



**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM
December 20, 2018
Regular Session 6:00 PM**

1. ROLL CALL:

Mr. Cioppettini	Present
Ms. Duarte	Present
Mr. Gisser	Present
Ms. Neibart	Present
Mayor Diegnan	Present

Also present:

John Mills, Township Attorney
Debbie Bonanno, Township Administrator
Maria Coppinger, Township Clerk

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

3. STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE:

Adequate Notice of this meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was given to the Observer Tribune and Daily Record on January 4, 2018 and the notice of time change was given on December 10, 2018. Notice was posted on the Bulletin Board in the Township Offices and notice was filed with the Township Clerk.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of October 23, 2018

Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

5. RESOLUTIONS

2018-193 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing the Cancellation of Small Balances on Tax and Sewer Utility Accounts for the Year Ending December 31, 2018

Ms. Neibart moved. Ms. Duarte seconded.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2018-194 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing Refund of Overpayment of Taxes Due to New Jersey State Tax Court Judgement

Mr. Gisser moved. Ms. Neibart seconded.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2018-195 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Awarding a Contract between Automated Building Controls and the Township of Mendham for HVAC Maintenance and Repairs

Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2018-196 Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing 2018 Budget Appropriation Transfer

Mr. Gisser moved. Mr. Cioppettini seconded.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

2018-197 Resolution for the Township Committee of the Township of Mendham Authorizing the Payment of Bills

Mr. Cioppettini moved. Ms. Duarte seconded.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

6. DISCUSSION

Accomplishments in 2018 – Administrator Debbie Bonanno shared the following accomplishments:

Personnel

- Conducted a successful search hiring a new Municipal Clerk, Department of Public Works Mechanic, Police Officer, and appointing a new Township Engineer
- Completed extensive training with staff and volunteers for Land Use training and Employment Practices Training
- Updated the employee handbook
- Began contract negotiations with the Teamsters who represent our Department of Public Works
- Attended seminars and implemented new employment policies based on newly enacted state laws
- In last year's accomplishment report, Lydia Blide was sitting for the Tax Collector's exam. In early 2018 we learned that she passed with flying colors!
- The Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Chief Financial Officer, Tax Collector, Police Officers and other staff members have attended various seminars, webinars and professional conventions and training to stay up to date on legislation and best practices

Communication/Outreach

- Mendham Township formalized its participation in the Morris County's Stigma Free Initiative
- An Ad Hoc Communications Committee was established and a survey was conducted to evaluate the Township's communication and make recommendations for improvement
- We have updated the Township's website
- Student members were added to the Environmental Commission, Recreation Advisory Committee and the Historic Preservation Committee
- Established the [Mendham Township Storm Alerts & Emergency Notifications](#) Facebook page right at the time of the spring storms: the page now has 673 followers
- The Township Clerk has evaluated the online [eCode](#) website (municipal ordinances website) on ways to improve the public documents section to better assist residents and employees with inquiries on resolutions, ordinances, and agendas. These improvements will be completed in 2019 and we will continue with the improvements moving forward

With Melanie Politi as our Information Manager:

- The Township Facebook page has 582 followers
- The Township Emergency Storm Alert & Emergency Notifications page has 673 followers
- The Township Recreation Page 278 (up 40 since June)
- You can now follow the Township on [Instagram](#); a page was added in mid-November with 109 followers added this month
- Worked closely with the Recreation Director on all program publicity, including weekly photos taken at the beach
- Used social media to inform the residents about schedule changes to garbage, recycling, meeting updates, recreation programs, emergency services, and daily activities within the Township.
- [The Police Department](#) also does a great job in keeping residents informed about road closures, safety issues and upcoming events using social media

Mendham Township Police Department along with Mendham Borough Police Department held the first *Cops, Kids and Cones* event in May. It was a HUGE success with over 600 people in attendance throughout the evening.

The police department strengthened our already strong alliance with the schools; they conducted over 400 hours of school security details and drills across our Township schools.

We continue our strong Community Policing Initiative including:

- Hosting an annual LEAD Graduation BBQ for the Mendham Township Middle School
- The Police Department is a Toys for Tots Drop Off Site
- Team for the 2nd Annual Mendham Township Elementary School Staff Breast Cancer Awareness Volleyball tournament (still undefeated as the champions!)
- Team for the Annual Staff/Student Mendham Township Middle School Newcomb Game
- Delivering an Anti-bullying program for the Mendham Township Middle School Students during Violence Awareness week
- Delivering a safe Halloween Program to all the students of the Mendham Township Elementary School

Municipal Properties

- Completed the upgrade of Mendham Sewer East converting the plant from a chemical processing facility to a biological facility. Six existing leach fields at the facility were also restored. The project was completed on time and under budget.
- Over \$70,000 in donations was transferred from the West Morris Junior Woman's Club to the Township to be put towards the rebuilding of the Ralston Playground. Two large pieces of playground equipment were installed, the gazebo was power washed and all existing bricks were refurbished and reset with the new bricks being installed. We have begun Phase 2 of the fundraising and continue to receive contributions from residents for additional equipment and benches to be installed in the spring. Since Phase 2 has begun we have received close to \$30,000 in additional donations for equipment to be installed this spring.
- The Governing Body authorized the acquisition of a new pumper for Ralston Fire Company
- The Department of Public Works refurbished the Mt. Pleasant tennis courts
- We have pursued the demolition of unsafe structures on municipal property (Mosle) and on private property
- The Township was awarded a DOT grant from State of NJ for \$265,000 to mill and pave Corey Lane
- The Pitney property subdivision was completed along with a rezoning consistent with the highest and best use of the property
- An Ad Hoc Pitney Farm Seven Acre Task Force Committee was formed to develop a strategic plan and timeline for improving the preserved seven acres of the property. The Task Force presented a concept plan in November and the unrestricted five acres of the Pitney property was auctioned in December.

Mendham Township Police Department

- Replaced our 20 year old portable sign board/speed trailer that was shared with the Borough
- An update and revision of our Rules and Regulations was completed. It is in the final revision process and is expected to be adopted by the Township in early 2019. This was last done in 2000.
- Ptl. Robert Kalweit received the Mothers Against Drunk Driving Top Cop Award for Morris County for the second year in a row for Drunk Driving Enforcement
- The Police Department attended and participated in over 1200 hours of training
- The Township replaced a 10 year old pickup truck with a Special Services unit that is outfitted with cones and barricades and other special equipment that can be deployed during any large storm or event.
- When the Police Department's locker room became uninhabitable, working with the Township they were able to identify a part of the existing Emergency Services Building to utilize resulting

in no cost to the tax payers for a temporary housing solution. Special thanks to the Brookside Engine Company and Mendham Township First Aid Squad for their cooperation!

- The Detective Bureau alone handled over 60 cases and investigations (burglaries, arson, serious motor vehicle accidents, missing persons, etc.) in addition to over 110 background and firearms applications
- The Police Department received grants: Distracted Driving (\$6,600), Drunk Driving Enforcement (\$3,400)

Tax Collection Department

- Our 2017 collection rate was 99.43%. Mendham Township continues to have a collection rate of close to 100%. The 2018 tax sale list was created on September 11, 2018 with a total of eight properties on the list. Six properties had delinquent 2017 taxes and two properties had delinquent 2017 sewer. The tax sale was set for Wednesday, October 31, 2018. The tax sale was cancelled due to collection of all of the 2017 delinquency prior to the tax sale date.

Tax Assessor

- Open Permit Project, mailings were conducted eight times from May to November totaling 331 homes to be inspected
- Processed 226 deeds
- Processed 103 Farmland applications involving 141 farm properties
- Processed 92 Added Assessments due to new construction and renovations
- Processed 30 County Tax Appeals that were adjudicated
- Processed 36 State Tax Appeals for 2018 which six have been resolved and numerous others pending resolution
- Processed 24 – 200 Foot Lists for planning and zoning applications

The department also continues to provide assistance to the public, property owners, realtors, appraisers, title companies, lawyers, and other professionals all seeking assessment related info.

Affordable Housing

- Continued open communication with the Housing Partnership, including updating the home resale values by the Tax Assessor
- Reviewed 41 Affordable Housing Property Deeds with attorney's office to ensure the Township retains affordability controls on the units. Confirmed we have until March of 2020 to update for retention.
- Worked with several departments to update the Township's ordinance to reflect updated 2018 income limits for qualification

Community Forestry Plan

- Coordinated an Emerald Ash Borer/Ash Yellow presentation with the Administrator to inform the public the plight of Ash Trees
- Utilized the Green Communities Grant for a tree inventory in the Township performed by a licensed tree expert

Health Department

In 2018, we continued to successfully partner with the County of Morris Health Management, creating a positive and productive department. The County has provided excellent service; we had our annual rabies and flu clinics here in the Township. Kathy Basile, our new Public Health Nurse is here at Town Hall twice per month for blood pressures, and has extended her visits to the Library. She monitors all infectious disease cases reported by the state.

- Approximately 77 septic applications for repair or alteration, with \$63,518 in revenue from January to November (+\$8,318 over 2017)
- On September 26th, we held our second Flu Clinic here at Town Hall, extending the clinic to our employees and volunteers at no cost to them. We increased attendance to a total of 37 shots given this year, and were able to provide 23 free shots to municipal employees and volunteers.

- The Rabies Clinic was held on November 3rd at the Emergency Services Building, with 32 rabies shots provided, and the vet provided services free of charge
- Issued five temporary event permits and three yearly establishment permits

Township Clerk

- The Township Clerk's Office has modernized its filing system and has put together several databases (logs) which will enable her to compare information from one year to another year (for example an OPRA log/Peddler log)
- The new filing system will also allow her to gather statistics for next year

Other Items

- Three ongoing cases of litigation were settled
- A comprehensive review of the Township's Master Plan was completed and the Master Plan reexamination was adopted
- We have worked closely with the Township Engineer to meet the extensive increase in the State's storm water management regulations
- We restructured the Brookside Beach membership charges providing free admission to residents during the week and a minimal charge for attendance on the weekends
- The operating procedures were changed at Brookside Beach resulting in a cost savings: we have also begun the permitting process to dredge the beach in 2019
- The Township's fees for permits, wood chips and mulch were updated providing an increase in revenues
- The Department of Public Works handled four Nor'easters in the spring of 2018. We completed tub grinding of approximately 20,000 yards of brush and provided a shared service opportunity for Mendham Borough to take part in the tub grinding
- An agreement was negotiated with the NJ Land Trust to preserve additional property adding to Lewis Morris Park
- The Township renewed an Interlocal Agreement with the Borough of Mendham and Randolph Township for Construction Inspection Services
- Electronics recycling service is now provided to residents and non-residents
- Zoning changes were made to two properties in the Township for potential new development
- An ordinance was adopted to amend the Fire Department's ordinance that was introduced over 40 years ago
- The Township went out for public bid and awarded contracts for snow plowing, HVAC, and plumbing
- A workshop meeting of the Township Committee was held with members of the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment to discuss the possibility of merging the two boards into a Land Use Board
- Shared Services Initiative meetings were held with Mendham Borough, Chester Township, Chester Borough, Washington Township and Randolph Township

Ms. Bonanno expressed that it has been a pleasure to serve Mendham Township and the Township Committee.

PROCLAMATION – Mayor Diegnan read the proclamation that was given to Russell Heiney, Construction Official, who is retiring from the Township of Mendham. Mr. Gisser read a statement from Mr. Heiney.

PROCLAMATION – Mayor Diegnan read the proclamation for retiring Committee Member Frank Cioppettini.

Mr. Cioppettini thanked the residents of Mendham Township for the privileged and honor to serve the Mendham Township residents for nearly 12 years as a member of the township committee.

STATE OF THE TOWNSHIP ADDRESS – MAYOR DIEGNAN

Mayor Diegnan thanked everyone for the honor of serving the Township, and expressed that he was proud of all of the accomplishments this year. He specifically thanked Ms. Bonanno and Ms. Fornaro for their leadership and guidance, as well as the entire Township staff. Mayor Diegnan also recognized Dave Read and his staff, Police Chief Johnson and his staff, the Fire Department and all the volunteers that dedicate their time to boards and committees, task forces, as well as the Library. Mayor Diegnan listed the 2018 accomplishments.

7. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mayor Diegnan entertained a motion to open.

Mr. Cioppettini moved. Ms. Duarte seconded.

There were no comments from the public.

Mayor Diegnan entertained a motion to close the public session.

Mr. Cioppettini moved. Ms. Neibart seconded.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to approve.

8. ADJOURNED at 6:40PM

Ms. Duarte offered thanks to Mr. Cioppettini and the Mayor for their service. Mr. Cioppettini expressed that it was a pleasure to work with the Township leadership. Mr. Gisser expressed he is proud to be part of the team and is looking forward to leadership in the coming year. Ms. Neibart thanked the Mayor for his service and also the Committee for their warm welcome and the Township staff.

Mayor Diegnan announced that there will be a party following the meeting for volunteers.

Mr. Cioppettini announced that the Township reorganization meeting will take place on Friday, January 4th.

Mayor Diegnan entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cioppettini seconded.

Roll call vote: All members present voted to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maria Coppinger, Township Clerk

Distributed: 01/14/2019

Approved: 01/22/2019