

**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 7:00 P.M. ON
April 12, 2018**

Mayor Gaechter 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 William Gaechter, Deputy Mayor Ronald Bassani, and Committeeman Jonathan Morris. Also, present: Administrator/Clerk Debra Millikin and Glenn Kienz, Esq.

Mayor Gaechter 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: 2018 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Mayor Gaechter stated the meeting will begin with the 2018 Municipal Budget Presentation. Mrs. Millikin stated on behalf of the Township of Wantage I am happy to present the 2018 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 total operating budget is an increase of \$1,262,621. The reason for this increase is for the acquisition of property through Green Acres. If the parcels are not purchased then this amount will be less including grant funding. Mayor Gaechter stated that this is being funded by grant funding. Mrs. Millikin stated yes through grant funding and money already raised through Open Space Funding. Mr. Bassani said there is no impact on the taxes.

Mrs. Millikin stated on page 3 is the Debt Service that the Township paid in 2017. One key aspect of this page is Debt Service payment is going down. On page 4 is the proposed capital plan. Mrs. Millikin stated this proposed capital plan provides a five-year estimated plan of capital expenses needed. One of the biggest investments the Township needs to continue is road infrastructure. The Township has over 120 miles of that the Township is responsible to maintain. Local road repair is also utilized on the roadways, which the DPW helps to complete. The proposed road projects for 2018 are: Spreen Road from the end of the paved area to the Lafayette border, Lewisburg Road from Spreen Road to the second top of the hill, Dales Crossing, Mt. View Drive, Liberty Street, North Shore Road, Wantage School Road from Route 23 to Rose Morrow Road, Newman Road DOT grant funding was received and Sherman Ridge Road also DOT grant funding from Brown Road to Libertyville Road. Oil & Stone: approximately 10 miles of roads will be completed with Oil and Stone. 7 items in the 2018 proposed capital budget will require bonding.

Mrs. Millikin stated the proposed 2018 Municipal Budget is a flat tax rate of \$0.294. Total budget for 2018 is \$7,319,458. The main reason for this increase is due to the acquisition of property through the Open Space Trust Fund and the grant funding associated with these purchases. Mrs. Millikin stated the top five expenses for the 2018 budget are Road Repair & Maintenance \$1,359,051, Debt Service \$974,680, Employee Health, Pension, Etc. \$671,263, Reserve for Uncollected Taxes (RUT) \$652,033, and Public Safety \$395,822. Mrs. Millikin stated 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

fluctuated. The RUT for 2018 decreased by \$174,960 due to a large jump in our tax collection rate. Mr. Bassani questioned if there has ever been a time the RUT was lower than the numbers show over the past 5 years. Mrs. LaStarza stated no it always been a pretty high number.

Mrs. Millikin next moved to the Fund Balance. 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. Mrs. Millikin stated the balance at the end of 2017 was \$1,202,874. Of this amount the Township is utilizing \$686,900 of this balance. On page 9 this page provides a breakdown paid for Wantage Residents. Mrs. Millikin stated this proposed breakdown is estimated tax rate for the public to see how much of the taxes paid actually goes to Wantage Township. Again this is estimated because the County nor the School have their tax rates established. The County of Sussex received 20.01%, Library Tax 1.25%, County Open Space .08%, Sussex/Wantage School District 41.80%, High Point Regional School District 25.73% and then Wantage Township 11.13%. In closing my thanks to the Township Committee, all the Departments, Township Engineer, Auditor and staff for their efforts in putting together a budget. Mayor Gaechter stated his goals in January each year is the budget. The budget is a very important task and take this job very seriously. It is always a happy day to have a 0% increase. Thank you to all involved.

Mayor Gaechter stated a motion is in order to adopt Resolution #46-2018 the adoption of the 2018 Township of Wantage Municipal Budget.

A motion was made by Mr. Bassani and seconded by Mr. Morris.

Mayor Gaechter opened the hearing to the public.

Mr. Daniel Veit questioned on the last page the Health Service percentage. Mrs. Millikin stated the Health Service tax use to be a separate tax but has been incorporated into the County tax. There being no other public comment the public hearing of the 2018 Municipal Budget was closed.

Upon Roll Call:

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Gaechter requested a motion to approve Resolution# 47-2018 and monthly reports for March 2018 for Board of Health, Clerk, Dog, Housing, Property Maintenance, Registrar, Tax Collector, and Zoning.

A motion was made by Mr. Bassani and seconded by Mr. Morris.

Upon Roll Call:

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

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #47-2018

AUTHORIZING REFUND FOR BLOCK 28, LOT 6.01

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

\$184.53 to the Estate of Agnes M. Chaff, Block 28 Lot 6.01 for tax overpayment

REPORTS

Clerk/Administrator – Mrs. Millikin stated the joint land use meeting for Sussex Borough and Wantage to hear the ShopRite matter has been scheduled for Monday, April 23rd at 7:00 p.m. at the Sussex Fire House.

Mrs. Millikin stated this Saturday is the opening day of Baseball and Softball at Woodbourne Park starting at 10:00 a.m. At 10:15 a.m. will be the dedication of the James R. Doherty Memorial Baseball Field.

Mrs. Millikin also stated that she has drafted a letter for the Mayor's signature to support the County of Sussex application to the Walkkill River National Wildlife Refuge for federal grant funding.

Mrs. Millikin indicated there is a meeting at Andover Borough on April 27th to meet with 24th Legislative District. I plan on attending and wanted to see if any Governing Body member would like to attend.

Mrs. Millikin finally indicated the Township received a note from the Grau family for the arrangement sent from the Township Committee, Land Use Board, and Employees.

Attorney – None.

Mayor/Committee Report – Mr. Bassani stated a meeting was held with Open Space Committee and Land Conservancy and discussed the preparation of the Master Plan. Two new members Allison Orsi & Kathleen Gorman have been great additions to the Committee. Next part of this plan will be a bus tour in May. This plan will look at property acquiring now, but also towards the future.

Mr. Bassani also mentioned April is Alcohol Awareness month.

Mr. Morris stated that Joe Konopinski, Mrs. Millikin and I met with the First Aid Squad regarding their replacement program. More to follow up on this matter. Not sure the replacement engine is the right move for the ambulance.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Gaechter stated with the passing of Paul Grau I need to fill the seat that has been left by Mr. Grau's passing. This is the last thing I want to do but needs to be done. Bill DeBoer will fill Mr. Grau's appointment to regular member which expires 12/31/2021. Mike Walther is being moved to the Alternate #1 spot, which leave the Alternate #2 spot open which will not be filled at this time.

Introduction of Ordinance

Mayor Gaechter stated a motion is in order approve on first reading Ordinance #2018-06 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 11-3 ENTITLED "ALLOCATION OF THE DISPOSAL OF SEWAGE" OF CHAPTER XII ENTITLED "SEWER AND WATER" OF THE "REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE, NEW JERSEY"

A motion was made by Mr. Bassani and seconded by Mr. Morris.

Upon Roll Call:

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

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

ORDINANCE # 2018-06

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 11-3 ENTITLED "ALLOCATION OF THE DISPOSAL OF SEWAGE" OF CHAPTER XII ENTITLED "SEWER AND WATER" OF THE "REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE, NEW JERSEY

WHEREAS, the Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority ("SCMUA") has provided the Township of Wantage with an allocation and apportionment of the volume of sewage disposal capacity that it has at its wastewater treatment facility located in Hardyston Township on a proportionate basis with other municipalities within the area of the Walkkill Basin; and

WHEREAS, in order to ensure that the Township's sewer allocation is fully utilized, it is the intent of this Ordinance to require owners of real property located in the Township to first reserve and utilize any unused sewer allocation that is needed for the development of their property from the Township before such property owner may seek to obtain a sewer allocation from another municipality or any other source.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Wantage, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey as follows:

Section 1.

Section 11-3 of Chapter XII of the Revised General Ordinances of the Township of Wantage is hereby amended and supplemented to add the following new subparagraph 11-3.4:

11-3.4 Reservation of Sewer Allocation For Development.

Every owner of real property located in the Township of Wantage that requires reserve capacity for wastewater treatment at the Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority's ("SCMUA") wastewater treatment facility for the development of the property, must first utilize any unused sewer allocation that has been allotted to the Township of Wantage by SCMUA or obtained by or for the property prior to the effective date of this Ordinance, before such property owner may seek to obtain a sewer allocation from another municipality within the service area or any other source. If an allocation is available, the property owner must enter into a sewer allocation agreement with the Township as a precondition to applying for any and all land use approvals necessary for the development of the property.

Section 2.

All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

Section 3. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon final passage and publication according to law.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Gaechter stated a motion is in order to approve the minutes of the Mayor and Special Meeting on February 20, 2018, Mayor and Committee Regular Meeting on March 22, 2018, and Executive Session Minutes on March 22, 2018.

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

Upon Roll Call:

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

PROCLAMATION

A Proclamation naming April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Office of the Mayor

Proclamation

WHEREAS, child abuse and neglect is a complex and ongoing problem in our society, affecting many children; and,

WHEREAS, every child is entitled to be loved, cared for, nurtured, feel secure and be free from verbal, sexual, emotional and physical abuse, and neglect; and

WHEREAS, child abuse and neglect not only directly harm children, but also increase the likelihood of criminal behavior, substance abuse, health problems, and risky behavior; and

WHEREAS the effects of child abuse are felt by communities as a whole, and need to be addressed by the community; and

WHEREAS, effective child abuse prevention programs succeed because of partnerships among families, social service agencies, schools, religious and civic organizations, law enforcement agencies and the business community;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Township of Wantage does proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month, and calls upon all citizens, community agencies, faith groups, medical facilities, and businesses to increase their participation in our efforts to support families, thereby preventing child abuse and strengthening the communities in which we live.

WILLIAM GAECHTER, Mayor

Dated: April 12, 2018

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

Mayor Gaechter opened the meeting to the public.

Mr. Daniel Veit, Jr., 1273 Route 23, here again regarding Under My Wing Bird Rescue. He provided information regarding future plans. Please review. Mayor Gaechter questioned if any active permits. Mrs. Millikin advised that there are none she is aware of, however, the property owner has been made aware any future buildings would require site plan approval.

Mr. Daniel Veit, Sr., 5 Brink Road, basically concerned as my son regarding the Under My Wing Bird Rescue. The Township might want to revisit the existing ordinances in place to address concerns with licensed premises through the State. Mayor Gaechter stated the Township has spoken with the NJDEP and that we have discussed that they need to keep the Township updated on any items related to permits issued.

Ms. Emily Bittner, 23 Armstrong Road, she questioned what the Under My Wing Bird Rescue issue is about. Mayor Gaechter stated the Rescue is licensed by State of New Jersey and there are some issues with the noise from the site.

Mrs. Ann Smulewicz, 108 Route 23, she is an animal activist who utilized the services of Under My Wind Bird Rescue. They are a resource to be utilized when there is an animal emergency.

Ms. Emily Bittner, 23 Armstrong Road, she questioned what is going on Cemetary Road with construction. Discussion ensued and it was determined she was referring to RER.

There being no other public this portion of the meeting was closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Gaechter stated a motion is in order to approve Resolution #48-2018 Authorizing the Township Committee to go into Executive Session to discuss Contract Negotiations – Blue Collar, Sherman Ridge, Agreement on tax payments, and Potential Litigation.

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

Upon Roll Call:

Aye: Bassani, Gaechter, Morris Nay: None Absent: None Abstain: None

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE
RESOLUTION #48-2018
EXECUTIVE SESSION April 12, 2018

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) Contract Negotiations – Blue Collar, Sherman Ridge
- (2) Agreement on tax payments
- (3) Potential Litigation

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Wantage, assembled in public session on April 12, 2018, that an Executive Session closed to the public shall be held on April 12, 2018, at 7:30 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.

Mayor Gaechter requested a motion to come out of Executive Session.

A motion was made by Mr. Morris and seconded by Mr. Bassani

Upon Roll Call:

Aye: Bassani, Morris, Gaechter Nay: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Mr. Kienz stated some items will have action taken tonight.

Mayor Gaechter stated a motion is in order to approve Resolution #49-2018 Authorizing the Township of Wantage to enter into an agreement with Maxim and Ann Smulewicz for payment of property taxes on Block 11, Lot 6.01.

Mr. Kienz stated that he will be re-drafting the agreement based on the discussion tonight and will get a new draft over regarding this matter.

A motion was made by Mr. Morris and seconded by Mr. Bassani

Upon Roll Call:

Aye: Bassani, Morris, Gaechter Nay: None Absent: None Abstain: None

TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE

RESOLUTION #49-2018

AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE TO ENTER INTO AN
AGREEMENT WITH MAXIM & ANN SMULEWICZ FOR PAYMENT OF
PROPERTY TAXES BLOCK 11, LOT 6.01

WHEREAS, Maxim Smulewicz and Ann H. Smulewicz (the "Smulewicz") own premises located at 108 Route 23 in the Township of Wantage, County of Sussex and State of New Jersey, known and designated as Block 11, Lot 6.01 on the Official Tax Map of the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Smulewicz are in arrears in the payment of real estate taxes for the property;
and

WHEREAS, the Smulewicz are desirous of obtaining a zoning permit and other approvals necessary to occupy the property by a tenant; and

WHEREAS, the Ordinances of the Township require all taxes and other charges to be current prior to the issuance of a zoning approval and/or other approvals; and

WHEREAS, the Smulewicz have requested that the Township agree to a tax installment payment plan to allow the issuance of the zoning permit and other approvals; and

WHEREAS, the Township is permitted to enter into an installment payment agreement pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54:5-19 et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the Township has agreed to enter into a tax installment plan pursuant to the statutes; and

WHEREAS, the size, nature and location of the property, including conditions on adjoining property are such that a payment plan is desirous to promote the economic viability of the Township and necessitates the need for this specific parcel to remain viable, through an installment payment plan; and

WHEREAS, the proposed payment plan is short-term; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Wantage, in the County of Sussex and State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Mayor is authorized to execute such documents as shall be approved by the Mayor and Township Attorney to confirm the Township's agreement to the terms set forth in this Resolution.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Mr. Kienz stated that also in discussion regarding the vacant property registration that was taken over by Veteran's Affairs. Due to the fact this is the Federal Government is not being required to be paid because it is a tax. The Committee was in agreement to waive Vacant Property Fee.

Mayor Gaechter requested a Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Bassani and seconded by Mr. Morris.

Upon Roll Call:

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra Millikin, Acting Municipal Clerk