



**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM
MARCH 12, 2018
Executive Session 6:30 PM
Regular Session 7:30 PM**

ROLL CALL:

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

Also Present: John M. Mills, III, Esq., Township Attorney
Deborah Bonanno, Administrator
Mary Beth Zichelli, Township Clerk

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.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Diegnan announced that the Township Committee had met on March 5th to interview the three nominees chosen by the Republican Party Committee and were happy to announce they chose Sarah Neibart. Kim Guadagno then administered the oath of office to Ms. Neibart.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor on behalf of himself and the Township Committee thanked the entire Township staff of volunteers and employees. He further praised Ms. Bonanno and Ms. Politi for their Facebook postings which helped keep all residents up to date on the storm related issues. He also announced there would be an Emerald Ash Borer presentation to be held March 22nd at 7 pm in Town Hall and there will be professionals present to answer questions.

PRESENTATIONS

School Safety

Borough Chief John Camoia, Township Chief Ross Johnson and superintendent of schools, Dr. Sal Constantino talked about school safety and what they do to be prepared for a shooting. The Borough Chief began the discussion by explaining that they are governed by the state as to fire drills and evacuations and the procedure they have to follow.

Chief Johnson said they are trying to change the climate of the schools and not have the students be fearful when they see a police officer.

Dr. Constantino explained what his staff does to ensure safety in the schools. They have a school safety team that meets monthly, always training staff, going over protocols and drill the uncommon; fire drill during recess or lunch.

Mr. Gisser stressed that prevention and threat assessment needs equal time and resources spent on the issue.

Tina Smith, 23 Calais Road, expressed how thrilled she is at the preparation the children have had for school safety at the elementary and middle school, but concerned about the high school safety. She also asked what parents could do to better prepare, get support and help.

Adam Dubeck, 307 Mendham Road West, expressed his concern about after hour's security and feels it needs to be addressed.

Dr. Constantino stated the protocols that have been changed to help that problem, including a morning safety check, but he also said it is hard to check every person coming into the school after hours for events.

Chief Johnson and Chief Camoia assured residents that the police officers and custodians check hallways for anything out of the ordinary every evening.

Danielle Ager, 4 Washington Valley Road, asked if metal detectors were a possibility and if there was anything as parents they could tell their children at home about school safety.

Dr. Constantino responded regarding the metal detectors. It has been thought about, but they are not ready to implement them yet.

Tracy Budnik, 36 Oak Knoll, asked what the procedure was to let parents know and asked if substitute teachers get the same training as the teachers, to which she was told they do get the same training as the full time teachers.

Kimberly Hart, 17 North Gate Road asked how many times a day officers walk through the schools. Chief Johnson stated that it is at least one or two times a day.

Trish O'Brien, 3 East Ridge Road commented that the reassurances to the parents could have been better. She also asked what the schools are doing to keep track of known special needs students. Dr. Constantino assured the residents that they assess all special needs students and if necessary, they pass it to the police to assess. Chief Johnson noted that if a special needs student is transferred to a different town or district, they are informed of that particular student.

Ms. Duarte mentioned that she was the liaison to the High school and asked residents to feel free to use her as a resource and thanked them all for keeping the kids safe and being so candid.

Playground plans

Steve Eisenstein, Recreation Director presented the three proposed plans for the Ralston Playground (attached) He stated that he was striving to keep the historic value of the playground, targeting 2-5 year olds, have a rock wall and swings. Laurie Pettine, Woodland Road asked about the swing sets on the plans and the regulations. Mr. Eisenstein said there are certain regulations to pass inspection, mainly an 8' clearance in front and behind. He also noted that \$70,000 came from the Women's Club and \$36,540 came from the Playground Recreation Fund. He commented that all the plans require little maintenance and also suggested that someone in the Township, either Steve himself or someone from the Public Works should become a Certified Playground Inspector. The warranties are all very similar. Mr. Eisenstein also discussed how the sale of bricks was going as a fundraiser and would like to see an entrance wall be built with them, rather than a path made to prevent wear and tear of the pavers on the ground.

The Mayor asked Steve to discuss the cost of each plan. Plan #1, General Recreation would be \$167,000. Plan #2, Liberty Parks & Playgrounds is \$165,000 plus \$45,000 for installation and the Plan #3, MRC Gametime is \$280,000.

Mr. Gisser asked about the phase approach and would it change the overall price. Mr. Eisenstein did not think the change would be significant except for the 0% interest.

Ms. Duarte thanked the people responsible for donating over \$100,000 to the funding of the playground: The entire Recreation Commission, Mendham Magic, West Morris Junior Woman's Club, the Patriot's Race, the Carnival, the Lonergan family (\$15,000) and the Finlay family (\$25,000). Ms. Duarte asked how Steve would get input from current families and asked about a timeline to plan a grand opening.

Mr. Eisenstein told residents the plans would be on the website by the end of week and will be room for comments. The timeline would be that it is finished before school is out and takes 4-7 weeks to complete.

Mr. Cioppettini asked about provisions for special needs and suggested asking the Matheny School for donations if special needs equipment were part of the plan.

Mr. Gisser is anxious to hear what the rec committee has in mind for alternative sources of funding.

Mr. Cioppettini and the Mayor commented that they believe once the plans are available to the public, other donations and funding will come forward.

Ms. Neibart suggested a digital poll rather than a Town Hall meeting.

Tracy Budnik, 36 Oak Knoll, asked about picnic tables and ticks.

Mr. Eisenstein said there would be a pavilion, tables and porta johns. He stated he would have to let them know about tick prevention.

Tina Smith, 23 Calais Road, suggested shading be addressed and thought the digital poll would be a good idea.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS

Seeing no one from the public wished to speak, the Mayor closed that portion of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – THE MAYOR ASKED THAT THE MINUTES BE TABLED UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING AND IF ANYONE WANTED TO MAKE ANY CHANGES, TO PLEASE SEND THEM TO THE CLERK.

February 12, 2018, regular session
February 12, 2018, executive session
February 27, 2018, regular session
February 27, 2018, executive session

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

ORDINANCE 2018-4

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 7 “TRAFFIC” SECTION 29 “SPEED LIMITS”

Mayor Diegnan called for a motion. Mr. Gisser moved. Ms. Duarte seconded. Ms. Bonanno explained that Sergeant Bittman had realized the street signs reflected a different speed than what was in the original ordinance. He then did a study/survey and asked to make the changes. All members voted to approve. This ordinance will be on for second reading and public hearing at the march 27, 2018 Township Committee meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION 2018-46

AUTHORIZING 2018 BUDGET APPROPRIATION TRANSFER

Mayor Diegnan called for a motion. Mr. Gisser moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. All members voted to approve.

RESOLUTION 2018-47

AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS

Mayor Diegnan called for a motion. Mr. Gisser moved. Ms. Duarte seconded. All members voted to approve.

DISCUSSION/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Diegnan announced that the HPC (Historic Preservation Committee) ordinance was passed and the appointments will be made at the next meeting. He also responded to a residents request from last meeting regarding the tree permits. The \$10 fee is per event, not per tree, so even if 5 trees were coming down at the same time, it is still \$10.

Ms. Duarte reminded everyone about the High School musical, Seussical and congratulated the middle school for their performance of Bye, Bye Birdie. Mendham TV wanted to thank Debbie for the new camera system. It allows residents to view on demand and reduces volunteer time. Chief Cooper asked to remind everyone to remove snow @ fire hydrants.

Mr. Cioppettini also thanked all first responders.

Mr. Gisser noted that the budget will be introduced on March 27th, and adopted on April 24th

Mr. Cioppettini complimented our CFO, Karen Fornaro for her amazing job.

Mr. Gisser thanked Mendham TV and TAG for their volunteer work at the Mendham Township meetings.

Ms. Neibart introduced herself and stated that she was committed to work towards property taxes not increasing. She would like to see the Township as a role model to work towards property taxes not being such a burden to residents.

Ms. Duarte announced her office hours, Friday, March 16th from 9 -10 AM in Town Hall. **Mayor Diegnan** called for a motion to have Mr. Cioppettini run the March 27th meeting. Ms. Duarte moved. Ms. Neibart seconded. All members voted to approve.

HEARING PERSONS PRESENT

Jack Curtis, 4 Michael Road, noted that the blind curve on Old Brookside Rd is quite dangerous and asked if something could be done about it. He also asked why Corey Lane was chosen to be paved by a DOT grant. Ms. Bonanno explained that Corey Lane had drainage issues which needed to be addressed and then it would have to be milled and paved.

Adam Dubeck, 307 Mendham Road West, asked if it were possible to take preempted measures to prevent power outages by cutting trees back.

Patricia Zimmerman, 3 West Main Street, suggested starting a movement to get JCP&L to put all wires underground.

Vanessa Brown asked for clarity about the HPC ordinance to which the Mayor explained.

Peter Staples, 10 Woodland Road, thought the Township residents and Committee had put everything behind us. He stated the Township has a bad history and it is time to put it in the past.

Ryan Guthrie, 28 Cold Hill Road, complimented the Finance Committee and the progress they accomplished. He also welcomed Ms. Neibart and suggested she would be running her election on shared services since that would be how to reduce taxes and he would like to volunteer to help.

Virginia Voght, 3 Martins Lane, welcomed the new council woman, complimented Mr. Cioppettini's work and asked to move on for the better.

Rick Blood, 32 Tingley Road, stated again how sorry he was for what he posted on Facebook. He thought it would have gone away after three weeks and feels he has paid dearly for what he did. He stated that he will continue trying to be involved in the community.

Mr. Cioppettini commented that he forgives Mr. Blood and wants to move on.

Ms. Duarte also would like to move on and present a welcoming resolution.

ADJOURNMENT

The Township Committee reconvened to executive session at 9:55 PM and then adjourned at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Beth Zichelli

Township Clerk