

July 28, 2009 CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE BOROUGH OF MT. EPHRAIM

MEETING CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Wolk called the meeting to order at 3:07pm.

SALUTE TO FLAG:

All present pledged their allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT

ABSENT

Commissioner Gilmore	___ x ___	_____
Commissioner Greenwald	___ x ___	_____
Mayor Wolk	___ x ___	_____

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Borough Solicitor – Joe Marrazzo
 Borough Engineers – Joe Federici & Doug Akin
 Rich Schwab—Borough Consultant
 PW Supervisor – Ken Jones
 Sewer Operator—John Wenner
 Zoning Officer—Chris Fitzgerald
 Sewer Dept.—John Wenner
 Police Chief – Ed Dobleman
 Marie Darlington –Tax Collector/Deputy Clerk

“OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW” ANNOUNCEMENT:

Mayor Wolk announced this Meeting has been advertised and notices posted in accordance with the “Open Public Meetings Act.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS:

Administration & Finance

The Clerk reported on the following items:

- Status of dog licenses/dog census—we have 14 residents left who have not obtained their dog license. The list of those due to get summonses has been provided. We just need your okay to proceed. The Governing Body approved the issuing of the summonses.

- Status of proposed sale of 324 Davis Ave—we rejected the prior bid and the new bid date is August 3 with a minimum bid of \$35,000. Sign is posted at the property and advertising has been placed.

Enforcement of non-renewed mercantile licenses—this issue remains unresolved.

- Joe Marrazzo submitted the attached ordinance language amendment for consideration. This will address the situation where the tenant businesses have filed their mercantile applications but the landlord has not paid the taxes. If you are in agreement, this ordinance can be introduced at the August 6 meeting. However, the following mercantile licenses remain un-issued and these businesses are operating in violation of our ordinance:

- Staliga (Flynn/O’Hara, East Coast Salons) This will be addressed by the ordinance amendment

- Sozzi (delinquent property taxes)

- Mt. Ephraim Dodge has not been renewed because of outstanding zoning issues. The Clerk read the letter that was provided by Mt. Ephraim Dodge’s engineer stating that they have installed shields on the lights and they will be conducting testing so hopefully this will be resolved soon.

- Spread Eagle (delinquent property taxes)

The Governing Body approved introduction of the ordinance pertaining to tenants but elected to again table the other issues pending further investigation.

- Project Porchlight--the CFL bulb distribution was done on Saturday, July 18. We had about 16 volunteers and 700 bulbs were distributed in the Borough.

Letter from Camden County regarding bike trail master plan study. The Mayor read portions of the letter indicating that Mt. Ephraim was to be included in the study to be done by the DVRPC for viability of bike/pedestrian trails. The County requested that we send a representative to the August 19 meeting. It was determined that Chief Dobleman will attend.

- New Jersey Greenhouse Gas Grant Program and Sustainable Jersey—funding is available for greenhouse gas reduction programs with pre-applications being due September 4. Funds can also be used to perform energy audits or municipal facilities. The first step is creating a Green Team. Mayor Wolk suggested that we ask for volunteers in the newsletter and start to work to build a green team.

- Letter from Attorney General regarding Games of Chance

The Clerk reported that she received the attached letter from the AG stating that they feel municipalities have not been doing thorough investigations of applicants for games of chance. They suggest that applicants be fingerprinted and background checks done each time someone files an application. This is excessive. If we get an application from a brand new organization, then this level of background check makes sense. But if Sacred Heart is renewing their bingo license, are we really going to subject them to this? We will be diligent with new organizations but will use common sense with existing organizations with whom we are already familiar.

Finance

CFO Dean Ciminera presented a mid-year budget review by department. Just a couple of areas are a potential problem. He highlighted the following areas:

- Legal expenses are down considerably to the prior year
- Engineering, however, has been expended at 71% at mid-year. He and Richard are looking for other places to charge some of the bills.
- Group Health Insurance—through June we are at 72% expended. The one month premium delay in December will help.
- Police overtime is tight but it is not a huge number.
- DPW--\$3650 was charged to on-call pay that was not budgeted and he is questioning what made up that expense. Terry suggested that perhaps it was the retro pay for the stipends that were added to the salary ordinance this year. She will follow-up with Pat to verify.

These are the only significant financial problems Dean sees at this time.

Police Department

Chief Dobleman reported on the following:

- July 4th Parade--Everything went very well. The police want to thank DPW for getting the barricades to the proper locations.
- Door-to-door Solicitation Ordinance--No action has been taken on this as of yet. The Barrington ordinance is attached. Do you want to consider amending the current ordinance? This will be reviewed in more detail so a good ordinance can be drafted.
- Bus Stops for Kings Highway, Market St. and Bell Road--NJ Transit has been advised that the Borough has approved flag stops. We are working with DPW to remove signs.
- Amendment to Chapter 94 of the Borough Code--The Chief met with Commissioner Gilmore and they have started to work with DPW to remove some signs and then will give Chapter 94 the final OK.
- Review of Center Avenue parking--Commissioner Gilmore reported that the Planning Board did not have the authority to approve the parking as part of the plan review as our ordinance has prohibited parking on that side for as long as he can remember. He, the Chief and the Captain have come up with some additional parking spots that the builder is happy with. It is not the full eleven spots he originally wanted but we will be able to give them some more spots by amending our ordinance.
- Parking on Rudderow—Ken Jones cannot get a trash truck down the street and has to back down from the paper street. We considered making only one side parking but the residents are strongly against. It was decided that the situation has existed for years and we are not going to upset the residents at this point. Parking on Rudderow will remain as it is now.
- Station Avenue parking—this situation has been looked at in detail. Commissioner Gilmore, the Chief and the Captain have looked at and think they have a solution that will help with the situation. The ordinance needs to say that parking on the east side is

allowed at all times but the side against the school should be no parking at all times. It is not a perfect solution but may be the best option.

- Warranty issues on police vehicles--Joe Marrazzo did send out a letter to Cherry Hill requesting contact information on this claim (letter attached). He still has not heard back from them.
- Auction was a Success--The PD received \$6100 from the sale of the BMW and Ford Expedition and we were also able to upgrade an unmarked patrol vehicle in the deal. DWI Grant for \$6000
- The Borough received \$6000 for DWI enforcement. Only eight Camden County towns received funds. (resolution accepting and appropriating the grant will be on the agenda.
- Defibrillator Program--We are in the final phase to possibly receive four defibrillators along with signs and more totaling \$7498.
- Shared Services Agreement with Camden County for Use of Armored Vehicle— Camden County is purchasing an armored vehicle with Homeland Security funds that can be utilized by CC municipalities during emergencies. In order to participate and to receive the necessary training, participating municipalities have to enter into a shared services agreement with the County. There is no cost to the municipalities (resolution authorizing shared services agreement will be on the agenda).
- Resident Handicap Parking--For discussion to discuss a fee with application
- Results of the Kings Highway and E. Lake Project Meeting--The County does not have funding and are asking towns to step up. The Chief will advise more at meeting.
- Request to be included in development review--The Chief is requesting that the police be included during plan review of proposed development so parking or other law enforcement issues can be addressed.

Emergency Management

The Clerk reported the following:

- Camden County 1st Responders Prophylaxis Plan
Camden County has been contacting us looking for the First Responder Information Forms. I spoke with Jay Villardo and he informed me that he was not previously responsible for this. This information is to be provided for all first responders, and their families, who could be exposed during a bioterrorism incident. To date, they have received nothing from Mt. Ephraim. We need to determine who is responsible for gathering this information and submitting to the County. Commissioner Gilmore said he would look into.

Fire

Rich Schwab reported the following:

- Fire House project status
At the last meeting it was decided to simultaneously submit an application for Federal stimulus grant funds for \$1.5 million towards a \$3.25 million building, the high end

architectural estimate, and continue work to “de-scope” the project to get within at least a \$2.5 million job. This assumes that the drainage work will be covered by the DOT and County grant. The Federal application has been submitted through the Borough Engineer’s office and efforts to get lots of support letters mailed or faxed in is underway. A meeting with the architect and the building committee is scheduled for this week to finalize the “de-scoping”. Since we need to wait until the end of the year to hear about the Federal grant, and we hope to get the drainage project done before building construction starts, we must delay bidding the work until at least the beginning of 2010. We have a support letter ready to go out to organizations to ask for their support for our grant application.

- Bell Rd and Lambert Ave lease agreements and property transfer status

The attorneys are finalizing the lease agreements in preparation for transfer of the ownership of the properties. There is agreement on the Lambert Ave agreement. The question is whether these terms are also applicable to Bell Rd. Also, since the Bell Rd project is delayed, should we delay the transfer of that property until the building is ready to be demolished or do it now anyhow. The key issue is who pays for building repairs, maintenance and utilities and from what funding source. This needs to be discussed in detail at this meeting.

- Appointment of new Fire Department members

Chief Scullin requested a resolution appointing Aaron Holmes, Ryan Holmes and Nicholas Buckingham as a new members of the fire department (resolution).

Other Public Safety items

Purchase of ambulance from Oaklyn--See attached resolution from Oaklyn. We need a resolution to purchase the ambulance for \$1.00.

Public Works, Planning and Zoning

- Delinquent landlord registrations—Commissioner Greenwald reported that Ken Hermann was embarrassed in court as the Judge told him he was not prepared. He should be more prepared when he returns for the court appearance.

- Equipment Auction--The equipment auction was a huge success. Every piece of equipment and vehicle sold and sales totaled \$20,914, less \$2091 for the auctioneer, net of \$18,823. Great job by Ken in pulling this together.

- Property Maintenance/Zoning Officer situation—Terry suggested that a meeting should be held to discuss property maintenance and zoning. There is some confusion as to who is responsible for enforcing property maintenance. It may make more sense for Steve Beach to be construction and zoning and have Fitz be property maintenance. Ken Jones supports this change as it is ultimately his department who will do any property maintenance work that is required. Commissioner Greenwald indicated we would schedule a separate meeting to discuss.

- Resolution for personnel designations—Commissioner Greenwald submitted a resolution changing some personnel designations in the public works department. The resolution will be on the agenda.
- Capital equipment purchases--Bids will be received July 29 for the leaf machine. If under budget (\$30,000) and no other problems, we should be able to make an award at August 6 meeting in order to have equipment in time for leaf season. The other items have been ordered and should be received shortly.
- Camden County Summer Youth Employment Program--Nothing to report. We did not receive any employees as the County had some internal problems with the program.

Solicitor

- Lease for Lambert Avenue has been approved and is ready to be signed. As the details for the Bell Road property are not completely resolved at this time, we will go forward with Lambert and will do Bell Road at a later date.
- Status of dealing with remaining outstanding water bills from out of town properties—litigation has been filed and we are waiting for court dates.
- Update on ownership of Lumberyard lots—this is still being researched. Joe is going to sit down with Federici's office to see if they can resolve ownership.
- Update on public intoxication ordinance class action—Joe Nardi's office requested discovery relative to this class action and his office is working on getting this together.
- Hoss case—there is a property line dispute between two neighbors and the Borough has been named in the suit. There is a conference scheduled for August 31. Until we can be removed from the case, we will have to appear and Joe will handle and try to get us out of the suit as quickly as possible.

Engineer: Projects and Grants Updates

- Mayor Wolk reported that he received a letter that the DOT cannot provide funding for the flooding problem related to the firehouse project. He had originally been told this was a “slam-dunk” by Freeholder Greco's office. He asked the Clerk to fax the letter to Greco's office so they can look into and let us know what happened.
- Update on stimulus funds projects—we received notification that our application was received. Once the applications have been review and scored, we will move to the next step. We should be notified as to the final disposition by December 31.
- They will be meeting next week with Tara and Kessler to get the information to revise the tax maps
- Status of Harding Ave. generator project—gas meter was installed but in the wrong location. PSE&G has to come back to move the meter. They are having a problem getting a response from PSE&G relative to the electric. Mayor Wolk said he would make a call.
- Streetscape Phase II—they did a railroad crossing study and re-submitted an entire new package to the DOT.

COMMENTS BY OFFICIALS: None

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Commissioner Greenwald and seconded by Commissioner Gilmore to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Shannon
Municipal Clerk