

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP
OF WANTAGE, HELD AT THE WANTAGE TOWNSHIP BUILDING, 888 STATE ROUTE 23,
WANTAGE, NJ, HELD AT 7 P.M. ON
April 13, 2017**

Mayor Morris called the meeting to order, and requested that the Clerk call the roll. Upon roll call, the following members of the governing body were present: Mayor Jonathan Morris, Committeeman Ronald Bassani, and Committeeman William Gaechter. Also, present: Administrator/Acting Clerk Debra Millikin and Mr. Glenn Kienz, Township Attorney.

Mayor Morris stated, "This meeting is being held in compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231. It has been properly noticed and certified by the Clerk."

PUBLIC HEARING: 2017 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Mayor Morris stated Mrs. Millikin will make the 2017 Municipal Budget Presentation. Mrs. Millikin began her presentation based on a power point presentation she prepared along with the budget that were available.

Mrs. Millikin state on behalf of the Township of Wantage I am very happy to present the 2017 Municipal Budget. My thanks to Michelle LaStarza for all her assistance as the Chief Financial Officer as well as Thomas Ferry the Township Auditor. This year's operating budget is a decrease from last year's adopted budget of \$86,156.00. Salaries are \$1,423,224.00, Total Operating Expenses \$2,322,831.00, Grants \$32,567.00, Capital Improvement Fund \$289,000.00, Debt Service \$1,098,513.00, Deferred Charges \$63,709.00, Reserve for Uncollected Taxes (RUT) \$826,993.00, for a total budget of \$6,056,837.00. Next page is debt service. This page presents the debt that the Township paid in both 2016 and anticipated to pay in 2017. Two items to notes is that there is no payment of bond principal in 2017 or interest on Bonds in 2017 this is due to the fact that these were paid off in 2016. Page 4 is the proposed capital plan. This proposed capital plan provides a five-year estimated plan of capital expenses needed. One of the biggest investments the Township needs to make is the road infrastructure. The Township has over 120 miles worth of roads that the Township is responsible to maintain. Local Road Repair is also utilized on the roadways in which the Department of Public Works helps to complete. 4 items in the 2017 Proposed Capital Budget will require bonding. These projects are: Various Roads based on Harold E. Pellow, PE 5 Year Road Master Plan completed in November 2016, New Truck for the DPW, Field Restoration of #5 & #6, and Irrigation upgrade to fields #5 & #6. Total amount to be bonded for 2017 \$1,109,745.00. The Total proposed 2017 Municipal Budget is a flat tax rate of \$0.294. Total budget is \$6,056,837.00, which is a decrease of \$86,156.000 from 2016. The top five municipal expenses for 2017 are: road repair and maintenance of \$1,126,470, debt service \$1,098,513, employee health, pension, etc. \$853,647, reserve for uncollected taxes (RUT) \$826,993, and public safety (fire, ems) \$692,605. The reserve for uncollected taxes or RUT is a mandatory appropriation that has to be placed in the budget. The payments to be made to the Schools and County are the reason for this appropriation. As you can see over the past 5 years the RUT has fluctuated. The RUT for 2017 increased by \$74,528.00.

The fund balance or surplus is a comparison over the past 5 years of the money utilized to help balance the budget. The Township does have a fund balance policy and it is important to try to build on fund balance each year. Final slide is the breakdown of taxes paid for Wantage Residents. This proposed breakdown of estimated cost for the public to see how much of the taxes paid actually goes to Wantage Township. The estimated cost was based off of 1 ½% since the school and county have not officially approved their budgets. The estimated percentages for 2017 are: County of Sussex 18.74%, Library Tax 1.18%, Health Service .51%, County Open Space .09%, Sussex/Wantage School District 43.95%, High Point Regional District 24.66%, and Wantage Township 10.86%. My thanks to the Township Committee, all the Departments, Township Engineer, Auditor and staff for their efforts in putting together a budget that has a 0% increase for 2017. It is my responsibility as administrator to make sure the Township continues to have a sound fiscal plan and a responsibility to the tax payers to keep taxes at their lowest, without sacrificing services.

Mayor Morris thanked Mrs. Millikin. Mayor Morris asked if the Committee had any questions there being none Mayor Morris opened the 2017 Budget Hearing to the public. No one coming forward for public comment the public portion was closed. Mayor Morris requested a motion to adopt the 2017 Municipal Budget. Motion made by Mr. Bassani, and seconded by Mr. Gaechter.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Gaechter, Morris Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Morris requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Resolution 50-2017, Resolution 52-2017, Resolution 53-2017, and social affairs permit for Sussex Elk 2288 for April 30, 2017. Motion made by Mr. Bassani, and seconded by Mr. Gaechter.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Gaechter, Morris Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #50-2017

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A DISABLED VETERAN EXEMPTION ON BLOCK 27 LOT 2.09

WHEREAS, The Department of Veteran Affairs determined that Laura Davis at 427 Route 284, Block 27 Lot 2.09 had a service connected disability that was totally disabling effective August 31, 2016,

WHEREAS, the Tax Assessor has received a Claim for property tax exemption on dwelling house of Disabled Veteran, which was approved by the Tax Assessor on March 15, 2017.

WHEREAS, as per N.J.S.A.54: 4-3.30et seq, Ms. Davis is entitled to a tax exemption on her property located at 427 Route 284 from January 1, 2017.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

1. The Tax Collector is authorized to cancel taxes billed for the 1st and 2nd Qtr 2017 in the amount of \$3,558.44.
2. The future billing of 2017 taxes will also be cancelled at time of billing.
3. This property will be marked as exempt in the 2018 tax list.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #52-2017

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUND FOR LIEN REDEMPTION BLOCK
112.01 Lot 39

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector has authorized a refund for a tax lien redemption with premium,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED to refund as follows:

\$12,998.12 to MTAG CUST, Block 112.01 Lot 39, for tax sale certificate 16-16
\$4,500.00 to MTAG CUST, Block 112.01 Lot 39, for tax sale premium

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #53-2017

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUND FOR LIEN REDEMPTIONS

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector has authorized a refund for a tax lien redemption with premium,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED to refund as follows:

\$12,998.12 to MTAG CUST, Block 112.01 Lot 39, for tax sale certificate 16-16
\$ 4,500.00 to MTAG CUST, Block 112.01 Lot 39, for tax sale premium
\$10,802.94 to MTAG CUST, Block 19 Lot 39, for tax sale certificate 16-07
\$ 7,000.00 to MTAG CUST, Block 19 Lot 39, for tax sale premium

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

A motion is in order to approve Resolution 51-2017 supporting submission of 2016 tonnage grant application. Motion made by Mr. Bassani, and seconded by Mr. Gaechter.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Gaechter Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: Morris

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #51-2017

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING SUBMISSION OF 2016 TONNAGE
GRANT APPLICATION

WHEREAS, the Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act, P.L. 1987, c.102, has established a recycling fund from which a tonnage grant may be made to municipalities in order to encourage local source separation and recycling programs; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent and the spirit of the Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act to use the tonnage grants to develop new municipal recycling programs and to continue and to expand existing programs; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has promulgated recycling regulations to implement the Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act; and

WHEREAS, the recycling regulations impose on municipalities certain requirements as a condition for applying for tonnage grants, including but not limited to, making and keeping accurate, verifiable records of materials collected and claimed by the municipality; and

WHEREAS, a resolution authorizing this municipality to apply for the 2016 Recycling Tonnage Grant will memorialize the commitment of this municipality to recycling and to indicate the assent of the Township of Wantage Committee to the efforts undertaken by the municipality and the requirements contained in the Recycling Act and recycling regulations; and

WHEREAS, such a resolution should designate the individual authorized to ensure the application is properly completed and timely filed; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage hereby endorses the submission of the recycling tonnage grant application to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and designates the Sussex County Municipal Utility Authority for the services of Certified Recycling Professional, to ensure that the application is properly filed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the monies received from the recycling tonnage grant be deposited in a dedicated recycling trust fund to be used solely for the purposes of the recycling.

CERTIFICATION: I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage, in the County of Sussex, New Jersey, at a meeting held on April 13, 2017.

REPORTS

Clerk – None

Administrator – Mrs. Millikin advised the Township received a resolution from Vernon Township allowing the Township of Wantage to place the high band radio frequency on

the Lake Panorama Tower. I have asked Glenn to work on an letter related to this matter. I will be working with the Fire Department on getting everything ordered.

Next Mrs. Millikin advised that Sussex Borough is beginning work on the pipeline project for Lake Rutherford. Sussex has requested to place gravel on the unimproved portion of Hankins Road for the construction crews to have access to the Borough's easement. I spoke with Bob Wagner and neither of us have an issue with this request and just want to confirm there is no issue from the Committee on this matter. I will be requesting a hold harmless and a certificate of insurance naming the Township an additional insured.

Next Mrs. Millikin advised High Point Regional High School has provided the Township with a cost for shared service for field maintenance which is the fertilizing, grub protection etc. done yearly on the fields at both Woodbourne Park & Lott Road. The cost for this year would be about \$14,000. High Point is also purchasing a ground machine that can be utilized for both the school and township field but will not be part of this shared service. Mr. Gaechter questioned if the school has someone in house. Mrs. Millikin indicated yes two employees. Mrs. Millikin indicated \$10,000 for the field maintenance and the additional \$4,000 to cover employee cost. The Committee was in support of this endeavor. Mr. Bassani questioned about lining of the fields. Mrs. Millikin advised this was not part of this price and I am meeting with High Point in a couple of weeks to take a tour of the fields and then get a price idea from them to potential do this as a shared service.

Mrs. Millikin also advised that on Wednesday and today the Township's Roller was at High Point being utilized for rolling out one of the fields. High Point was very appreciative of the roller and DPW member that assisted with this work.

Mrs. Millikin also advised she has provided each Committee member with a copy regarding the Recreation Ordinance. I wanted to discuss this with the Committee tonight to find out what type of information you would like me to gather on this and put together for discussion at a later time. Mr. Morris stated if we want to make sure we make a change in the ordinance we need to make sure we have the right man power. Mrs. Millikin advised it makes it Advisory and that personnel would have to be planned moving forward. Mr. Bassani stated this is changing the status to Advisory. Phase I would be the ordinance and phase II would be the implementation. Mr. Morris will be meeting with Recreation at the end the month and will discuss this proposed ordinance regarding this change. Mr. Gaechter stated this is a work in progress and convey this to the Commission. Mr. Bassani maybe get some input from the Commission on this matter. After Mr. Morris meets with the Commission this will be placed on the agenda.

Mrs. Millikin advised she was contacted by the Clerk of Montague for a shared service for QPA. She will prepare a shared service agreement for the Township. Finally, the Municipal Offices are closed tomorrow for Good Friday. Happy Easter.

Attorney Report – none

Mayor Morris stated a subcommittee was established to review ordinances and the committee has met and will begin work on about 4 items for ordinance to be addressed. Used Car dealership is the first to be reviewed.

Mayor Morris indicated the meeting with Senator Oroho and Assemblyman Space has been postponed and working on a meeting with NJDEP. Mayor Morris also updated on

the Deckertown Union Cemetery and NJDEP has issued a letter stating the cemetery is in compliance and it was clean fill and the matter is now closed. Mayor Morris indicated that the County Health meeting and discussing Soil Importation.

Mayor Morris indicated that Ben Hopper will be receiving Eagle Scout Merit Badge on April 30th and the Township will be in attendance.

Mayor Morris also attended the County X-09 bridge project the bridge and road will be closed for about a one year period beginning potentially in August till 2018. The estimated cost of the project is \$2.9 million. Detouring of traffic will be through Sussex Borough. The County discussed the realignment and widening of the bridge. Also, discussion of the micro grip pavement to be placed down on the road surface as well.

Mayor Morris also received a letter from Mrs. Stearns at 5 Southfield Drive and issue with the drainage ditch along her property. Mrs. Millikin advised that Mr. Pellow has been provided the letter and Mr. Pellow indicated there is the potential for applying for a wetlands permit.

Committee Member Report – Mr. Gaechter - none

Committee Member Report – Mr. Bassani – none

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes

A Motion is in Order to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2017 Mayor and Committee Regular Meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Bassani and seconded by Mr. Gaechter

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Gaechter, Morris Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Office of the Mayor

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Benjamin Hopper has achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, which represents an accomplishment of high regard within the Wantage Community, and

WHEREAS, as a member of Boy Scout Troop 84, Benjamin has held numerous leadership positions in the troop, including Assistant Patrol Leader, Patrol Leader, and Senior Patrol Leader, the Boy Scouts' highest youth leadership position, and

WHEREAS, Benjamin has distinguished himself by earning 32 merit badges during his Boy Scout career, as well as through service to his community, including his Eagle Scout

Project for which he dedicated more than 60 hours to planning and constructing a gravel walkway for the Sussex United Methodist Church, and

WHEREAS, Benjamin, who is a senior attending High Point Regional High School, has been very active in his school community. He has been member of the High Point High School's marching band for four years, a member of P.R.I.D.E. (Peers Rejoicing in a Drug Free Environment) for four years and volunteers for O.S.C.A.R. (One Step Closer Animal Rescue) when his schedule allows, and

WHEREAS, such a fine record of accomplishment is worthy of praise and recognition,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jonathan Morris, Mayor of the Township of Wantage, hereby offer my congratulations to Benjamin Hopper for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, and

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED that the entire Wantage Community is hereby encouraged to join in the recognition of this fine accomplishment.

Jonathan Morris, Mayor

Dated: April 13, 2017

Knox Box Ordinance Discussion – Wantage Fire Department

Chief Vander Groef was present along with Deputy Chief Alex Rubin, Deputy Chief Mark Snook, and OEM Coordinator Joseph Konopinski. Mr. Vander Groef indicated that the Department does obtain a fair amount of false alarms and unfortunately this causes issues while waiting for a person to respond to the scene to allow access. Mr. Vander Groef indicated this is being recommended for any businesses that have a central station alarm. Mr. Vander Groef stated a proposed ordinance was provided to the Committee. The Department is in the process of doing a business listing and pre-plan and getting specifics on contact list along with getting specifics on buildings.

After some discussion regarding the Knox Box Ordinance. Mr. Morris questioned the cost of the Knox box. Mr. Snook indicated about \$300.00. There are no other monthly fees associated with the Knox box. Mr. Bassani questioned who mounts the Knox box. Mr. Morris stated it should be mounted securely to the building. Mr. Gaechter questioned the false alarm ordinance and enforcement of this ordinance. Mr. Morris indicated the Fire Inspector enforces the false alarm ordinance. It was requested that Mrs. Millikin obtain copy of the false alarm ordinance for the Committee. Mr. Bassani questioned the number of businesses this would affect in the Township. Mr. Vander Groef indicated he was not sure the number of businesses. Mr. Morris indicated he feels if it is for the businesses with central station this is a good ordinance. Mr. Morris questioned the Township's that currently have Knox box ordinances in the County. Vernon, Hardyston, and Hampton were the ordinances that were utilized to draft this proposed ordinance. Mr. Gaechter questioned the centralized station calls for residential homes. These are not an issue because the residents are typically there waiting for the emergency services. Mr. Morris indicated the main reason is to eliminate property damage. The Committee requested the Wantage Fire Department get a list of the businesses that would be effected by this

ordinance for the Committee's review. Mr. Bassani indicated the Township should examine placing in the ordinance an incentive for the businesses to implement the Knox box ordinance. Mrs. Millikin questioned how long allowing businesses to comply and if not complying then who will enforce the ordinance. Mr. Vander Groef indicated the Knox box inspection should be part of the Fire Inspectors list when he goes out annually for inspections. The Committee requested obtaining further information requested and have the Fire Department supply this information to the Administrator.

Mr. Bassani questioned if Mrs. Millikin could investigate the Acme parking lot traffic light and why you cannot make a right on red at that light? Mr. Bassani questioned that the Township go back to NJDOT to review all the traffic lights within Sussex Borough for the traffic lights. Both by the Acme and Sussex Inn intersections.

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

Ms. Ann Smulewicz, 108 Route 23, She had some questions regarding the Township working on ordinances with used car lots. Mr. Morris indicated that this is being established to have a used car dealer with regards to licensing. Used car dealers would have to be registered and limit the number in the Township. Ms. Smulewicz indicated she is pro-business. Another question she had about Health and Recycling. Mr. Morris indicated it is County Health and Municipal Coordination meeting held by the County of Sussex. One of the topics is soil importation. Conference call being held on April 19th. Mr. Morris stated he could get her a copy of the minutes. Ms. Smulewicz stated yes please. Mrs. Smulewicz asked the other three ordinances. Mr. Morris soil importation, and trailers being located on residential property. Ms. Smulewicz asked for the Committee to clarify why the Airport cannot have the billboard sign and is denied and has over \$9,000 fines. How does this differ from Joe Maggio? Mr. Bassani indicated that the Township cannot comment on the Maggio matter since this is currently in front of the Land Use Board. Mr. Morris indicated there is an ordinance that prohibits billboard signs and the sign was removed. Mr. Morris indicated he went about putting the sign up without going through the proper approval. The Township is enforcing their ordinances. Mr. Gaechter indicated both were in front of the Land Use Board and one has been decided. Ms. Smulewicz indicated she hopes the same daily fine given to the small business is given to the other business.

Mr. Justin Vander Groef, 1 Shady Brook Lane, also attending the bridge meeting. Mr. Vander Groef requested that Spreen Road be up kept by the Wantage DPW because of the bridge detour.

There being no other member of the public wanting to speak Mayor Morris closed the public session.

Mayor Morris asked for a Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Mr. Bassani. Second by Mr. Gaechter.

Ayes: Bassani, Gaechter, Morris Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Debra Millikin, Acting Municipal Clerk