



**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM
SPECIAL MEETING
Minutes**

DATE: Thursday, November 19, 2020

TIME: 6:00 PM Executive Session
7:30 PM Special Session

LOCATION: **IN-PERSON LOCATION**
Town Hall
2 West Main Street
Brookside

REMOTE VIA ZOOM – Link on the last page
Webinar ID: 838 8095 2143
Passcode: 021071

ROLL CALL

Mr. Baio Present (left at 9:00 pm)
Ms. Duarte Present
Mr. Monaghan Present
Mr. Orlins Present
Mayor Neibart Present

Also, Present:

Mr. Bob Casey, Interim Administrator
Mr. John Mills, Township Attorney
Ms. Maria F. 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 November 16, 2020. Notice was posted on the bulletin board in the township offices and notice was filed with the Township Clerk.

REGULAR AGENDA – RESOLUTIONS

2020-219 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Providing for a Meeting Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE	MOTION	SECOND	MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION	SECOND	ROLL CALL		
					YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Baio				X	X		
Ms. Duarte	X		X		X		
Mr. Monaghan					X		
Mr. Orlins		X			X		
Mayor Neibart					X		

Township Committee adjourned into executive session at 6:02PM. Township Committee reconvened at 7:26PM.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

REGULAR SESSION STARTS AT 7:30PM

WORKSHOP

Discussion on the Department of Public Works Presentation originally presented on November 9, 2020

Mr. Orlins gave a presentation at last meeting, and the presentation is posted on the website. Mr. Orlins made the following remarks:

- There is big chunk of work available out in the private sector that can be done, better, faster, cheaper.
- This is not a destruction of DPW; it's a restructure.
- We are not eliminating any services; it's all about who does it.
- We are just talking about alternatives.
- There are some, next steps that the committee can take to initiate the process, take some small steps, phase in some of the major outsourcing pieces.

Mr. Baio made the following remarks:

- This is not an immediate cutting of the DPW; This is a phased series of steps.
- Evaluate in a very methodical way.
- Supports continuing the approach to cut expenses.

Ms. Duarte made the following remarks:

- Glad to hear Mr. Baio say that this is not an immediate plan that was going to be implemented.
- She is hearing a lot of concern from residents like diminishing of services, slower response time and if any savings would be seen.
- Expressed her concern with Slide 25; language matters.
- Slide 17 talks about beautification as "odd jobs" – it did not include anything about trail work, pedestrian easements.
- Iworq may not have been the most accurately functionally data collection system.
- Emergency Services rely on DPW.
- "This might not work out" –glad we are not selling equipment.
- The plan seems very risky.
- She is very supportive of DPW.

Mr. Monaghan made the following remarks:

- He was told that the Iworq data is 50% correct; would have liked to see all the data the study was based on.
- We need to dive into the outsource cost, concerned with the prevailing wage.
- Having a staff of 4 is not reasonable.
- Does not have all of the information at this time to make a decision.
- As a first responder, he knows how important it is to have DPW assist during weather related emergencies.
- Happy to hear that there is a possibility of further analysis.

Mayor Neibart made the following remarks:

- She expressed that language is powerful; she doesn't believe the language that was used by several people during last week's meeting was appropriate.
- She spoke with the DPW Superintendent and notified him that the township committee is not planning to take action on this proposal, immediately.

- If there is a unanimous vote, later tonight, the Township Committee will reject the snow plow bids.
- She does not have enough data or information to make a decision on the proposal; expressed that 4 employees seems very low.
- She requested from the superintendent the work that is being done every day so she can create a log and get clarity.
- We should not be talking about decreasing the number of employees when seeking Request for Proposals or in the spring.
- Thanked Mr. Orlins for his efforts in putting together the presentation but at the end of the day she would like to give DPW the benefit of the doubt.

The Township Committee engaged in a discussion on the DPW presentation. Overall, the Township Committee agreed that additional information is needed and questions need to be answered to be able to move forward.

Mr. Monaghan would like to get the Committee's feeling on whether we should ask the administrator to look into finding a third-party reviewer to make sure we are dealing with accurate data and conclusion.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mr. Monaghan made a motion to open the meeting to the public; seconded by Ms. Duarte.

Jack Curtis - 4 Michael Road – commented on the downsizing of the DPW, noting that data can say anything. He does not believe 4 DPW employees will be able to maintain the town. He asked the committee to look into the two ways that he has mentioned to bring money to Mendham Township like the bus maintenance contract and farmland assessment.

Mike Broadrick – Teamster Local 469, Hazlet, NJ – Thanked everyone for their commitment to the process and going forward, hopefully a long and happy career with everyone. Mr. Broadrick invited Mr. Orlins to ride in a snow plow truck or a salt truck. He does not agree with the proposals from landscapers that will do the same work for less. He thanked the committee for their insight as far as getting additional information because it's really needed. He thanked the DPW employees for their continued work.

Martin Slayne - 15 Indian Hollow Road – He highlighted a letter that he submitted to the committee from the Environmental Commission, regarding the maintenance of the parks and trails.

Mr. Baio left the meeting at 9:00PM.

Craig Shrader - 1 West Main Street – The trails are not being maintained. The work load needs to be considered. The proposal needs to have the superintendent of DPW involved in this process.

Peter Dumovic - 3 Shelton Road – Stated the committee had a terrific presentation in August and likes the workshop style of the meetings. He also likes the idea of a peer review of the study. The study is an excellent starting point but the most important element, moving forward, is to include the department head.

Rick Blood - 32 Tingley Road – He reviewed the slides, and made some calculation corrections on numbers presented. He provided the Committee with some suggestions on cost saving efforts. He expressed his concern on prevailing wages.

Patricia Zimmerman, 3 West Main Street – Thanked Mr. Orlins for all the work he has done. He has opened up a subject for debate which is healthy for the town and committee. The DPW gets so much support because Dave has been a wonderful leader for so many years. She expressed that items have been neglected and thinks Dave needs more help and not less.

Rick Blood - 32 Tingley Road – Commented that Boonton Township is 8.5 sq. miles, population 4,200 and they have never had a DPW since their inception – their medium income is \$117,000. Mendham Township is 18 sq. miles, population 5,600 and medium income is \$185,000.

Craig Shrader - 1 West Main Street – The presentation needs to have some attention paid to some other departments / or municipalities which would add color.

Jack Curtis - 4 Michael Road – commented that the towns on the list that he provided with 10-50 DPW employees are not maintaining large DPWs because it’s a nice thing to do; they are maintaining them because they provide a huge service to the town.

Pratip Chattopadhyah – 12 Brookrace Drive - He is appalled by the DPW presentation. He is not concern with the data entry errors, he is concern with analysis and interpretation error and there is a lot of spin and a lack of objectivity in the presentation. He encouraged Mr. Orlins to share not only the raw iworq data but his working files as well. He believes the whole analysis is confirmation bias. He encouraged the committee to think about the idea of peer review or an independent analysis of the issue. He is surprise of the phasing-in approach.

Michael Merritt – Mountainside Road – He applauded the committee for establishing the workshop format, it’s extremely useful. He addressed a couple of separate issues; spoke on the prudence of adults meeting indoors without wearing masks, he appreciated the comments made about the importance of language. Mr. Merritt had several questions regarding the presentation. He also noted that he is leery in rushing into a solution but at the same time, counseled the committee that long period of indirection with layoffs being openly discussed will result inevitable qualified and valuable employees finding secure employment elsewhere.

Diana Orban Brown – Ironia Road – She supports the idea of peer review, this is a very important point, please move forward on this. One of the problems the DPW faces is that they are not well known as individuals by most of the members of the tax paying public. She recommends that as soon as possible after the new year, the Township Committee invite the DPW to make a formal presentation to the Township Committee and the public regarding their work, their challenges, and opportunities, and most important the money that they save the Township of Mendham by being available to what contractors can not or fail to do. For the DPW employees who would like to come to the presentation and be introduced they should be welcomed.

Mayor Neibart made a statement about the committee members not wearing masks on the dais noting that there are barriers (plexi-glass) between each member. This procedure was signed off by the County Health Dept.

Ms. Duarte made a motion to close the public comment section; seconded by Mr. Monaghan.

RESOLUTIONS

2020-220 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Rejecting Bids for Snow Plow Services

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE	MOTION	SECOND	MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION	SECOND	ROLL CALL		
					YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Baio					ABSENT		
Ms. Duarte	X		X		X		
Mr. Monaghan				X	X		
Mr. Orlins		X			X		
Mayor Neibart					X		

2020-221 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing a Contract with Phoenix Consulting for Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Services

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE	MOTION	SECOND	MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION	SECOND	ROLL CALL		
					YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Baio					ABSENT		
Ms. Duarte		X	X		X		
Mr. Monaghan	X			X	X		
Mr. Orlins					X		
Mayor Neibart					X		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mr. Monaghan made a motion to open the meeting to the public; seconded by Ms. Duarte.

Patricia Zimmerman – 3 West Main Street – Asked about the debt principle in the presentation. She noted that we pay close to \$2 million dollars to service the debt that we have – she expressed that is the problem.

Michael Merritt – Mountainside Road – noted that the benchmark target is 2%.

Jack Curtis – 4 Michael Road – he wrote a letter to the editor and it started with a quote “measure twice, cut once” and suggested that be the rule followed with DPW. He spoke about farmland assessments.

Ms. Duarte made a motion to close the public comment section; seconded by Mr. Orlins.

Mayor Neibart asked for a motion to table the discussion items to Tuesday’s meeting. Motion made by Ms. Duarte; seconded by Mr. Orlins.

DISCUSSION

- ***Administration***
 - Land Use Organization: Combining Planning and Zoning Boards
 - Committee Ordinances
 - 2021 Appointment Process –Seeking and Evaluating Volunteer
 - Construction Project Proposed Schedule

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn at 10:12pm made by Ms. Duarte; seconded by Mr. Monaghan.

Respectfully submitted,

Distributed: 05/21/2021

Approved: 05/24/2021

Maria F. Coppinger
Township Clerk

