

**TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 10, 2005**

Mayor O'Connor called the workshop meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Chatham to order at 7:30 p.m.

Adequate Notice of this meeting of the Township Committee was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was given to both The Chatham Courier and the Morris County Daily Record on January 7, 2005; notice was posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building on January 7, 2005; and notice was filed with the Township Clerk on January 7, 2005.

Mayor O'Connor led the flag salute.

Answering present to the roll call were Committeewoman Hagner, Committeeman Hartford, Deputy Mayor DeMeo and Mayor O'Connor. Committeeman Brower arrived at 7:37 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

Deputy Mayor DeMeo requested that maintenance for the tennis courts be added to Discussion Items. Mayor O'Connor suggested tabling Discussion Item 1 "Snow Management/Sidewalks" and making the tennis courts discussion item "1a." All members were unanimously in favor of amending the agenda.

Reports

Mayor O'Connor advised the Committee and the public that the closing on the Kirby property was held the previous evening, February 9, 2005, and commended all who were involved for their work and time.

Mayor O'Connor proposed adding three items for the February 24, 2005 meeting, which will include a budget presentation, a discussion on assessments to be led by Ernest DelGuercio, and an award ceremony to recognize Otto Vopelius. Administrator Ciccarone advised that the actual tax rate will be determined upon completion of the municipal, school and county budgets; an estimated rate will be included in the presentation.

Hearing of Citizens

Mayor O'Connor opened the hearing of citizens.

1. Dan Miller, Green Village Road resident, asked if copies of the budget would be available prior to the presentation on February 24, 2005. Administrator Ciccarone advised the budget would be available after the Township Committee introduces it. Mr. Miller asked when the residents who came in for an informal hearing would be notified of the Assessor's decision. Administrator Ciccarone stated that letters are in the process of being mailed to those residents. Attorney Woodward advised that appeals could be filed with the County by April 1, 2005. Attorney Woodward added that if your assessment exceeded \$750,000, an appeal could be filed directly with the State.
2. Ervin Hoag, member of the Tree Committee and Township resident, informed the Township Committee and the public of the dangers of the Asian Longhorned Beetle and advised that brochures are available in the Clerk's Office at Town Hall so the residents can be aware of the signs.
3. Dot Stillinger, Environmental Commission Chair and Township resident, spoke on behalf of Julia Somers from the Great Swamp Watershed and thanked everyone instrumental with the acquisition of the Kirby property and provided special thanks to Sue Hoag, Bill O'Connor and Administrator Ciccarone.
4. Peter Hofmann, May Drive resident, asked if there was anything new on the Woodland Park project, and the Committee's response was no. Mr. Hofmann asked about last month's meeting discussion that an individual was renting an affordable housing unit and questioned what the town is doing to correct the situation. Administrator Ciccarone advised that this information was brought to his attention and the town is in the process of having the person evicted. Committeeman Hartford reiterated discussion from last

month's meeting relative to the sale of units in 2016 at fair market value and asked what impact there would be on the affordable housing requirement at that time. Administrator Ciccarone advised that there is no way of predicting this information and Attorney Woodward added that we do not know what the State's plan will be after the 30 year period. Committeeman Brower asked Attorney Woodward what effect the Darcy School and the number of commercial employees would have on the round three certification. Attorney Woodward advised the number of employees and the square footage are considered in the standards, and that the Planning Board and Planner would review the requirements this year. The Township Committee requested Attorney Woodward to discuss affordable housing with the Planning Board attorney relative to grandfather clauses.

Since there were no further comments, Mayor O'Connor closed the hearing of citizens.

Consent Agenda

RESOLUTION 2005-045

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS, PAYROLLS, SCHOOL TAXES, AND COUNTY TAXES

BE IT RESOLVED that bills in the total amount of \$385,668.86 and the prior month's payroll of \$362,415.06 Current Fund, \$40,345.10 Sewer No. 1, \$7,226.13 Sewer No. 2, and \$2,023.20 Police Private Employment be paid.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that taxes due to School District of the Chathams for the month of February 2005, in the amount of \$1,709,137.00 be paid.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that taxes due to the County of Morris, for the First Quarter 2005, in the amount of \$1,545,615.30 be paid.

RESOLUTION 2005-046

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM APPROVING RAFFLES FOR ST. PATRICK CHURCH

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Chatham that off-premise raffles to be conducted by St. Patrick Church on April 16, 2005, at 234 Southern Boulevard, Chatham Township, are hereby approved.

RESOLUTION 2005-047

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM, COUNTY OF MORRIS, STATE OF NEW JERSEY APPROVING ONE-DAY SPECIAL PERMIT FOR LIQUOR LICENSE

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Chatham that the following permit for a One-Day Liquor License is hereby approved:

<u>Name of Organization</u>	<u>Dates of Social Affair</u>	<u>Place where Affair will be held</u>
Chatham Township Volunteer Fire Department	June 4, 2005	Chatham Township Volunteer Fire Department 495 River Road Chatham, NJ 07928

Deputy Mayor DeMeo moved to approve the Consent Agenda, Resolution 2005-045 through Resolution 2005-047. Committeewoman Hagner seconded the motion.

Roll call: Committeewoman Hagner, Aye; Committeeman Brower, Aye; Committeeman Hartford, Aye; Deputy Mayor DeMeo, Aye; Mayor O'Connor, Aye.

Discussion

- 1a. Tennis Courts: Deputy Mayor DeMeo advised the Committee that the Colony Tennis Courts are showing signs of deterioration and Thomas Denning, Recreation Director, has reviewed proposals to resurface the courts. Administrator Ciccarone stated that Mr. Denning's memorandum recommends an artificial surface to be placed over an existing surface, which is being used at a number of facilities. Relative to the budget, Administrator Ciccarone advised that this would be a capital item and would be included in a bond ordinance with other capital projects anticipated for 2005; it would not be in the operational budget. Committeeman Brower provided his recommendations relative to his experience with such projects and suggested looking at other options. Committeeman Brower advised that a window of 60 to 90 days would be needed to obtain additional information and recommended the work on the courts be held until this fall. Alternatively, Committeeman Brower advised that the Committee might want to consider hiring a consultant. Following discussion the Committee agreed to not move forward with this proposal to resurface the courts, but to develop estimates to rebuild the courts. Committeeman Brower will provide Committeeman Hartford, the liaison to the Colony Pool Advisory Committee, with additional information to bring to the Colony Pool Advisory Committee meeting. Mayor O'Connor advised that this item should be on the March 2005 Agenda.

2. Open Space Tax/Open Space Plan: Mayor O'Connor advised that the current Open Space tax rate is two cents per \$100 of assessed value. Speaking only hypothetically, Mayor O'Connor added that if the current tax rate is left "as is" and assuming every assessment was doubled, everyone would also be paying double on the open space tax. Mayor O'Connor advised the annual generation is \$260,000 a year to the Open Space Fund and that this supports \$3,500,000 in bonding debt. Mayor O'Connor referred to detailed written summary provided by Administrator Ciccarone and advised that the options to consider include keeping the tax at the current two cents per \$100 of assessed value or changing the current Open Space tax rate by adopting an ordinance. Administrator Ciccarone entertained Township Committee member questions about bonding and debt and whether there is a way to tie in the rate with the revaluation. After a lengthy discussion, Administrator Ciccarone advised that the average assessment was not available yet, however, the overall ratable base is \$2.7 billion, up from \$1.3 billion. Administrator Ciccarone advised that to raise an amount of \$300,000 a year for Open Space, the tax rate would need to be about 1.1 cents. Although Committeeman Hartford felt the tax rate should remain at two cents per \$100 of assessed value, the general census of the other members of the Committee was to adjust the rate down in order to keep the same revenue collected of \$260,000. Administrator Ciccarone advised that this would require the introduction of an ordinance.

Mayor O'Connor requested Administrator Ciccarone to provide a general philosophy of Open Space and the Greenway. Administrator Ciccarone referred to a map that outlined the conceptual Greenway plan and stated that the properties purchased for Open Space are complimentary to this conceptual plan and are accepted by Green Acres. Former Mayor Susan Hoag added that parcels in the Open Space plan must be approved by Green Acres in order to get Green Acres funding, however other properties not along the plan could be purchased using only Township money. Mrs. Hoag further explained the Greenway concept to the Committee and advised that this is part of the Master Plan.

3. Deer Management: Mayor O'Connor stated that the Township Committee has been exploring alternate methods of deer population control besides bow hunting. The Deer Management Permit Plan that must be approved by the Fish & Game Council is one method that offers different approaches including controlled hunting, authorized shooters, capture-euthanasia, capture-removal, fertility program, etc. The Committee discussed a variety of other ways to decrease the deer population. Some suggestions discussed included increasing the number of hunters, allowing gun hunting in certain areas with all safeguards in place, allowing homeowners to group together to hire experts to control deer in those neighborhoods, allowing one hunter to take more than the number of deer allowed, opening up some larger tracts of land for deer to be taken, taking steps to minimize deer accidents and encouraging residents to take an environmental strategy. Chief Goeckel provided the statistics on the number of deer taken and the number of accidents caused by deer. After a very lengthy discussion, it was determined that a subcommittee to include Mayor O'Connor, Committeeman

Brower, Chief Goeckel and Sergeant Rick Carlson should meet and provide a recommendation to the Township Committee for the March 10, 2005 agenda.

Hearing of Citizens

Mayor O'Connor opened the hearing of citizens.

1. Dot Stillinger, Environmental Commission Chair and Township resident, suggested planting deer resistant shrubs. Relative to accidents caused by deer, Mrs. Stillinger suggested fencing to control the number of deer near the roadway.
2. Peter Hofmann, May Drive resident, stated that Chatham Township should receive an exemption from the number of deer permitted to be taken by hunters. Mr. Hofmann added that the deer problem has gotten worse and fencing will not be a solution for everyone.
3. Dan Miller, Green Village resident, stated that he counted 31 deer on his five-acre parcel and has seen a significant increase in the number of deer on his property because of Harding Township's deer management program.
4. Joseph Kelly, Mountain Avenue resident, stated that the number of deer taken this year would indicate an impact on the deer population. Mr. Kelly asked about the total of the county and township open space tax and was informed it would be ten cents combined.

Mayor O'Connor closed the hearing of citizens.

Committeeman Brower moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 p.m. Committeewoman Hagner seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Joy M. Wiley
Municipal Clerk