

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP
OF WANTAGE, 7:00 P.M. ON
MARCH 24, 2022**

Mayor Bassani 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 Ron Bassani, Deputy Mayor Jon Morris. Also, present: Attorney Glenn Kienz and Administrator/Clerk Michael Restel. Committeeman William Gaechter was absent

Mayor Bassani 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."

2022 Wantage Township Budget:

A Motion is in order to Adopt the 2022 Wantage Township Municipal Budget in the amount of \$6,710,460.22 with a local tax rate of .310, a 2022 Open Space tax rate of .005 and a total sewer allocation budget of \$126,000.

Wantage Township Chief Financial Officer Ashley Wilson presented the 2022 Municipal Budget.

Mrs. Wilson stated the Local tax rate went from .3086 to .3097

Mrs. Wilson stated Wantage Township fund balanced doubled from prior year.

Mrs. Wilson stated Wantage Township overall tax rate ranks as Second lowest in the County.

Mrs. Wilson stated the tax increase for the local taxes is \$4.00 on the average of assessed at \$255,000.

Mayor Bassani stated that Wantage Township consolidated Bonds and entered into a long-term financing which saved the Township a lot of money.

Mayor Bassani opened the meeting to he public for Comments on the Budget only.

No one from the public spoke.

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

Upon Roll Call:

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Bassani requested a motion to approve Resolution #31-2022 to #35-2022 with the removal of PO# 18547 for Bassani Power Equipment LLC in the Amount of \$11.92

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

Upon Roll Call:

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

A Motion is in order to Approve PO# 18577 for Bassani Power Equipment LLC in the Amount of \$11.92 was moved to next meeting.

REPORTS

Administrator/Clerk: Mr. Restel stated he attended the Sussex Wantage Chamber of Commerce meeting.

Mr. Restel stated it was good to see new businesses joining and speaking about what they do.

Mr. Restel Sussex Rural attended the meeting and stated the power outage 2 weeks ago was due to a broke bearing.

Mr. Restel stated Sussex Rural opened their scholarship application and received 19 and only 1 trade school.

Mr. Restel stated that Myself and the Mayor had multiple meetings with different people.

Mr. Restel started the East Egg hunt is April 9th 10am at Woodbourne Park with the Rain Date of April 16th.

Attorney's Report: Mr. Kienz offered no report

Deputy Mayor Jon Morris stated he met with Mr. Luce pertaining to his Hemp farm business.

Mr. Morris stated the meeting went well and learned a lot of Mr. Luce Business.

Mayor Bassani discussed the lack of communication between High Point High School and Wantage Township pertaining to Woodbourne Park Fertilization.

Mayor Bassani stated in the consent agenda we approved a fertilizing contract with Farmside Landscape Services who are a very professional company.

Mayor Bassani spoke about different future projects at Woodbourne Park including Pickleball courts and expanding the walking path.

Mayor Bassani stated the Grant writer will be looking for monies for the Master Plan and for Park Enhancements.

Mayor Bassani stated he met with Mrs. Jessica Caldwell and discussed COAH housing and Master Plan updates.

Mayor Bassani stated Mrs. Caldwell mentioned there is some training for Land Use Members to attend. Discussion ensued

Mayor Bassani stated there is still ongoing discussion with Tennessee Pipeline over some monies to the town.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

A motion is in order to approve the minutes of the March 10th Mayor and Committee Regular Meeting

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

Upon Roll Call:

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

ORDINANCE:

A motion is in order to Introduce Ordinance #02-2022 an Ordinance repealing Ordinance 04-2022 and authorizing and directing that an easement on a portion of certain real property located in tax lot 11 block 143 set forth on the official tax map of the Township of Wantage shall be acquired by purchase and gift.

Mr. Restel stated when the Title search was performed there was a silver of property that was State Farmland Preserved and an easement was needed to gain access for the K turn

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

Upon Roll Call:

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

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION:

Walter Lyon 82 Unionville Road: Mr. Lyon stated he is here to discuss MNL Farms Gun range and the noise.

Mr. Lyon stated about the illegal dumping taking place over Presidents Day weekend.

Mr. Lyon stated he has a signed petition of over 50 signatures of residents that are tired of hearing all the noise of the gun range.

Mr. Lyon stated there are multiple health concerns with the gun powder being discharged into the air and ground.

Mr. Lyon stated there needs to be an end to this.

Mayor Bassani discussed how the application was approved. Discussion ensued.

Judy Nelson 81 Clove Road; Mrs. Nelson stated that Clove Road has been littered with Shotgun shells and is tired of seeing the litter.

Steve Szalczinger 39 Skytop: Mr. Szalczinger stated he is fed up with the unbearable noise and now his house value is decreasing.

Mr. Szalczinger stated he would like to see his taxes decreased because of this.

Larry Nelson 81 Clove Road: Mr. Nelson stated the shooting has been hardcore the past week and they are shooting with bigger ammunition and guns.

Mr. Nelson stated the quality of life is being destroyed by the day.

Mr. Nelson stated this past Sunday was the worst he has heard.

Mr. Nelson stated he would like to have a stop work order issued asap. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Nelson stated he did approach the Sussex County Board of Health and was disappointed with them and offered no help.

Marcus Luce Judge Beach Road: Mr. Luce stated his meeting with Mr. Morris went well and valid points were talked about.

Mr. Luce stated he tried and look up crime stats pertaining to cannabis and crimes.

Mr. Luce stated it was hard to gather data pertaining to those crimes. Discussion Ensued.

Emil Conforth Route 565: Mr. Conforth stated his niece lives on Wolfpit and she can hear the gun range.

Mr. Conforth stated across the road from him there is illegal shooting happening on the property.

Mr. Conforth read into record information pertaining to lead ammunition in the ground.

Mr. Conforth stated with all the discharge of the lead and metal ammunition there has to be some sort of ground water contamination. Discussion ensued.

Joe Retz Libertyville Road: Mr. Retz stated the township was interested in purchasing a piece of property on Libertyville.

Mr. Retz stated the property was useless and recalls it testing high in lead.

Mr. Retz stated the township was going to use Green Acre monies to purchase it.

Mr. Morris explained that when Wantage did not purchase the property due to the high level of lead. Discussion Ensued.

William Lasalle 123 Rose Morrow Road: Mr. LaSalle stated he has no faith in the professionals in Wantage Township if you just look at the road resurfacing.

Mayor Bassani stated he appreciated everyone attending the meeting.

Mayor Bassani stated we are not blowing you off and we are in a unique position with this.

Mayor Bassani stated we are going to look into all your suggestions.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Bassani requested a motion to adjourn

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

Upon Roll:

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

Meeting Adjourned 8:15pm

Respectfully submitted by

Michael L Restel

Administrator/Acting Clerk