expressed that it was a privilege to work with all departments in the township.
- **Autism Awareness Month -April 2020**
Ms. Duarte read the proclamation. Melissa Suharko who is a resident with a child who has autism, spoke about the challenges that parents face, especially during the current Covid19 crisis. She thanked the Committee for raising awareness.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Mayor Neibart presented statistics based on Stephanie Gorman's report. Currently there are 30 cases of Covid19 in the township. The Morris County College testing site had 1,867 patients. The Mayor mentioned that there is community spread, however there are fewer cases in general with higher death rates. Currently there is no federal definition of what is considered to be in recovery. Mayor Neibart reported that the Governor signed an executive order today that there is a state of emergency in NJ and that face coverings are recommended in public places as well as take out food should be covered. Mayor Neibart's nightly reports from the Department of Health outline statistical information regarding hospitalizations, discharges and mortality rates.

Mr. Baio asked whether there were any deaths in the township to which the Mayor responded that there were none to her knowledge.

Ms. Duarte commented that she had gotten several questions from residents as to whether neighborhoods could be Covid identified to which the Mayor responded that is not publicly available.

A question arose from the public virtual chat as to whether Mendham Township will do contact tracing. Mayor Neibart responded that she will look into this. Mr. Monaghan commented that once a person is diagnosed as having Covid19 that contact tracing is done by the County Health department. The resident questioned whether the township could take the lead on tracing however it was mentioned this is not possible as the Township Committee does not receive names of those people diagnosed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Neibart's:

- Prior to this meeting the Township Committee and Finance Committee met for a workshop regarding the 2020 budget. The 0% increase in property tax will be discussed at the next township committee meeting on Tuesday, April 28th.

- The first Sirens for Solidarity event was held this evening at 6pm to support those in the community affected by the virus as well as front line workers.
- The Governor has issued an executive order for state flags to be flown half staff for those who have lost their lives due to Covid19 and the township has done the same.
- The Recreation department is sponsoring a free Mendham Gets Fit program for the month of April.
- The County College of Morris testing site is closed today but open tomorrow for Morris County residents who have a doctor prescription, are symptomatic and have an appointment. The FEMA site does not require an appointment but individuals must be symptomatic. Sick patients must call first, wear a mask, and present with a temperature. The 911 number should not be used for testing requests.
- The Medical Reserve Corps need volunteers. Anyone who has PPE can donate.
- Residents are encouraged to attend the virtual school board budget open house on April 16 and 23. A 7% increase is being proposed.

Mr. Monaghan: Thanked residents for continuing to practice social distancing.

Ms. Duarte: Ms. Duarte announced that the Stigma Free Task force is holding a fundraising drive to benefit the Interfaith Food Pantry. Donations can be made on the Stigma Free facebook page or on the Interfaith Food Pantry website under Mendham Stigma Free. The Task Force is also promoting a campaign for Mental Health Awareness month in May. Photos and other things will be posted on Facebook highlighting positive happenings in the community. The Environmental Commission and Schiff have cancelled the usual Earth Day cleanup however neighborhood clean up will be promoted individually rather than as a group. Mendham TV continues to cover the Governor's daily press briefings and also broadcasting old library lectures. Additionally there is a tickler on the bottom of the screen with announcements; anyone who would like to post an announcement can contact George Twill at grtwill@gmail.com. The Wildlife Committee recommends that bird feeders be elevated to avoid attracting bears and also to secure trash cans.

Mr. Orlins: Mr. Orlins made the Mendham Township Board of Education Budget announcement document available on the screen. Mr. Orlins commented that this is an opportunity for residents to weigh in on the proposed budget.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

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

Diana Urban Brown – Ironia Road - Ms. Brown suggested that an amendment be made to the open space resolution to bar specific group activities such as picnics. Mr. Monaghan commented that this is already in the resolution language. Mayor Neibart agreed that that a line to the effect that group events are excluded could be added since emergency rules are made on a local level.

Taylor Buonocore - 28 Cold Hill Road - Ms. Buonocore commented that these virtual town meetings are worthwhile and thanked the Committee for doing a good job.

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

2020-069 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Requesting that New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy Reopen State and County Parks, Public and Private Recreation Areas, with Appropriate Social Distancing, and Designate the Closing Authority of these Areas to Each Municipality and Its Law Enforcement Agency

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

Mayor Neibart explained that the purpose of this resolution was not to necessarily open all areas automatically, but to allow the municipality to have the authority to open or manage these recreation areas.

Mr. Orlins commented that the Governor's executive order mostly included areas that are typically crowded, unlike golf courses, which are wide open, monitored, and by nature offer social distancing. He added that golf is one of the only exercises afforded to seniors and he recommended that like the surrounding states of New York and Connecticut, that golf courses be allowed to remain open.

Ms. Duarte raised a concern about the wording in the resolution regarding the opening of all state and county parks, and that it was too broad and that Mendham Township has no state parks so it isn't an issue

impacting Mendham Township. She also noted she had checked with Morris County Freeholder Deborah Smith, and the county has no intentions of re-opening county parks at this time.

After a discussion amongst Committee members, it was decided that Mayor Neibart would amend the resolution to strike the word 'state' and insert Diana Orban Brown's suggestion to include that no group activities are allowed.

Motion made by Mayor Neibart and second by Mr. Orlins.

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

Ms. Duarte offered a friendly amendment to change the words 'public and private recreation area' to 'public and private golf courses' since she felt the wording was too broad and that the original intent is lost.

Attorney Mills pointed out that there was no second motion to Ms. Duarte's friendly amendment therefore it would not occur.

Motion to call the question by Mr. Orlins. Seconded by Mr. Monaghan.

Ms. Duarte made a final comment that she would abstain because the resolution is too broad.

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

2020-070 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing Contract with Edward Clark Landscape Architect to Develop Landscape Construction Drawings and Bid Form for the Project at the Mendham Township Historic Park at Pitney Farm

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

Mr. Baio requested that the HPC have a seat at the review meeting.

Mr. Casey will be authorized to work with the contractor to establish a suitable timeline.

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

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2020-071 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing the Payment of Bills

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

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

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2020-072 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Establishing an Ad Hoc Communications Committee and Appointing Members

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

Ms. Duarte explained that this is a project based focus effort to attract new residents and ensure that property values stabilize and continue to go up.

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

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

ORDINANCE FOR INTRODUCTION / FIRST HEARING

03-2020 An Ordinance of the Township of Mendham Providing for the Milling and Paving of Woodland Road and Appropriating \$280,000 Therefore, Including \$252,000 from the State of New Jersey Department of Transportation and \$28,000 from the Capital Improvement Fund

Second Reading and Public Hearing Scheduled for April 28, 2020

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

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

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. Monaghan.

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

There were no public comments.

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

All members present voted to close public session.

DISCUSSION

- Animal Control Services Agreement-Mr. Casey presented a draft of the Animal Control Services Agreement between Mendham Township, Mendham Borough, and Chester Township. Ms. Duarte clarified that Animal Control and Animal Shelter are separate services.

- Mayor Neibart reported on a conversation she had with the school board regarding their proposed increase of 7%. It was explained to her that the board was planning on buying busses, to which Mayor Neibart objects, and she proposed that they should be bonding the buses. In response to her suggestion to put this question on the ballot, the board changed the increase to 5% by using reserve funds. Mayor Neibart expressed dissatisfaction with how the board members have been voting and mentioned the possibility of putting the local school budget up for a public vote. Mayor Neibart encouraged all to attend school budget meetings.

LIAISON REPORTS

Construction - Mr. Monaghan reported that inspections are halted for now.

DPW - Mr. Monaghan reported that brush pick up continues. Preparing for road paving.

Environmental Commission – Ms. Duarte reported that there is a Zoom meeting upcoming for Earth day clean up

Finance Committee - Mr. Orlins commended Mayor Gisser and the previous Finance Committee as well as Mayor Neibart for their work.

Fire Department - Mayor Neibart reported that their budget has been frozen and there will be more conversations on run cards in the future.

First Aid Squad - no update

Historic Preservation - no update

Library - no updated provided

Mendham Sewer East & West - Mayor Neibart reported that there was a transformer down at Sewer West which was resolved. Increased flow problem still continues at Sewer East and a resolution of the problem will be pursued.

Mendham Township School District - Mr. Orlins complimented teachers during this difficult time.

Mendham TV – no update

Planning Board – no update

Police - Mr. Monaghan reported that police have modified their situation, responding with PPE and distancing. Be aware of an uptick in fraud and online donation sites. There will be an elementary school teach parades this week. Processing of firearms permits are running slower than usual. Report suspicious activity. Ms. Duarte mentioned that residents have been asking about signs in support of police which were purchased by former Mayor Gisser.

Recreation Committee – no update

Regional School District – no update

Shared Court – no update

Stigma-Free Initiative – Mary Kornick has been appointed as official Borough liaison.

Surrounding Town Outreach – no update

Tax Assessor – no update

Tree Committee –no update

Wildlife Management – no update

Zoning Board – no update

Mayor Neibart reported that the town hall reassessment due date has been moved back to early next week.

ADJOURN

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

All members present voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Distributed: 06/04/2020

Approved: 06/09/2020

Maria F. Coppinger
Township Clerk