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**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM
MARCH 27, 2018
Regular Session 7:30 PM**

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Cioppettini	Present
Ms. Duarte	Present
Mr. Gisser	Present (By Conference Call)
Ms. Neibart	Present
Mayor Diegnan	Present (By Conference Call)

Also Present:

Deborah Bonanno, Administrator
Beth Foley, Land Use Secretary
Karen Fornaro, Chief Finance Officer

Mr. Cioppettini stated that Mayor Diegnan and Mr. Gisser are joining the meeting by conference call and that he would be presiding.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

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. Notice was posted on the Bulletin Board in the Township Offices and Notice was filed with the Township Clerk.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There will be one change on Agenda Item 8 and that questions from the public will also include persons present.

Ms. Bonanno announced that the Police Department requested that she share that April is Distracted Driving Month and that they will be enforcing cell phone use violations from April 1st – April 21st.

Mr. Cioppettini announced that the Rotary Club will be holding their annual antique and plant sale on April 7th and 8th at the local high school. Proceeds will help fund scholarships for the Township's high school students.

PRESENTATIONS

2018 Municipal Budget- Karen Fornaro, CFO

Ms. Fornaro explained that the presentation would highlight parts of the budget. She began by explaining the purpose of the budget and that namely it funds the daily operation of the Township, helps to control spending, allots funds and resources to departments, and reflects the priorities of the governing body. She also discussed revenues, both anticipated and realized, and high level operating and statutory expenses. The impact of the budget on taxes was also included, and the details of the presentation are in the attached document.

The next public hearing will take place on April 24th at 7:30, and long term strategic planning will continue with the development of the 2019 budget.

Ms. Fornaro then solicited questions:

Ms. Duarte thanked Ms. Fornaro and Committee members Mr. Gisser and Mr. Cioppettini for their excellent work regarding the budget. She questioned whether topics discussed at prior meetings, such as the Ralston fire pump, beach improvements and playground funding are part of the budget process. Ms. Fornaro explained that there is enough in the budget for these projects and that the next step would be a bond ordinance. Once an ordinance is approved the projects requested will be prioritized and memos forthcoming regarding these capital projects for potential approvals. Ms. Duarte expressed that she hopes the recreation and beach projects will move forward and emphasized the importance of increasing grants and the possibility of hiring a grant writer. Mr. Cioppettini agreed that the Committee should pursue hiring a grant writer, and he also mentioned that studies by the Committee show that a full- fledged pumper would not be financially feasible; however, if the fire department wished to pursue a mini-pumper that this would be possible.

Mr. Cioppettini thanked Ms. Fornaro for putting together a terrific budget and for an excellent presentation.

Ms. Neibart inquired whether taxpayers are still levied the same amount of money if the budget passes and the bond ordinance fails. Ms. Fornaro explained that the cash funds would still be in reserve for future capital projects. Mr. Cioppettini commented that if the funds were not spent that it could be returned; however, he opined that it would be very difficult not to spend since there are many legitimate needs and that these projects are addressed in a methodical, affordable way.

Ms. Duarte asked whether the mini-pumper was for the Brookside Fire Company, and Mr. Cioppettini said that it can be moved to Ralston. She then asked if contributions would be allocated to the playground and beach improvements, and Mr. Cioppettini responded that funds were earmarked for both projects. Ms. Duarte stated that there were past discussions regarding a full time Recreation Director's position and whether this was still in the budget and open for further discussion. Mr. Cioppettini responded that the Township Committee would have to discuss this further and that the consent of the majority of the Committee would be necessary. There are funds earmarked for this position should the Township Committee decide to move in that direction.

Mr. Cioppettini asked if Mr. Gisser and Mr. Diegnan had any comments. Mr. Gisser commented that he appreciated everyone's participation this year. Mayor Diegnan thanked the Finance Committee and Ms. Fornaro for an excellent job and commended them for producing a multi-year plan last year and again this year, which helps continue to strengthen the financial position of the Township.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS AND PERSONS PRESENT

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded.

Michael Merritt – 73 Mountainside Rd. Mr. Merritt addressed the issue of fire department equipment and encouraged an open, transparent, and detailed conversation about it. He believed he heard two contradictory statements - one being that there are resources available if the Township Committee chose to invest in them and secondly, that one member of the Committee stated that the decision had been made. He would like to ensure that all members of the Committee have visibility into the arguments. He was uncertain if it was an affordability issue but suspected it was a willingness and priority issue and that the Committee should be clear as to how and why decisions are being made. He hoped that by the next meeting that the options would be more apparent along with the specific requests from the engine companies and what decisions were made.

Jack Curtis – 4 Michael Rd. – Mr. Curtis first offered kudos to the Committee for their budget report. He said he was here a few weeks ago regarding the curve on Old Brookside Road and expressed concern over the condition of a house that is seen as one turns the curve from Randolph. It is near a welcoming sign to 'beautiful' Mendham Township and the house is not only dilapidated but is also a health hazard. He went on to say that a few years ago he attempted to have it boarded up and the barn taken down across the street because it was a health issue. He also expressed concern about the dangerous blind curve on Old Brookside Road and offered photos of a school bus that was forced to go over the yellow line in order to get around the curve. He said that he spoke with the former Township Administrator, Mr. Steve Mountain, and DPW years ago who agreed that the curve was dangerous and that at that time it was agreed that the blind curve had an easy fix by removing 5 to 7 feet of embankment in front of the house. This would allow people to have a line of sight to see oncoming vehicles. He questioned why the Township was spending \$265K on Corey Lane to improve a road that was in good condition yet unwilling to correct the blind curve using DPW employees. Mr. Curtis went on to show the Committee a series of photos of the road in question. Mr. Cioppettini

suggested that the Town Committee engineer, DPW and Township Administrator look into this and report back to the Committee.

Mr. Curtis also commented that another issue is blight, and Mr. Cioppettini requested that Ms. Bonanno address this issue with the engineer and DPW and that one or two members of the Township Committee also look into this matter. Mr. Cioppettini mentioned there is no ordinance in town related to blight except for homes in foreclosure, which Mr. Mills confirmed. In the past the Township was reluctant to advise homeowners how to care for their property; however, he is seeing more blight in other neighborhoods and feels that the Committee should discuss blight before it adversely affects all of the Township properties. Mr. Curtis said that as an educator, he was more concerned with the danger rather than blight, yet the town could take advantage of both issues and 'kill two birds with one stone.' Mr. Curtis said he will return to follow up on these issues.

Patricia Zimmerman – Ms. Zimmerman commented that there is \$15k available in the budget for furniture or equipment for this building. She assumed that includes the lecturn that is needed and that this is a reminder to the Committee.

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to close. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 12, 2018 regular session minutes

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. All members present voted to approve.

February 12, 2018 executive session minutes

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. All members present voted to approve.

February 27, 2018 regular session minutes

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. All members present voted to approve.

February 27, 2018 executive session minutes

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. All members present voted to approve.

March 12, 2018 regular session minutes

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. Ms. Duarte asked for a correction to minutes regarding funding for the children's playground. The minutes incorrectly states "Women's Auxiliary" and should read "West Morris Junior Women's Club." It was requested that Ms. Foley make the change.

All members present voted to approve the minutes as amended.

March 12, 2018 executive session minutes

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to approve. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. All members present voted to approve.

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

ORDINANCE 2018-4

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 7 "TRAFFIC" SECTION 29 "SPEED LIMITS"

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to adopt. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to open to the public. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. All members present voted to approve any comments from the public.

Mr. Curtis – Mr. Curtis asked for an explanation of the 30 and 35 mph speed limits. Ms. Bonanno explained that the change was being made based on a traffic study done by Lt. Bittman and certified by the Township Engineer. Currently there are certain areas on the road that are marked at 20 mph and that there is not a good basis for that speed limit.

Mr. Cioppettini called for a vote. All members present voted to adopt.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION 2018-49

INTRODUCTION OF THE 2018 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to introduce. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. All members present voted to approve.

RESOLUTION 2018-50

TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM SELF-EXAMINATION OF BUDGET

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to adopt. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. Mr. Cioppettini asked Ms. Fornaro to explain this topic to the public. Ms. Fornaro explained that every three years the Township is under state examination with great detail; the other two years the Township performs a self-exam whereby a resolution is needed to report that all is in order. The state performed their exam last year.

Mr. Cioppettini called for a roll call vote. Ms. Neibart abstained since she said she has not been involved in the budget discussions. All other members voted to adopt.

RESOLUTION 2018-51

AUTHORIZING AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES TO FRENCH AND PARRELLO ASSOCIATES

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to adopt. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. Mr. Cioppettini questioned whether this resolution should include a financial cap for the services rendered. Mr. Mills responded that it doesn't, but that it incorporates by reference to the proposals submitted by French and Parrello. He also stated that the cap would be the amount of work the Committee authorized French and Parrello to perform. Mr. Cioppettini also asked if the cap would be the amount that is budgeted, and Mr. Mills confirmed this and added that the limits can be adjusted. Mr. Cioppettini then inquired as to the length of the appointment, and Mr. Mills replied that the intent was an annual appointment, but statutorily the appointment is for three years. Ms. Bonanno added that the ordinance states a one-year appointment, and Mr. Mills indicated that the resolution should be amended to state a one-year appointment. Mr. Cioppettini questioned Mr. Mills about the fact that statutorily the appointment is for three years, and Mr. Mills responded that he is adhering to the ordinance and will reconcile the differences at a later date. Ms. Neibart questioned whether this issue can

be postponed for further clarity, however Mr. Cioppettini indicated that the Planning Board needs this resolved for their own purposes.

Mr. Cioppettini called for a roll call vote to which all approved.

RESOLUTION 2018-52

APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to adopt. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. Ms. Duarte thanked all the members of the Historic Preservation Committee, and Mr. Gisser expressed appreciation for the feedback on the Hillandale project.

Mr. Cioppettini called for a roll call vote, which all approved.

RESOLUTION 2018-53

AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS

Mr. Cioppettini called for a motion to adopt. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. Mr. Cioppettini mentioned that there is one additional bill to be added to this list from Mr. Buzak's law firm for the retainer portion of that invoice. Mr. Gisser confirmed this.

Mr. Cioppettini called for a roll call vote to which all approved.

DISCUSSION/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Cioppettini thanked Ms. Fornaro for her report and presentation.

Ms. Duarte discussed the Ad Hoc Communication Committee that was created earlier in the year and whereby 14 individuals volunteered. The Committee has been researching different aspects of communications, and the Committee's next step is to conduct a survey in the community to determine how residents currently receive communications and what their preference would be in receiving these communications. A subcommittee was created and a tool called Survey Monkey was suggested by Ms. Duarte. There are two options- one is a free survey limited to ten questions with only one hundred surveys obtained. However, there would be many limitations to what can be done with the data obtained. The other option is the proposal being made by the Ad Hoc Committee, which would be to use the Advantage plan that the Board of Ed is currently using for their strategic planning. The cost is \$36.00 a month and the Committee would most likely hire them for only a few months. One Committee member suggested that an annual subscription could be shared by several departments such as Recreation or Mendham TV. Ms. Duarte confirmed with Ms. Fornaro that \$72 would be available in the budget for this purpose and was hoping to get approval this evening since her Committee is meeting again next week. Mr. Cioppettini stated that he has not read the entire email that Ms. Duarte had sent to the Township Committee describing this project and asked for further clarification. Ms. Duarte explained that the survey would have approximately 20 questions, which might include such topics as whether facebook is used by a resident and whether or not residents are aware of the various pages and links on the Township website. Mr. Cioppettini said the money is not an issue but would like to see if some piggy-backing could be done with information used by other departments. He asked to defer on this until April 9th. Ms. Duarte opined that the advantage of moving on the project immediately is because the

volunteers could begin the paperwork in order to set up the account and begin inputting questions. Ms. Neibart asked if the Township Committee could convene earlier than April 9th, and Mr. Cioppettini responded that this is not practical since the meeting would have to be noticed and a date agreed upon. Ms. Neibart then inquired whether this topic would need to be placed on the agenda in order to vote, and Mr. Cioppettini responded that it would not have to be placed on the agenda. Mr. Cioppettini expressed some concerns about moving forward without further research, but Ms. Duarte explained that both Ms. Bonanno and Ms. Politi in addition to Chief Johnson were aware of the survey and that there should be no concerns. Ms. Duarte motioned to spend the \$72 for the survey, and Ms. Neibart seconded the motion. Mr. Cioppettini asked for a roll call vote to which all agreed.

Ms. Duarte discussed the possibility of creating a volunteer spotlight recognition program focusing on the various Township organizations. Mendham TV was offered as an example, and Ms. Duarte agreed that this was a good idea.

The Environmental Commission asked Ms. Duarte to announce that there is a website called Hikemendham.org where information about trail maps can be obtained and to also thank Ken Beckerman who created the site many years ago.

Ms. Duarte commented that the high school is going to announce a panel for school safety and wellness issues. She also wanted to recognize the high school students who are civic minded along with the students who helped organize the recent march in Morristown in response to the tragedy in Parkland School in Florida.

Mr. Cioppettini added that the West Morris Mendham mock trial team won the Vounty award and are moving on to the States.

Ms. Neibart received her appointment to the Committee this week and is excited to learn more about the town.

Mr. Gisser said that since most of this meeting was dedicated to financial matters that the next meeting will include updates in other areas.

Mayor Diegnan thanked the Committee for all the hard work on the budget.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Cioppettini entertained a motion to adjourn. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. The Township Committee adjourned at 8:39pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Denise Bobinski
Mendham Township