

**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
May 25, 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."

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Morris requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Resolution 64-2017 through Resolution 69-2017. Motion made by Mr. Bassani, and seconded by Mr. Gaechter.

Upon Roll Call:

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

Mayor Morris requested a motion to approve Bassani Power Equipment PO # 14386 in the amount of \$309.84 on the bill list. Motion made by Mr. Gaechter and seconded by Mayor Morris.

Upon Roll Call:

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

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #64-2017

AUTHORIZING REFUND

WHEREAS, the Zoning Secretary has recommended the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Wantage reimburse funds for vacant property registration fees paid by both the bank and homeowner.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage, County of Sussex, does hereby authorize the refund of

\$1,166.00 to Khamis Sumrein, Block 88 Lot 31, for vacant property registration fee.
500.00 to Frances Terry, Block 154 Lot 10.06, for vacant property registration fee.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #65-2017

AUTHORIZING REFUND

WHEREAS, the Recreation Secretary has recommended the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Wantage reimburse funds for two Mets Tickets.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage, County of Sussex, does hereby authorize the refund of

\$120.00 to Paul Arnott, 11 East Shore Lake Owassa Road, Newton, NJ for two Mets tickets.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #66-2017

AUTHORIZING REFUND

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector has recommended the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Wantage reimburse funds for a tax overpayment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage, County of Sussex, does hereby authorize the refund of

\$504.60 to Josephine Morrisett, Block 53.07 Lot 17, for tax overpayment.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #67-2017

RESOLUTION APPROVING A PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSFER OF LIQUOR LICENSE

WHEREAS, an application has been filed for a person to person transfer of Plenary Retail Consumption License #1924-33-005-008, heretofore issued to MARCVIN, LLC., for premise located at 87 Route 23, in the Township of Wantage, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, proof of publication of the said pending application for transfer has been submitted, and no objection from the public has been filed against this proposed transfer; and

WHEREAS, the submitted application form is complete in all respects, the transfer fees have been paid,

WHEREAS, the applicant is qualified to be licensed according to all standards established by Title 33 of the New Jersey Statutes, regulations promulgated thereunder, as well as pertinent ordinances and conditions consistent with Title 33;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT REOSLVED, that the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Wantage in Sussex County, New Jersey, does hereby approve, effective May 26, 2017, the person-to-person transfer of the aforesaid Plenary Retail Consumption License,

RESOLUTION #68-2017

RESOLUTION APPROVING OUTDOOR EVENT LICENSE FOR SKYDIVE SUSSEX

WHEREAS, the Township of Wantage requires an Outdoor Event License; and

WHEREAS, Rich Winstock, Skydive Sussex, 55 County Road 639, Sussex, New Jersey is requesting an Outdoor Event License for "That's How We Roll" Event on June 23, 24, and 25, 2017,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that by the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage, County of Sussex that it hereby approves the Outdoor License Event for Skydive Sussex for June 23, 24, and 25, 2017.

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #69-2017

RESOLUTION APPROVING BILLS AND VOUCHERS FOR PAYMENT

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage in the County of Sussex that payment is hereby approved for all vouchers that have been properly authenticated and presented for payment, representing expenditures for which appropriations were duly made in 2016 and 2017 Budgets adopted by this local Governing Body, including any emergency appropriations, and where unexpended balances exist in said appropriation accounts for the payment of such vouchers.

REPORTS

Clerk – None

Administrator – Mrs. Millikin advised on Friday she received word from Senator Oroho's Office that the Township of Wantage received the NJDOT Municipal Aid Grant Funding for the Newman Road Project. Total award to the Township is \$148,000. This will be a project for 2018.

Next Mrs. Millikin advised a request was received from Mr. Rueben Kline regarding the 5th Annual Highlands Gran Fondo Bicycling Event being held on June 4th. This has been an ongoing event and the route is on several roads in Wantage. Mayor Morris indicated that the Fire Police and Joseph Konopinski do assist it this event. There was no issue.

Mrs. Millikin stated the County Engineering Department has invited Wantage to attend a meeting on May 31st from 7 – 9 p.m. at the County College regarding NJTPA Plan Update.

Mrs. Millikin stated on Monday, June 5th there will be a meeting regarding the Route 23 project from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Sussex-Wantage Library.

Mrs. Millikin advised that she provided on the dais for each Committee Member a memo from Harold Pellow regarding a request from Lafayette Township to make Pond School Road and Fox Hill Road restricted to a 4-ton weight limit. Please review his memo and I would like to discuss at the next Committee Meeting. Mr. Bassani questioned where Fox Hill Road is located and Mayor Morris indicated off of Spreen Drive.

Mrs. Millikin advised that Christine Von Oesen received a request from Amy Keegnar requesting waiving of the dog fee for her license. Ms. Keegnar has already paid the fee and is looking for the amount back since she cannot afford this. The fee is required to be paid and this is something that I do not have the authority to waive. The Committee advised the fee could not be waived.

Mrs. Millikin advised that she received a call from the owner of 25 Summit Drive and questioned if the property had been offered to the neighbors and he indicated yes. He wants to know if the Township is interested. Mayor Morris indicated he did go up to the site and it is a wooded lot and not very wide. He does not understand why a neighbor does not purchase the property to add to their parcel. The Committee did not see a benefit in receiving the property because it will go off the tax rolls.

Mrs. Millikin also advised that she received an e-mail regarding 20 Locust Road, Wantage. They are requesting that the Township refund the \$1,666 paid since the house has been sold. Mrs. Millikin indicated that she is concerned with this request due to the fact that the Township established the ordinance in September of last year. The ordinance was established to make sure property maintenance is maintained on those parcels that are bank owned or under foreclosures. Mrs. Millikin stated her concern was refunding the money would be setting a precedent. The Committee felt there was no reason to refund the amount since this is part of the ordinance.

Finally, Mrs. Millikin advised that Wantage Day is June 3rd from noon to 4 p.m. and the Municipal Offices will be closed on Monday for Memorial Day.

Attorney Report - Mr. Kienz stated he does not have anything just confirming Mr. Bassani was going to discuss the meeting in Ledgewood. Mr. Bassani state yes.

Mayor's Report - Mayor Morris stated he had a couple of bullet items. I want to say Thank you to Myles Kuperus and the Farmside Landscaping Crew for cleaning up and preparing the Veteran's Memorial. Also want to thank Nathaniel Sajdak, from the Wallkill River Watershed Group along with 15 AP Environment Science Students from High Point Regional High School. They planted over 250 trees along the west branch of the Papakating Creek. This is being done for Eco quality and the partners involved were US Fish and Wildlife, NJDEP, and SCMUA. Also had the honor of attending the Sussex County League of Municipalities reorganization meeting in which Debi Millikin became Secretary of the Sussex County League of Municipalities. I had the honor to speak at the Salute to Veterans on Sunday. Finally, I received an e-mail from a resident of Clove Hill Manor that wanted to complement the Fire Chief on his assistance and attention to the residents of Clove Hill Manor.

Committee Member Report – Mr. Gaechter provided a Land-Use Board update. At the last meeting John Maione can in front of the Board to construct 4 additional residential apartments which contain 20 units each for a total of 80 units. This application has been carried to the June meeting. If any public has concerns regarding this project they should come to the next meeting.

Committee Member Report – Mr. Bassani provided a quick update on Open Space. The Township was informed that Green Acres will be providing 50% towards the cost of the Berry Road purchase. The negotiations with the Berry Road parcel have been interesting and will continue to work with towards the purchase of the parcel. Green Acres has also indicated that the Open Space money would be 50% for the potential purchase of the Sherman Ridge Parcel. The seller of that parcel will be approached in the next ten days. The third piece of property withdrew working with the Open Space Committee so the State came in and purchased the parcel. If successful the Township will be 3 for 3 in 2017.

Mr. Bassani also indicated that the Township met with the owner who is looking to develop on Route 23 in Sussex and Wantage. Since the Township is concern regarding the traffic light it was suggested the Township hirer a traffic engineer to review the proposed light.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Introduction of Ordinance

A Motion is in Order to approve on first reading Ordinance #2017-08 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION TO THE VOTERS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE AT THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 7, 2017, A REFERENDUM AUTHORIZING AN ANNUAL LEVY FOR ACQUISITION, DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF MUNICIPAL OPEN SPACE, FARMLAND AND HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$0.02 PER \$100.00 OF ASSESSED VALUE FOR REAL PROPERTY IN THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE AS AUTHORIZED BY P.L. 1997, c. 24 OF THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY.

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

Upon Roll Call:

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

Mr. Bassani advised the public that this ordinance will allow the Township to place on the ballot in November questions to the tax payers to allow the Open Space Tax to be reinstated for 2018.

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

ORDINANCE #2017-08

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION TO THE VOTERS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE AT THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 7, 2017 A REFERENDUM AUTHORIZING AN ANNUAL LEVY

FOR THE ACQUISITION, DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF MUNICIPAL OPEN SPACE, FARMLAND AND HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$0.02 PER \$100.00 OF ASSESSED VALUE FOR REAL PROPERTY IN THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE AS AUTHORIZED BY P.L. 1997, C. 24 OF THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY.

WHEREAS, P.L. 1997, c. 24 of the Laws of the State of New Jersey permits the governing body of a municipality to submit to the voters of said municipality in a general or special election a proposition authorizing the imposition of an annual levy for an amount or at a rate deemed appropriate for any or all of the following purposes, or any combination thereof, as determined by the governing body:

- (a) Acquisition of lands for recreation and conservation purposes;
- (b) Development of lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes;
- (c) Maintenance of lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes;
- (d) Acquisition of farmland for farmland preservation purposes;
- (e) Historic preservation of historic properties, structures, facilities, sites, areas or objects, and the acquisition of such properties, structures, facilities, sites, areas or objects for historic preservation purposes; or
- (f) Payment of debt service or indebtedness issued or incurred by a municipality for any of the purposes set forth in paragraphs (a), (b), (d) and (e) hereinabove; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Wantage heretofore adopted an Ordinance following a referendum vote establishing an open space tax in the amount not to exceed \$0.02 per \$100.00 of assessed value of real property to generate revenue for municipal open space, recreation, farmland, historic preservation trust funds and maintenance of same which expired on December 31, 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee based upon the recommendation of the Open Space Advisory Committee is desirous of reestablishing the open space tax.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage that:

Section 1. Pursuant to P.L. 1997, c. 24 of the Laws of the State of New Jersey, the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage, Sussex County, New Jersey, wishes to place and hereby requests of the Sussex County Clerk that the following referendum question be placed on the general election ballot for consideration by the voters of the Township on November 7, 2017 the following question:

WANTAGE OPEN SPACE TRUST FUND

Shall the Township establish an annual levy imposed to raise funds for the municipal open space, recreation, farmland and historic preservation trust fund and the maintenance of same, at the rate to be determined by the Township Committee, but not to exceed \$0.02 per \$100.00 of assessed value of real property located in the Township of Wantage, to be effective as of January 1, 2018. Said funds will be utilized to acquire, develop and maintain lands for recreation and conservation purposes; acquire farmland for farmland preservation purposes; preserve and acquire historic properties, structures, facilities, sites, areas or objects for historic preservation purposes; and pay debt service on the indebtedness issued or incurred by the Township for any of the above-referenced purposes?

Yes [] No []

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Previously the Township of Wantage collected open space tax as previously authorized by a referendum vote in the Township. The rate was \$0.02 per \$100.00 of assessed value of real property. The authorization has expired. The Open Space Advisory Committee has recommended that an open space tax be reinstated to be collected by the Township. The proposed open space tax rate shall not exceed \$0.02 per \$100.00 of assessed value of real property located in the Township of Wantage as determined by the Township Committee. A vote "yes" will establish the open space tax at the rate determined by the Township Committee not to exceed \$0.02 per \$100.00 of assessed value of real property as of January 1, 2018. A vote "no" will reject an open space tax.

Section 2. This Ordinance shall take effect _____.

Section 3. A certified true copy of this Ordinance, upon its adoption and publication as required by law, shall be furnished by the Municipal Clerk to the Sussex County Clerk's Office and Sussex County Superintendent of Elections and request that the above-referenced question be placed on the general election ballot for Wantage Township on November 7, 2017 for voter consideration.

Section 4. If any part of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of the Ordinance. Any Ordinance or portion thereof that may be inconsistent with the Ordinance is hereby repealed to the extent of the inconsistency.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect in the time and manner prescribed by law.

Approval of Minutes

A Motion is in Order to approve the minutes of the May 11, 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

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

Mrs. Kathy Gorman, Fernwood Road had two questions the introduction of the ordinance it states historic properties. Mrs. Millikin indicated this was in the previous ordinance. Mrs. Gorman discussed the traffic light by the apartments for Mr. Maione. Mr. Maione stated no because NJDOT had an application by Blair Road. What would be the difference to have one by Shop Rite with the light by ACME and Sussex Motor Sports. She is concern on this matter. Mayor Morris indicated the three of us are not in favor of this light, but ultimately NJDOT will be the final decision maker on the traffic light. Mr. Bassani stated one of the reasons why Shop Rite would like this light is because it will allow to make access easier to their store and help pedestrians cross. Mr. Bassani stated the Township would be looking to hire an independent traffic consultant to review this matter. Mr. Gaechter questioned if Shop Rite had a traffic consultant. Mr. Bassani stated yes and their consultant is presenting that the light is required. Mr. Gaechter stated on a side note the Vernon Advertiser had a nice article on the Romano Family.

Mr. Vinny Pudula, property owner 87 Route 23, of Celine's Kitchen, and appearing for any questions regarding the Liquor License Approval. He indicated he has owned the property since 2004 and hire local people and have done some great renovations. He questioned that the taxes have increased over the past six years by 30 to 40% and values of property had decreased and questioned the dust bowl across the street. This has an effect on his air filters every two weeks, well water requires uv, and wants to know what is occurring with this site. This dust bowl site is a huge issue for his business. Mayor Morris indicated they are moving on to Phase III. They are getting ready to remove all the soils to have this ready to be sold. The operation has moved to Blair Road and the construction entrance is off of this road but they will still be doing some excavation. Mr. Pudula indicated that the new name will be Wantage Pub and Grill. Thank you for the information. Mayor Morris stated the goal is to clean up the property by this summer.

Ann Smulewicz 108 Route 23 and she lives across the street from Mr. Pudula's property. She asked where Mr. Pudula has been and said just take a look at her car with the dust and she cannot see the gauges. This has not subsided and still an issue and nuisance and feels there will be an ultimate justice to come to these people. This is causing health issues for them and hopes something can be done.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A Motion is in Order to approve Resolution #70-2017 Authorizing the Township Committee to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Matters and Contract Negotiations.

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

Mr. Kienz read the following resolution:

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #70-2017

EXECUTIVE SESSION May 25, 2017

WHEREAS, the Township of Wantage is subject to certain requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, provides that an Executive Session, not open to the public, may be held for certain specific purposes when authorized by Resolution; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage to discuss in a session not open to the public certain matters relating to the item authorized by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b and designated below:

- (1) Personnel Matters
- (2) Contract Negotiations

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage, assembled in public session on May 25, 2017, that an Executive Session closed to the public shall be held on May 25, 2017, at 7:40 PM in the Township of Wantage Municipal Building, 888 Route 23, Wantage, NJ, for the discussion of matters relating to the specific item designated above.

It is anticipated that the deliberations conducted in closed session may be disclosed to the public upon the determination of the Township Committee that the public interest will no longer be served by such confidentiality.

Motion to come out of Executive Session made by Mr. Bassani and seconded by Mr. Gaechter.

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

Mr. Kienz stated personnel and contract negotiation matters but will not be made public at this time and will be made public when appropriate.

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Bassani and seconded by Mr. Gaechter.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra Millikin, Acting Municipal Clerk