

The Township Committee of the Township of Raritan met on February 2, 2016 at the Municipal Building, One Municipal Drive, Flemington, New Jersey

**MEETING
CALLED**

Mayor Gilbert called the regular meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

**MEETING
ADVERTISED**

Mayor Gilbert announced that the meeting was noticed on January 29, 2016 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 the Township Website.

Attorney Willard read Resolution #16-38 in full.

Resolution #16-38 – CLOSED SESSION

Contractual – Contract Negotiations:

Tax Attorney;

Risk Management

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #16-38.

Motion was made by Comm. Mangin and seconded by Comm. O'Brien.

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

Motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION

The Committee retired into Closed Session at 6:04 p.m. The Closed Session Minutes are on a separate document.

OPEN SESSION

The Committee came out of Closed Session and went into Open Session at 6:40. The meeting was recessed and resumed at 7:02 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE

Cub Scout Pack 194, Den 9 led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag and asked 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.

Mayor Gilbert asked that if anyone was present to speak about the Rescue Squad Resolution, that they wait until that topic is addressed.

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

*** Christopher Phelan, Emergency Management Coordinator, said that during the snow storm the lines of communication were open between the Township, residents, departments and agencies including Mayor Gilbert and Comm. Reiner. He thanked them all. Emergency Management is currently working with FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). Sup't Hutchins is putting the paperwork together to assess the damages and present the report to FEMA.

Mayor Gilbert asked if Mr. Phelan knew what the actual amount of snowfall was.

*** Mr. Phelan said that the official count in Raritan Township was just over 27 inches. It was one of the top five snow storms. He mentioned that the departments were prepared and staffed over the weekend. Calls were taken care of in a timely fashion.

**FINANCIAL
ISSUES**

Payment of Bills as Listed for Raritan Township: **\$ 3,657,952.77**

Adm. Giaimis said that the Verizon bill was significantly higher because of the purchase of a table, hardware and software the Public Works Department. The charge will be about \$1,200.

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to approve the Bill List.

**FINANCIAL
ISSUES**

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

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

Motion carried.

REPORTS

LIAISON REPORTS

Karen Gilbert – Administration, Personnel, Planning Board – (Class I – Mayor) – Mayor Gilbert is reporting for Comm. Reiner. He had a family emergency and was unable to attend the meeting. Comm. Reiner took it upon himself to go to Shop Rite during the snow storm to pick up party platters for the Rescue Squad, Fire, Police and DPW. When he let it be known why he was there, Shop Rite donated the platters. Mayor Gilbert sent a letter of thanks to Joe Colalillo of Shop Rite. Mayor Gilbert said that there was a house fire at Four Seasons Drive. There were no injuries.

Michael Mangin – Planning Board (Class II – Governing Body), Police, Finance & Business – Comm. Mangin said that at the last Planning Board Meeting, Johanna Foods received preliminary and final site plan approvals for the plant expansion. There has been excessive noise coming from the plant and Johanna Foods is going to remove the fans and the wastewater treatment plant which will eventually significantly reduce the noise to the nearby development. The Police Chief informed Comm. Mangin that they will be receiving a grant for body cameras. Software will be purchased so that the cameras can be hooked up to the computers. Adm. Giannis and CFO Pandos will be meeting with the Department Heads to discuss the upcoming budget.

Louis Reiner – Public Works, Fire/Rescue/OEM, Local Historians –
Absent

Richard Chen – Open Space, Parks & Recreation, RTMUA – Comm. Chen said that there were two bar-b-ques and two benches were replaced at Mine Brook Park, all complements of Home Depot.

Craig O’Brien – Board of Health, Green Team, Environmental Commission
No report.

SNOW REPORT – Mayor Gilbert said that the bulk of the money was spent on overtime because the storm happened on Saturday and Sunday. The Department of Public Works worked around the clock.

**UNFINISHED
BUSINESS**

FLEMINGTON-RARITAN FIRST AID & RESCUE SQUAD -

DESIGNATED AREAS – Mayor Gilbert said that there is a resolution for the consideration of the Committee. She asked all the Rescue Squads to come before the Township Committee. At this time, the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad is a primary responder for part of Raritan Township. The remainder of the Township is serviced by Quakertown Rescue, Clinton Rescue and Amwell Valley Rescue. Quakertown Rescue responded and they are acceptable with the change in the designated areas. Comm. O'Brien said that Clinton Squad services a very small part of the north end of Raritan Township. They are also acceptable with the change in the designated areas. She asked Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad and Amwell Valley to come forward to address the Committee.

*** Dave Giuliani, Chief of the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad, said that currently, the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad covers the majority of Raritan Township with the exception of the northern and southern portion. At this point in time, the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad felt that they should provide Emergency services for the entire Township. It is a staffed agency and NJ State Certified and Licensed. They can respond 24 hours per day and they carry the proper medications including Narcan, epi pens and aspirin. The Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad works together with the Fire Department. The Township has supported them in the past and also provided their assets. He reached out to Clinton Rescue, Quakertown Rescue and Amwell Valley Rescue to express their concerns that the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad should service the entire Township. He did not hear from Amwell Valley. This is what is best for the residents of the Township. He asked that the Committee adopt the resolution allowing the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad to support the entire Township of Raritan. The Flemington Raritan Rescue Squad is manned 24 hours a day/7 days a week for every major and natural disaster in coordination with Flemington Borough OEM and Raritan Township OEM. They are certified by the Department of Health and State of New Jersey. They also work closely with the Fire Departments in both municipalities. There are 18 per diem employees, 4 full time employees and 48 volunteer members. They operate five ambulances. The Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad bills for their services. Most of that bill is covered under the patient's insurance.

*** Attila Huebscher, President of the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad, said that the charge is \$800 per transport.

Comm. Mangin asked if the Rescue Squad takes a partial payment, does the patient have to be responsible for the balance.

*** Mr. Huebscher said that they are required to send out three invoices. If the patient does not pay, they will not aggressively pursue the bill.

**UNFINISHED
BUSINESS**

- *** Pete Molner, Chief of the Amwell Valley Rescue Squad, said that this began about five years ago when the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad came before the Amwell Valley Rescue Squad to ask to be on dual alert with them. Amwell Valley rejected that offer of dual alert. Amwell Valley submitted over 200 signatures from residents that would like Amwell Valley to stay in the southern portion of Raritan Township. Amwell Valley handles about 400 calls per year which covers East Amwell, parts of West Amwell, Hopewell, Raritan Township and Delaware Township. Amwell Valley is comprised of volunteers. He said that there is no reason for Flemington-Raritan to take over the southern portion of Raritan Township. Amwell Valley receives no money from Raritan Township. Amwell Valley has been serving the southern portion of the Township free of charge. East Amwell contributes \$30,000. They receive \$7,000 from West Amwell. They rely on donations. There has been no issue to warrant taking away that area from Amwell Valley.

- *** Joseph Notorangelo, Deputy Chief of the Amwell Valley Rescue Squad for 25 years. The Amwell Valley Rescue Squad is all volunteer and it intends to remain that way. They do not bill for their services. They carry the same equipment as Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad. The average calls to Raritan Township are about seventy (70) per year. This has been working for years free of charge. There have been no complaints so there is no reason to change the designated area. The Amwell Valley Rescue Squad is very upset that the designated area is being changed. There are twelve (12) volunteers on the squad. Three members have passed the EMT course.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- *** Michael Varas, 7 Decatur Court, said that according to the petition, the residents in the southern portion of the Township are well served by Amwell Valley Rescue Squad. He was surprised that the Township wanted to designate areas. Volunteers are a valuable, precious commodity. By doing this, he felt that the Township is creating a battle instead of trying to figure out ways for them to work together. Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad has specialized equipment and specialized training. He said that they should not step on toes over territory. He felt that they should be able to work together and help each other out. He felt that the volunteers are being punished.

- *** Tom Steele, 2 Quick Court, Ringoes, said that the insurance only covers a portion of the call from Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad. When the deductible is met, then the insurance company will pick up the balance of the cost. The cost to the southern portion of Raritan Township is \$800 to about 400 households. He felt that each year, the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad will be asking for more and more areas to cover. He also felt that this was ridiculous. Even though Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad is not part of the

PUBLIC COMMENT: (Continued)

response area at this time, they still solicit fees. The Amwell Valley Rescue Squad should not have their fees taken away when they are a volunteer squad who live on donations.

- *** Frances Gavigan, 123 Wertsville Road, said she has lived in Ringoes for 21 years. Ten years ago, she worked for 9-1-1 Dispatch Center. Regarding the response time, she felt that there would be a problem getting to the south end of the Township, especially on Route 202/31, because of the traffic. The traffic will even be more horrible because, beginning shortly, the NJ DOT will commence work on the Flemington Circle. This will impact response times. Also if someone needs to use the rescue squad more than once, it can be very costly, especially if they rely on Social Security. She wanted to know if Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad is going to give up the more distant areas. She felt that Amwell Valley is doing a great job and it's not broke. Considering the construction happening on Route 202/31, this is not the time to change the coverage areas. She wanted to know what the real numbers and data were. The homework has not been done. The public is not going to be served well because of this change. Amwell Valley is very polite and a home spun group.
- *** Frank Venezia, 113 Blue Flag Court, Whitehouse, said that he agreed with the history that has been presented. This has been going on for the past 5 years. His kids attend Copper Hill School and there is no reason why, when there is a staffed ambulance with people ready to go, why should people have to wait for volunteers to reach the squad. Flemington-Raritan has the assets and all the residents of the Township have supported this through taxes and donations. He has been on the squad since 1998. He said that an ambulance must get on the road as soon as possible and not wait just because one is volunteer and one is paid. He appreciated all the comments made, however, his child attends Copper Hill School and he wants to see an ambulance arrive immediately.
- *** Oliver Elbert, 254 Everitts Road, Ringoes, said that he understood the point brought by Frank Venezia about having Flemington-Raritan take over the school. There were over 200 residents sign a petition stating that they were happy with the volunteer ambulance squad taking care of that area.
- *** Michael Varas, 7 Decatur Court, Ringoes, said that both ambulance squads have to pass Copper Hill School to get to his residence. There is no definitive difference in terms of distance and response time when it comes to Copper Hill School. His children have been through the entire school system.

PUBLIC COMMENT: (Continued)

- *** Jeff Hoffman, 33 Everitts Road, Ringoes, asked the Committee not to change the designated service area that Amwell Valley covers in the south end of the Township. He is quite comfortable and prefers Amwell Valley for that area. They have been covering that section of Raritan Township for years without any issue. If it isn't broke, don't fix it. Advanced Life Services through the Hunterdon Medical Center is called for those special situations. This appears to be some sort of turf war or a money grab. By voting for the change, the residents would be paying for a fee for services that are currently covered without charge through Amwell Valley. Amwell Valley members are trained and qualified. They can provide the service 24/7. The members respond to all sorts of calls whether in the daytime or nighttime. He asked Amwell Valley if they are able to administer Narcam or epi pens. These are hard working neighbors who volunteer their time and talent to help out when needed. He asked the Committee to leave Ringoes alone. He felt that everyone should be able to work together.
- *** Pete Molnar, Chief, Amwell Valley Rescue Squad, said that although they used to carry the epi pen, it was never used because the schools and paramedics are equipped with it. The cost is \$300-\$400. Amwell Valley was trained in the use of Narcam during the month of December. The training will be cleared with the Hunterdon Medical Center within a few days.
- *** Jim Mazunik, 91 Everitts Road, Ringoes, said there are people that do not earn a lot of money and he would hate to see someone hesitate calling an ambulance because of the cost involved.
- *** Tom Steele, 2 Quick Court, Ringoes, mentioned that Rescue 48 responds for Rescue 49 calls. When he was on the rescue squad, they were not able to get people out and they ended up going to the gym on Route 31. Sometimes they can't make the calls because they do not have enough people on staff. So this works both ways.
- *** Michael Rankowski, Captain, Amwell Valley Rescue Squad, said he thought it was the duty of the Mayor and Committee to talk to the people that are going to be impacted by the change. He recently found out that Medicare does not cover the cost of the ambulance trip to the hospital if the patient is not admitted. This is a big deal for the residents to have to pay for this. He wanted to know if the Township and the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad have reached out to all the residents that are going to be impacted.

PUBLIC COMMENT: (Continued)

Mayor Gilbert said that the Township has not reached out to all the residents involved in the change. Anyone, however, was invited to attend this meeting. It was announced to the newspapers and posted on the Township's Web Site. She extended the invitation to Amwell Valley to make sure that they knew this topic would be discussed.

She asked that Resolution #16-39 be pulled from the Consent Agenda and be voted on in this segment. The Committee Agreed.

Comm. O'Brien said that in 2015 there were 2,700 total calls made to the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad. 1,703 to Raritan Township and 676 to Flemington Borough. The balance was comprised of calls made from other municipalities. He wanted to know if this was correct.

Mr. Huebscher said there were 2,706 total calls that were responded to. Mr. Giuliani said that about two years ago, Whitehouse Rescue took over the whole Township of Readington. They have two stations; one on Main Street and one in Three Bridges. The Three Bridges facility does not receive many calls to support the facility. Readington Township reached out to Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad to ask if they could cover that section of Three Bridges from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. every day as a Mutual Aid Agreement with the Whitehouse Rescue.

Comm. O'Brien asked if the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad is not able to collect the fees, are the fees forgiven. The cost to 3,000 residents who live in East Amwell is about \$10 per head. The Township donates about \$30,000 per year to the Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad. The population of the Township is about 22,000 which equates to \$1.50 per citizen. Raritan Township received 1,700 calls which is about \$17.00 per call. The taxpayers are supporting \$120 per call for East Amwell.

*** Mr. Heubscher said that, by law, three invoices are sent out with a cost of \$800. About 51% is written off. He is not sure how much Medicare or Medicaid pays for this service. He also said that the fees are waived in certain circumstances. With regards to the 9-1-1 Communications Center, no decision can be made until the Township adopts the Resolution.

**Resolution #16-39 – Designating Areas for Flemington-Raritan First Aid
and Rescue Squad**

Mayor Gilbert read Resolution #16-39 in full.

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #16-39.

Motion was made by Comm. O'Brien and seconded by Comm. Mangin.

Roll Call Vote: Chen – *At the meeting of December 1, 2015, Mr. Pandos, Flemington-Raritan Rescue Squad, said that the residents in the Amwell Valley calling area would be notified of the switch. This was not done. He does not have a problem with this when both sides mutually agree. There was a petition submitted with 218 signatures voicing their objections.*
Mr. Chen casted a no vote.

Mangin – yes – *He stated that he wanted Amwell Valley Rescue Squad to know that their work has been appreciated in this town for some time. It is a very hard decision for him to make because he is a volunteer.*

Obrien – yes

Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

IT BUDGET UPDATE – Adm. Giaimis said that an update was distributed to the Committee. Link High Technologies has begun work in the Township. Mr. Hutchins has been excellent with all of the new technological and software changes. Comm. O'Brien thanked Comm. Chen for the hours he spent at the Township in the designing and also in working with the contractors.

**NEW
BUSINESS**

**DENIAL OF RELEASE OF PERFORMANCE BOND TO BARTON
HOLLOW ESTATES -**

Adm. Giaimis said that Engineer Antoine Hajjar has denied this project because certain items have not been completed. There was no dispute from the builder. A resolution was adopted later in the meeting.

ORDINANCES *There were none.*

CORRESPONDENCE

- a. League of Municipalities: (All Information is on File in the Clerk's Office):
Governor Takes Action on Legislation; Federal Update; Rescheduled Seminar for Newly elected, Re-elected and Experienced Municipal Officials on February 13, 2016;
- b. NJ American Water Notice of Public Hearings
- c. GovConnect Update
- d. Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce January Newsletter
- e. Proclamation re: The Great Kindness Challenge
- f. NJ DOT (1) Pre-Construction Public Information Center – Thursday, February 18, 2016 re: Flemington Circle Safety Improvements
(2) Traffic Impact Notice
- g. JCP&L Posts Best Service Reliability Results in More than a Decade
- h. Thank You Letter to Shop Rite from Mayor Gilbert -
- i. NJ DOT Pre-Construction Public Information Center – February 18, 2016 - 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – *Adm. Giaimis made mention that this meeting of the NJ DOT will take place on February 18, 2016 at Flemington Borough.*
- j. Snow Removal Emails from Residents – *Mayor Gilbert sand that emails were received praising the Department of Public Works for the great job done with snow removal.*

NON CONSENT AGENDA:

Resolution #16-39 – Designating Areas for Flemington-Raritan First Aid and Rescue Squad

This resolution was adopted earlier in the meeting.

**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 Meeting Minutes: January 7, 2016

Executive Session Meeting Minutes: November 16, 2015

Resolutions:

**Resolution #16-37 – Denial of Request for Release of Cash Performance
Bond to Barton Hollow Estates, LLC**

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda.

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

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

Motion carried.

**PRIVILEGE
OF THE
FLOOR**

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

No one appeared.

Resolution #16-38 – CLOSED SESSION
Contractual – Contract Negotiations:
Tax Attorney;
Risk Management

This Resolution was not adopted.

Comm. Mangin said that the dome at Healthquest fell down from the snow storm. Raritan Township Fire Company went out, however, they could not assess the damage made to the dome because the snow fell inward. The temperature was about 18 degrees. When the temperature rose in the 40's, the snow was hosed off. He felt that the Fire Department did a great job.

**ADJOURN-
MENT**

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting

Motion was made by Comm. Mangin and seconded by Comm. O'Brien.

Vote: 5 – 0 motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at: 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Sollena, RMC/CMC
Township Clerk