

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP
OF WANTAGE, HELD VIA VIRTUAL MEETING 7:30 P.M. ON
JANUARY 7, 2021**

Mayor Gaechter called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. 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 Ron Bassani and Committeeman Jonathan Morris. Also, present: Administrator/Clerk Michael Restel, and Mr. 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."

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Gaechter requested a motion to approve Resolution #17-2021 to #22-2021

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

REPORTS

Administrator/Clerk: Mr. Restel Thanked all his employees for their hard work in 2020.

Mr. Restel stated Wantage Township received \$44,000 in Reimbursements from NJCARES Act.

Attorneys Report: Mr. Kienz spoke about the Town Center lawsuit and the actions being taken against the Township. Discussion ensued

Deputy Mayor Ron Bassani: Mr. Bassani stated he spoke with Sussex Borough Mayor Ed Meyer about the High Point High School Budget Issues and also spoke about expanding Shared Services with Sussex borough.

Mr. Bassani stated Mr. Restel and myself were on the Shoprite conference call and are looking to start work back up April 1 weather permitting and to open the store October 2022.

Mr. Bassani stated Shoprite would like to hold a joint Land Use Meeting to go over the Amended Final Site Plan.

Committeeman Jonathan Morris: Mr. Morris stated the School Election resolution was passed in Branchville, Lafayette and Sussex. Mr. Morris stated Frankford will have it on their agenda next week for approval.

Mr. Morris stated the Mayors of each municipality would like to have another sit down.

Mr. Morris thanked long time recreation member Christy Tuper for her hard work as a member.

Mayors Report William Gaechter: Mayor Gaechter wished everyone a Happy New Year.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

A motion is in order to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2020 Mayor and Committee Regular Meeting.

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

Upon Roll Call:

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

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION:

Kathy Gorman Fernwood: Mrs. Gorman asked for an update pertaining to High Point Regional High School litigation. Discussion Ensued

Mrs. Gorman asked for an update on Sussex Wantage School Budget. Mr. Restel stated at this moment the focus has been on High Point. Discussion ensued.

Bill DeBoer Beemer Road: Mr. DeBoer sated he remembers when he was Mayor when the taxpayers were able to vote on the school budgets. Mr. DeBoer is 100% behind the Committee allowing the taxpayers a vote.

Wayne Dunn 19 Ann Marie and High Point School Board President: Mr. Dunn Congratulated Mr. Morris on his Election win and congratulated everyone on their appointments.

Mr. Dunn spoke about the High Point High School Pending Litigation and explained the major loss of School Aid.

Mr. Dunn stated residents in Wantage expect exceptional schools and with lose of State Aid it getting harder and harder to provide.

Mr. Dunn spoke about the findings in an OPRA request and the cost of litigation for Wantage Township.

Mr. Dunn stated even if Wantage Township and other municipalities win the suit doubts their will be a tax decrease.

Mr. Dunn urged to reconsider the suit and to look at possible alternatives.

Mr. Dunn asked for the committee to advocate to the State Assemblyman and Senator for more state aid.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Upon Roll:

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

Meeting Adjourned 8:00PM

Respectfully submitted by

Michael L Restel

Administrator/Acting Clerk