

The Township Committee of the Township of Raritan met on May 2, 2017 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, Comm. Michael Mangin, Comm. Richard Chen and Comm. Louis Reiner. Comm. Craig O'Brien was absent. Also present was Attorney Paul Rizzo of DiFrancesco, Bateman.

**MEETING
ADVERTISED**

Mayor Gilbert advised that the meeting was advertised in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act in the January 11, 2017 issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat and was posted on the office bulletin board and the Township Website.

Attorney Rizzo read Resolution #17-107 in full.

Resolution #17-107 - CLOSED SESSION:

Personnel – Municipal Court Judge Interviews

6:00 P.M. – Peter Fico

6:30 P.M. – Lori Buza

Deputy Court Administrator;

Township Clerk (Interview Committee);

Plumbing Sub-Code Official

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-107.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

**CLOSED
SESSION:**

Closed Session Minutes are on a separate document.

**OPEN
SESSION**

Open Session began at 7:09 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Gilbert 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.

AMEND/APPROVE THE AGENDA: *Comm. Chen made a motion to amend Resolution #17-117. The Open Space Committee and the Wildlife Committee have been looking for properties that are suitable for the nature preservation site. He felt that the Francavilla property would be ideal for this. The resolution will include one line item: "The open space funding cannot be used for maintenance, past recreation and all other uses as well". There were no other amendments to the agenda.*

Motion was seconded by Comm. Reiner. All Committee Members voted yes.

Motion carried,

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to approve the Agenda as amended.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

RARITAN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY (RTMUA)
PRESENTATION

*** Peter Kinsella, Commissioner of the RTMUA, gave a presentation on the function of the RTMUA. The Raritan Township Municipal Utilities Authority was founded in 1964. The plant covers 3.8 million gallons per day. In the service area, the RTMUA encompasses 50% of the Township, 100% of Flemington Borough and 12% of Readington Township. Greg LaFerla is in charge of the day to day operation of the plant. Dan Maddon is the engineer. There are 64 miles of gravity sewer in the Township and 15 miles of force mains and also 11 pump stations. All of what is processed goes into the South Branch River. The RTMUA runs a clean and efficient plant with no violations from the NJ DCA. The actual value of the RTMUA is \$27 million. The debt of the RTMUA is \$7.75 million. There are 4,323 rate payers of which 4,015 are residential. There are 288 commercial and 20 industrial rate payers. A map was presented and a film was shown on the operation of the RTMUA.

*** Amy Greene, 32 Windham Court, wanted to know if any towns have implemented septic system management.

The engineer said there wasn't anything like that in place at this time. The septic systems are controlled by the Health Department. Comm. Reiner wanted to know what Ms. Greene meant by a septic system management.

*** Ms. Greene said that this is a management program where anyone with a septic system would be required to register their system and have the system regulated as far as inspections and pumping. The benefit would be water quality improvement. The secondary benefit would be that the people would share the burden of regular maintenance, repair and replacement.

*** Rena Falipia, Flemington, asked that since the area has become more dense, will there be a need for more capacity. How would new development impact the sewer system.

Mayor Gilbert said that the Township is limited at this time for capacity.

*** Dolores Fogarty, Raritan Township, said that the residents have been hit with a 7% increase in sewer charges which she thought was quite expensive. She did, however, understand the complexity of the authority. She wanted to know if everyone was paying the same amount of money.

*** Mr. Kinsella said that the RTMUA has been experiencing rate increases for the past 5 – 7 years because equipment has had to be repaired or replaced. As a result, the RTMUA has made many improvements to the equipment. By 2019, the rates should stabilize or perhaps drop at that point. Mr. Kinsella mentioned that by comparison to other towns in Central New Jersey, there are higher rates and lower rates. RTMUA comes right about in the middle.

Comm. Reiner said that the rate payers have experienced a 19% increase Cumulatively over the last three years. He wanted to know how the residents could be helped.

*** Mr. Kinsella said that in the past 6 – 7 years, there have been major infrastructure improvements to the system. For many years, the RTMUA did not do any improvements. New pumps have now been installed and others have been repaired.

**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, said she opposes the contracts being given out for hunting on open space land that everyone has paid for. When open space land was acquired, the people thought that the lands were to save trees and to preserve wild life. Instead open space is being used to murder wild life. The contracts given out for hunting included people that are from out of this area. Some of the hunting is done in the dark so that the people will have out of towners scoping around their property at only 150 feet from their occupied houses. That is not a pleasant thing because they have dangerous weapons with them which has been documented that the weapons kill. She felt that the Township should not save any more open space because it is not going for the reasons that it is being acquired. It is being logged and used to murder wild life.

*** Sharon Winnek, 20 Monsey Drive, said that she felt that the Township wants to rob \$400,000 from the open space plan to pay off debt. This is not what the residents voted for. Debt will always be on the books, however, open space will not. She has seen a tremendous amount of development. The Township needs to retain as much open space as it can. Whatever land is left, the Township should purchase. She wanted the Committee to reconsider leaving the open space money for open space and let the homeowners pay to preserve land in Raritan Township.

PUBLIC HEARING AND FINAL ADOPTION OF THE 2017 BUDGET

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to open the public hearing on the 2017 Budget.

Motion as made by Comm. Mangin and seconded by Comm. Reiner.

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

Meeting opened to the public for the 2017 Budget

Comm. Chen said that the Hunterdon County Freeholders introduced a flat budget for the 4th consecutive year. Even with a flat budget, they included \$8.9 million for engineering, repair and maintenance of roads and bridges. For the last three years, the Township only spent 2 – 3 % of the budget for major road repairs and maintenance. He would like to see an increase in the budget for road repairs and maintenance included in the budget on an annual basis.

Comm. Mangin commended Mayor Gilbert and the Committee on the 2017 Budget. Township Budget shows an increase of $\frac{1}{4}$ of one percent. For an average home in the Township that is valued at \$400,000, the increase is \$6.00. However, the Township has no control over the schools and County taxes. Mayor Gilbert said that the budget is almost flat. At the same time, the Township will be hiring new people and will be paving roads and making purchases that are essential. Improvements are being made in the Township while keeping municipal taxes as low as possible. She thanked Bill Pandos, CFO and Don Hutchins, Administrator for the great job they did.

Comm. Reiner thanked Don Hutchins and Bill Pandos as well. He said he was unable to support 2015 and 2016 budgets because it entailed \$4 million worth of additional bonding debt without voter approval and also a 3% increase on the municipal side. He is very pleased with the budget.

Mayor Gilbert said that that all meetings were held in the public forum. All members were present and there were no additions or deletions or changes to the budget without the entire Committee being aware of it. It was a very open and public process. The process worked and the budget is being voted on earlier than last year.

Comm. Reiner said that the Township used \$1.4 million in surplus which he rejects that it is surplus. That \$1.4 million surplus is an overcharge as a result of bad budgeting which is being returned to the people to balance the budget.

Bill Pandos, CFO, did a comparison between Readington Township and Raritan Township. Readington Township has a population of 16,000 and Raritan Township has a population of 22,000. Raritan Township's municipal budget is less than Readington Township even with more of a population. For example, in 2016 Raritan Township's Budget was \$17,903.00. Readington Township's Budget was \$18,775, which was \$871,000 higher than Raritan. The 2017 Raritan Township Budget is 18,528,000.00. Readington Township's Budget is \$20,789.00 with an increase of \$2.2 million. The Readington Township tax rate is 43% higher than Raritan Township. In 2016, Raritan Township used \$875,000 in surplus. Readington Township used \$1,000,055.00 in surplus which is increase of over \$180,000. In 2017, Raritan Township used \$1.4 million in surplus. Readington Township used \$1,756,000.00, which is \$331,000 more than Raritan Township. The assessed value of new construction for Raritan Township in 2015 was \$31,116,000. In Readington Township it was \$18,580,000. In 2016, the new assessed value for Raritan was \$31,900,000. The Readington Township new assessed value was \$20,881,000. There were increases in out of cap appropriations also. There was an increase in debt service which was due to Raritan Township financing \$4.8 million of debt because interest rates increased significantly last fall. Comm. Reiner noted that the \$1.4 million that was taken to balance the budget. There is \$1.4 million left with another projected \$1 million.

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to close the public hearing on the 2017 Budget.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

Resolution #17-108 – FINAL ADOPTION OF THE 2017 BUDGET

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-108.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

**FINANCIAL
ISSUES**

Payment of Bills as Listed for Raritan Township: **\$8,363,217.02**

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

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

Payment of Bills as Listed for the Fire Company **\$1,405.20**

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to approve the Bill List for the Fire Company,

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – recuse
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert - yes

REPORTS

FIRE PREVENTATION REPORT – Thomas Abraham, Fire Marshal and Fire Protection Sub Code Official presented a report showing the accomplishments of the Fire Marshal's Office in the past several years. The reports have been submitted to the State of New Jersey.

MONTHLY MUNICIPAL COURT REPORTS – Court Administrator, Lynne Timlin, submitted a monthly Court Report. The Committee was pleased with the functions of the Court.

LIAISON REPORTS

Karen Gilbert: Historians, Finance, Personnel, Planning Board (Class I)
Mayor Gilbert said that the technical review committee of the Planning Board is working on the ordinance governing the overflow parking for the automobile dealerships. A final draft is anticipated to be completed by the end of the month for submission to the Municipal Attorney and Township Committee for review.

Michael Mangin: Planning Board (Class II), RTMUA
Approvals were given to Hail Built and Temple on Barley Sheaf Road by the Planning Board.

Louis Reiner: Environmental Commission, Green Team, Fire/Rescue/OEM

Richard Chen: Finance, Open Space, Parks & Recreation

Craig O'Brien: Open Space

No reports were given by Louis Reiner or Richard Chen. Craig O'Brien was absent.

UNFINISHED None
BUSINESS

NEW
BUSINESS

41 ROUTE 31, LLC (CHIMNEY ROCK, INC.) LETTERROAD RESURFACING
Since Chimney Rock Inn encompasses Flemington Borough and Raritan Township, it has requested that one municipality handle the inspections. The inspections will be handled by Flemington Borough.

AWARD OF BID RE: SUNNY HILLS SECTION I – Eng. Hajjar recommended that the bid for Sunny Hills Section I be awarded to DeSantis Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$1,130,366.00. A start date is scheduled for the beginning of June and will be completed in about four to five months. A resolution was adopted later in the meeting.

OPEN SPACE PLAN REVIEW & OPEN SPACE ALLOWABLE EXPENSES – Amy Greene, Chair of the Open Space Advisory Committee, gave an overview of open space. She said that the Open Space Committee has continually been making recommendations to the Township Committee for open space preservation. The primary object of the Open Space Advisory Committee is to identify and assist in the acquisition of properties in the Township to be preserved as open space. The open space plan follows the Township’s Master Plan conservation element. Properties are to be preserved for the purpose of limiting residential growth, to protect environmental resources, vistas, provide linkages to existing open space and provide areas for future active and passive recreation. The Master Plan also includes a farmland preservation element. There are about 2,456 acres of permanently preserved open space. Of those, Raritan Township has 1,150 acres, Hunterdon County has 767 acres, the State of New Jersey has 352 acres including Hunterdon Land Trust and New Jersey Conservation Foundation. Out of 38.6 square miles, 3.8 square miles is open space. There is an additional 1,360 acres of preserved farmland. There are still very large areas of farmland unpreserved in Raritan Township. At this time, the Township is finalizing a farmland preservation plan which will make the Township eligible for significant matching funds from the State of New Jersey.

Mayor Gilbert commended the Open Space Committee for putting all the information together. She mentioned that this Committee is comprised of volunteers who took their time to present the information to the Committee.

ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE #17-08

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RARITAN, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY, AMENDING TITLE 3 ENTITLED "REVENUE AND FINANCE" OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RARITAN TO INCLUDE CERTAIN FEE EXEMPTIONS FOR VETERANS.

Meeting opened to the public. No one appeared.

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to close the meeting to the public and adopt Ordinance #17-08 on final consideration same to be published according to law.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

**CORRES-
PONDENCE**

- a. Concord Ridge Homeowners Association Letter – *Don Hutchins, ADM. said that the Concord Ridge Homeowner's Association is asking for speed humps on Concord Ridge Road. Eng. Hajjar said that a traffic study would have to be completed in order to find out if speed humps are necessary on that road. Mr. Hajjar was also concerned about the noise that is generated from the speed humps. Mayor Gilbert mentioned that several people have voiced complaints about the noise from the speed humps in other areas. Mr. Hajjar suggested that the Township contact the homeowner's association to report back to the Township on how many homeowners wish to have the speed humps installed. There are many factors to consider including Rescue Squad trucks, fire trucks and police vehicles.*
- b. Willows @ Flemington Email
- c. Hunterdon Land Trust re: Farmer's Market opening on May 21, 2017.
- d. NJ DOT re: Route 31 & Flemington Circle New Traffic Pattern
- e. George BouChamoun re: Auto Oasis, 307 South Main Street – *Eng. Hajjar said that Auto Oasis will be returning to the Board of Adjustment to request an extension.*

NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution # 17-109 – Approval of Pick Up Truck F-250 for Public Works

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-109.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

Resolution # 17-110 – Approval of Utility Body Truck F-550 for the Public Works Department

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-110.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner - yes. *Mr. Reiner said that the two expenditures for trucks for Public Works have already been budgeted as part of the 2016 Budget and not from the 2017 Budget.*
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

Resolution #17-111 – Awarding a Two (2) Year Contract for Licensing or Archery Deer Hunting Rights on Four (4) Raritan Township Owned Parcels

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-111.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

Resolution #17-113 – Awarding a Two (2) Year Contract for Licensing of Archery Deer Hunting Rights on Six (6) Raritan Township Owned Parcels

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-113.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

Resolution #17-117 – Authorizing Application to Hunterdon County Municipal Grant Fund for Francavilla Purchase

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-117 as amended by Comm. Chen at the beginning of the meeting.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes. *Mr. Reiner said that the Township is taking hardly no revenue municipal taxes for this property. The property taxes are only \$122.71 as verified by the Raritan Township Tax Collector. This is as a result of the Francavilla property being woodland management. He has been advised that if the Township acquires this property, it could receive a more substantial amount of roughly \$25,000 in possible deer bids if hunting is allowed on the property*
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

Resolution #17-118 – Appointment of Plumbing Sub-Code Official – Richard Sodano

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-118.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert - yes

Motion carried.

**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:
Executive Session Meeting Minutes:

Resolutions:

Resolution #17-112 - Confirming the Termination of Acting Township Clerk William Bray and Confirming the Appointment of Rose Sollena, Acting Township Clerk

Resolution #17-114 – Confirming the Appointment of Superintendent of Department of Public Works – Brion Fleming

Resolution #17-115 – Return of Developer’s Escrow Fee in the amount of \$455.61 and Board of Adjustment Application Fee in the amount of \$1,000.00 to DBC4 (aka Lenteni)

Resolution #17-116 – Award of Bid for Sunny Hills, Section I to DeSantis Construction, Inc. of Somerset, NJ in the amount of \$1,130,366.00

Resolution #17-119 – Tonnage Grant

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda with the removal of Item "b" – Resolution #17-114 – Confirming the Appointment of Superintendent of Department of Public Works – Brion Fleming.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes
 Mayor Gilbert – yes

Motion carried.

Resolution #17-114 – Confirming the Appointment of Superintendent of Public Works – Brion Fleming

Mayor Gilbert acknowledged that Brion Fleming has been the Acting Superintendent of Public Works and has done an outstanding job. The Committee was pleased.

Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-114.

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

Roll Call Vote: Chen – yes
 Mangin – yes
 Reiner – yes. *Mr. Reiner thanked Brion Fleming for his service.*
 Mayor Gilbert - yes

**PRIVILEGE
OF THE
FLOOR**

*** Marty Resnick, Rustic Trail, commented on the drug issues going on in the Township. He felt that there is no activities in the Township for the kids to participate in. He has devised a program where he will be taking kids down to the New Egypt Speedway. He is speaking with the people at the Patriot's Ball Park. They will try to help out with activities. Also the shooting range may be able to help out. He asked the Township Committee to help him arrange for the High School Fieldhouse to be open Saturday evenings. This would be a place for the kids to hang out. WiFi could be available. This would be a place that is safe and the kids are familiar with. There is no movie theatre in this area. He asked the Committee to enact an ordinance for some tax relief for someone to build a movie theatre. He blamed the community for not providing the kids with something that they can do. He spoke with Leslie Gabel, Hunterdon Drug Awareness who informed him that if the kids had something to do, a small percentage of kids would turn to drugs. He would appreciate any help from the Committee.

Comm. Reiner thanked Mr. Resnick for reaching out. Mayor Gilbert said that the Township could write a letter of support or perhaps meeting with the businesses together with Mr. Resnick. She suggested that the major businesses be contacted.

*** Dave Kunz, 26 Grandin Drive, said that he was happy to see the open space approvals by the Committee. He was concerned about the speeding in his neighborhood and requested a patrol officer be stationed on Grandin Drive from time to time to curb the speeding.

Chief Glenn Tabasko said he would have an officer at Grandin Drive the next morning. He said that a speed trailer could be on Grandin Drive to slow down motorists.

**ADJOURN-
MENT**

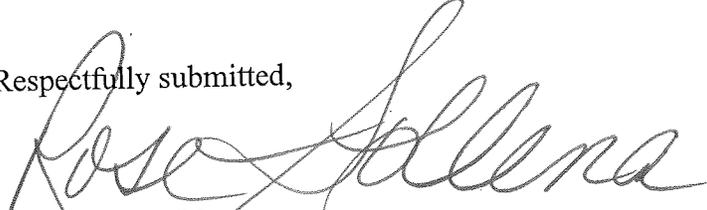
Mayor Gilbert asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting

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

Vote: 4 – 0 motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at: 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Rose Sollena, RMC
Acting Township Clerk