

*The Township Committee of the Township of Raritan met on June 16, 2015
at the Municipal Building, One Municipal Drive, Flemington, New Jersey*

**MEETING
CALLED**

Mayor O'Brien called the regular meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

ROLL CALL

The following were present: Mayor Craig O'Brien, Deputy Mayor Karen Gilbert, Comm. Michael Mangin, Comm. Richard Chen and Comm. Louis Reiner. Also present was Adm. Jerry Giaimis.

**MEETING
ADVERTISED**

Mayor O'Brien advised that the meeting was noticed on June 12, 2015 by providing notice to the Hunterdon County Democrat, Star Ledger, Courier-News, Trenton Times and Express Times in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and posted on the office bulletin board and Township Website.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor O'Brien asked all to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag and to remain standing for a Moment of Silence to remember our Men and Women serving in the Armed Forces and in Particular Those Serving In Troubled Areas Around the World.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

It is the policy of the Township Committee that all public comments on an issue shall be limited to three minutes per person. Public comment shall be permitted on items of concern regarding the agenda only. In addition, time will be allotted at the end of the meeting for public comment on any issue.

*** Barbara Sachau, 2 Glenway Drive, said that when property owners are notified about construction, she felt that 200 feet was not enough distance. It appeared to her that, in extreme weather conditions, property owners that are at a further distance than 200 feet are much more impacted by changes in construction. She has personally witnessed this. Mrs. Sachau also mentioned the auditing process. She felt that it was not investigative enough and that a fresh look should be taken especially if an auditor has been with the Township for a long time. The auditing process is a very important process which can bring on effective spending of taxpayer dollars.

Mayor O'Brien said since a new Chief Financial Officer was hired, there will be a new relationship between the CFO and the Township Auditor and also a different approach to the audit process.

**FINANCIAL
ISSUES**

Payment of Bills as Listed for Raritan Township: **\$ 109,520.94**

Comm. Mangin said that because of the bills from AT&T and CenturyLink, he suggested that perhaps it is time for the Township to review its phone service. Adm. Giaimis said that he is reviewing the current phone system and cell phone use.

Mayor O'Brien asked for a motion to approve the Bill List.

Motion was made by Comm. Mangin and seconded by Comm. Gilbert.

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Gilbert – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 O'Brien – yes

Motion carried.

**FINANCIAL
ISSUES
(Con't)**

Payment of Bills as Listed for the Fire Company: **\$ 11,520.60**

Mayor O'Brien said that this is for one item which is turnout gear.

Mayor O'Brien asked for a motion to approve the Bill List for the Fire Company.

Motion was made by Comm. Gilbert and seconded by Comm. Chen.

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Gilbert – yes
 Mangin – recuse
 Reiner – yes
 O'Brien – yes

Motion carried.

REPORTS

LIAISON REPORTS – There were no Liaison Reports.

**UNFINISHED
BUSINESS**

STIPULATIONS OF SETTLEMENTS – Adm. Giaimis said that there are resolutions under Section 13 of the Agenda that reference the discussions that the Committee has had for the settlement of tax appeals. The taxes will be frozen for the years 2016, 2017 and 2018 unless there is a change of value or any improvements made to the property. In which case, the Tax Assessor will have the authority to do a reassessment. This is based on the recommendations by the Tax Assessor and the Tax Attorney. The properties are for Bedford Falls, LLC.

**NEW
BUSINESS**

ELECTRONIC RECYCLING PROGRAM – Don Hutchins, Superintendent of Public Works said that he is awaiting a signed contract from the vendor. This electronic recycling program will be advertised in the Hunterdon County Democrat. The container for the e-recycling has already been placed at the Public Works Facility. This will be up and running in about one week. It will be based on the regular recycling with the purchase of a \$5.00 sticker. The electronics will be held in an enclosed dumpster. The company is certified to take care of the removal of any data left on any electronics. Comm. Gilbert thanked Attorney Cruz for doing a great job. Comm. Reiner thanked Comm. Gilbert and Don Hutchins for a job well done and for a possible increase to the tonnage.

ORDINANCES: There were no ordinances.

CORRESPONDENCE There was no correspondence.

NON CONSENT AGENDA: There was none

**CONSENT
AGENDA**

All matters listed on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Township Committee and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

Minutes:

Township Committee Minutes : *May 18, 2015; June 3, 2015*
Executive Session Minutes: *April 21ST, May 5th, May 18th, 2015*

Resolutions:

**Resolution #15-132 – Award of Contract to Denville Line Painting, Inc.
for Line Striping on Roadways**

Resolution #15-133 – Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned “206 Bedford Falls, LLC vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket Nos: 015421-2012; 011237-2013 and 11966-2014

Resolution #15-134 – Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned 213 Bedford Falls, LLC vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket No: 007185-2012

Resolution #15-135 – Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned 210 Bedford Falls, LLC vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket Nos: 015419-2012; 011239-2013; and 011967-2014

Resolution #15-136 – Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned The Bedford Falls Lane Co. vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket Nos: 007191-2012; 001556-2013 and 002135-2014

Resolution #15-137 – Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned 249 Bedford Falls, LLC vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket Nos: 007195-2012; 001557-2013 and 002134-2014

Resolution #15-138 – Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned 204 Bedford Falls, LLC vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket Nos: 007199-2012; 001555-2013 and 002136-2014

Resolution #15-139 – Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned 282 Bedford Falls, LLC vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket Nos: 015408-2012; 011241-2013 and 011969-2014

Resolution #15-140 – Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned 18 Bedford Falls, LLC vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket Nos: 007181-2012; 001558-2013 and 002133-2014

Resolution #15-141 – Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned 298 Bedford Falls, LLC vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket Nos: 015418-2012; 011240-2013 and 011968-2014

Resolution #15-142 – Authorizing E-Recycling Program

Comm. Chen requested that Resolution #15-133 be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

Resolution #15-133 - Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned “206 Bedford Falls, LLC vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket Nos: 015421-2012; 011237-2013 and 011966-2014

Comm. Chen commented on Items 13 “b” through 13 “j” regarding resolutions pertaining to Stipulations of Settlements. His comment was, “My vote is yes. Even though Bedford Falls, LLC withdrew their tax appeals, let the record show that the Township’s Tax Assessor’s Office spent \$56,524.63 on legal fees on these nine (9) tax appeal cases. This concludes my statement”.

Mayor O’Brien said that in 2015, there were thirty-one tax appeals which is big drop from last year when there were ninety tax appeals. In 2013 there were One Hundred Forty-eight (148) tax appeals. The Township will see a decrease in the legal costs associated with tax appeals because the volume has decreased 80%.

Mayor O’Brien asked for a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda with the removal of Item 13”b” – Resolution #15-133.

Motion was made by Comm. Chen and seconded by Comm. Gilbert.

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Gilbert – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 O’Brien – yes

Motion carried.

Resolution #15-133 - Stipulation of Settlement Relative to the Tax Appeal Captioned “206 Bedford Falls, LLC vs. Raritan Township, Tax Court of New Jersey, Docket Nos: 015421-2012; 011237-2013 and 011966-2014

Mayor O’Brien asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #15-133.

Motion was made by Comm. Chen and seconded by Comm. Gilbert.

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Gilbert – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 O’Brien – yes

Motion carried.

**PRIVILEGE
OF THE
FLOOR**

Anyone may address the Committee on any issue for three (3) minutes

*** Dave Boelhouwer, 18 Meadow Lane, resident of Raritan Township since 1977. His concern was that he received a notice for the development of land behind much of Meadow Lane. This project was already defeated about 3 ½ years ago. He noted that there are wetlands on the property and it is also a game preserve for deer and foxes and many trees that will be cut down. He would like the Township to support its citizens regarding this matter and not approve this development. He would like to see the Township remain rural with wild life preservation and the preservation of wetlands. The notice mentioned that this case would be heard at a meeting of the Planning Board, however, the meeting was cancelled. The next meeting is scheduled for July 8, 2015. He also mentioned that because of this development, there will be a road that will connect Autumn Leaf Boulevard to the second Autumn Leaf Boulevard. Bonetown Road already exists which parallels Autumn Leaf Boulevard. He wanted to know why the Township would want to build another road. He also wanted to know what the benefit would be to build nineteen homes.

Mayor O'Brien said that the Planning Board is an Independent Board and the governing authority in this matter. He will speak to Jeffrey Kuhl about Mr. Boelhorwer's concerns. The road that Mr. Boelhouwer mentioned is listed on the Master Plan. When the development was built on South Autumn Leaf Drive, it was built with the intent that the roads connect. This is not something new that is being added. It was part of the original plan. Also, Bonetown Road was not designed to support all that through traffic. Mayor O'Brien also mentioned that the residents pay \$2 million per year in open space taxes expressly for the purpose of buying and preserving land. Raritan Township has preserved about 4,000 acres. This is almost six square miles in a 38 square mile town.

**ADJOURN-
MENT**

Mayor O'Brien asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting

Motion was made by Comm. Gilbert and seconded by Comm. Mangin.

Vote: 5 – 0 motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at: 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Sollena, RMC/CMC
Township Clerk