

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP
OF WANTAGE, HELD VIA VIRTUAL MEETING 7:00 P.M. ON
MAY 14, 2020

Mayor Morris called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and requested that the Clerk call the roll. Upon roll call, the following members of the governing body were present: Mayor Morris, Deputy Mayor William Gaechter and Committeeman Ronald Bassani. Also, present: Administrator/Clerk Michael Restel, Wantage Chief Financial Officer Michelle LaStarza and Mr. Glenn Kienz, Esq.

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 Resolution #42-2020 - #44-2020.

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

Upon Roll Call:

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

Mayor Morris requested a motion to approve PO# 16992 and PO# 17011 Bassani Power in the amount \$767.63

A motion was made by Mr. Gaechter and seconded by Mayor Morris.

Upon Roll Call:

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

PUBLIC HEARING OF 2020 BUDGET

Mayor Morris opened the meeting and invited Mr. Restel to speak about the 2020 Budget.

Mr. Restel stated the 2020 Budget will have a flat municipal tax increase, Mr. Restel in the 2020 Budget there was a new DPW Mechanic and DPW labor in the budget. Mr. Restel stated Wantage Township removed a Bond Ordinance in the amount of \$1,700,000 to purchase a fire truck, DPW mason dump, new Animal Control vehicle and road projects, Mr. Restel stated Wantage did not want to burden the taxpayers with this while some of our tax payers are losing their jobs.

Mr. Restel spoke about 95% of the lines in the 2020 Budget either remained the same or were decreased. Mr. Restel explained the lines that increased are the typical ones that increase.

Mr. Bassani asked to explain the Municipal Budget Number, Open Space Number and Sewer Allocation Budget. Mr. Restel and Mrs. LaStarza explained what each of the Budgeted numbers represented.

Kathy Gorman Fernwood: Mrs. Gorman asked if there would be a copy of the budget posted online, Mr. Restel stated Yes.

Mayor Morris closed It to the Public.

Mayor Morris requested a motion to approve 2020 Budget Amendment

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

Mrs. LaStarza explained the Budget Amendment and discussion ensued.

Upon Roll Call:

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

Mayor Morris requested a motion to approve 2020 Budget as Amended.

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

Upon Roll Call:

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

REPORTS:

Administrator/Clerk: Mr. Restel spoke about Wantage Townships reopening Plan that includes Three Phases. Mr. Restel stated Phase 1 would commence on May18th, this phase would have all employees return back to work normal hours, all employees will have their temperatures taken before entering the town hall, there will be no congregating in the mailroom/copy room and break room, employees Are to maintain social distancing and when dealing with the public employees are to wear masks and gloves. Mr. Restel Phases 2 and 3 will be at a later date due to Gathering restrictions.

Attorneys Report: Mr. Kienz stated Mr. Restel reopening plan the great idea and applauds him for it.

Mr. Kienz reiterated the COVID-19 I still out there and for everyone to remain safe and healthy throughout this, Mr. Kienz stated this will be a revolving door and to follow all guidelines.

Mayors Report:

Mayor Morris gave an update on the County COVID-19 report.

Mayr Morris spoke about the Governors call about COVID-19.

Mayor Morris accepted Kathy Gorman's resignation from the Recreation Committee and Thanked her for her hard work.

Mayor Morris stated that Wantage Township will be sending a letter to high Point pertaining to their 14% Budget increase, discussion ensued.

Mayor Morris stated Wantage would like to have a soft opening of the Berry Road property and Wantage will have the town engineer come up with a plan for safely crossing from Woodbourne park to the property, discussion ensued.

Deputy Mayor: Mr. Gaechter stated its always hard to see a Volunteer resign and Thanked Kathy Gorman for her hard work on the Recreation Board.

Committeeman Bassani Report: Mr. Bassani stated he would like to applaud Mayor Morris and Mr. Restel for their hard work throughout the COVID-19 crisis and keeping the public and employees safe during this time.

Mr. Bassani Thanked Kathy Gorman for her hard work on the Recreation Board and helping getting the Wantage festival to the fall.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

A motion is in order to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2020 Mayor and Committee Regular Meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Gaechter and seconded by Mr. Bassani.

Upon Roll Call:

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

ORDINANCE:

Adoption of Ordinance #03-2020 Ordinance to Fixing the Salaries of Officers and Employees of the Township of Wantage, County of Sussex and State of New Jersey for 2020

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

Mayor Morris opened it to the Public.

No one from the public spoke.

Mayor Morris closed it to the public.

Upon Roll Call:

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

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION:

Kathy Gorman Fernwood: Mrs. Gorman Thanked All involved in the Budget for keeping the Municipal Tax flat and not following the schools increases.

Mrs. Gorman would like Lake Neepaulin advertised for fishing and would like the picnic bench out back at the beach.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Upon Roll:

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

Meeting Adjourned 7:37PM

Respectfully submitted by

Michael L Restel

Administrator/Acting Clerk

