

**MINUTES OF
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
WORKSESSION MEETING
November 10, 2014**

The Worksession Meeting of the Municipal Council of the Township of Edison was held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Complex. The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Council President Karabinchak, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present were Councilmembers Gomez, Karabinchak, Lombardi, Mascola, Prasad and Shah
Councilmember Diehl was absent.

Also present were Acting Township Clerk Russomanno, Deputy Township Clerk Kenny, Township Attorney McManimon, Business Administrator Ruane, Recreation Director Halliwell, Health Director Elliot, Township Engineer Medina, Deputy Police Chief Anderko, Fire Chief Latham and Cameraman Cologna.

The Clerk advised that adequate notice of this meeting as required by the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975, has been provided by an Annual Notice sent to The Home News and Tribune, The Star Ledger and the Sentinel on December 14, 2013 and posted in the Main Lobby of the Municipal Complex on the same date.

Council President Karabinchak opened the meeting for comments from the public.

Peter Kothari, spoke on the robberies that have been occurring in the Asian community and the meeting that was held regarding this issue. He asked why the meeting has not been televised. He said this is a serious matter and he appreciates the Police departments help but the community needs some answers. He said the prosecutor is holding a meeting at TV Asia and he felt this is unfair and he asked the Council to contact the prosecutor and tell him that he is dividing the community. He asked what the strategy is when a crime is committed. He questioned why no description has been given.

Council President Karabinchak said he was present at the meeting and heard a lot of concerns. He said the top priority of the Mayor and Council is the safety of our residents. He said he cannot speak for the prosecutor but the Council has not been given a lot of details. He does not know why the prosecutor is holding a meeting with TV Asia. He said home invasion is traumatizing and he cannot even imagine what those residents went through. He assured everyone that this will not be tolerated and the Police are strategizing.

Councilmember Prasad said the meeting was useful but there is a lot of work to be done. He said no one can speak for the prosecutor but usually when a crime occurs sketches are issued and there is a little bit of a mystery why that is not being done at this time. He felt sketches are helpful as they can assist in catching suspects. He felt the meeting that was held was important and contained a lot of good information and he also inquired as to why it has not been televised.

Ms. Ruane said it is still being decided if it will air or not.

Councilmember Shah thanked Chief Bryan and the Police Union representatives for all their help. She said this is a very emotional issue but we are all united and the Police are working very hard.

Bruce Diamond, Calvert Avenue, said from Park Avenue South onto Stephenville Parkway there are signs that say "No Trucks" but there are no signs on Stephenville Parkway. He felt we just spent a lot of money on paving and the trucks will ruin the pavement.

Deputy Chief Anderko said he will look at the signage.

Mr. Diamond asked if reflective tape can be placed on telephone poles.

Deputy Chief Anderko said the poles belong to PSE&G.

Mr. Diamond felt we never have answers to the problems. He also felt a municipality this big needs a larger Police force. He said no matter how hard they work there are just not enough Police officers to protect everyone.

Council President Karabinchak said this Administration and Council are making strides but this will not happen overnight.

Esther Nemitz, 162B Fay Street, said she was also looking for the re-play of the meeting that was held on the home invasions. She said Sergeant Dudash does an excellent presentation and it should be aired. She commented on the \$5 million in tax appeals on the agenda and said the apartment complexes need to be told to return that money to the tenants. She asked which items we are bonding for.

Matt Jessup, Tax Appeal Attorney, said the \$11 million bond is to fund tax appeal from this meeting and also the tax appeals that were passed in August.

Ms. Nemitz asked for an explanation of item #12.

Mr. Medina said we are rejecting the proposal and it will be rebid. We are also extending the prior contract.

Hearing no further comments, this public hearing was closed, on a motion made by Councilmember Mascola, seconded by Councilmember Prasad, with all in favor.

The public hearing was reopened on a motion made by Councilmember Shah, seconded by Councilmember Prasad, with all in favor.

Mr. Vinod said he came from India with the hope that if he works hard and is honest here in America, he will have the right to speak. He asked if a public servant commits a crime is the punishment the same as it would be for a private citizen. He asked the consequences for the misuse of power.

Council President Karabinchak said whether someone is a public servant or a private citizen the judicial system in this country treats everyone the same and fairly. It may not be perfect but we need to trust in the system.

Walter Stochel, 2118 Oak Tree Road, asked if the Council receives a report on crime statistics from the Police department. He heard there were forty burglaries during the holidays. He also suggested looking into a program, **crimemapping.com**, that is being used in other municipalities.

Council President Karabinchak said Edison has good record in solving crimes.

Mr Stochel, said the newspapers are not that reliable anymore. We need to establish Community Watches and get the DPW involved as they are out in the community every day. He commented that the dedication plaque that was located in the lobby has been removed. He asked if it will be relocated.

Ms. Ruane said it will be moved to a new spot in the lobby.

Hearing no further comments, this public hearing was closed, on a motion made by Councilmember Mascola, seconded by Councilmember Gomez, with all in favor.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Accepted as submitted

6. REPORTS FROM ALL COUNCIL COMMITTEES:

None

7. POINTS OF LIGHT:

Council President Karabinchak announced that a food drive to benefit the Hands of Hope food pantry is currently going on at Townhall until November 20th. He also said tomorrow is Veteran's Day and there will be street dedications and also the visits to the monuments and he read the schedule.

8. FROM THE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR:

a. No comment was made.

b. Councilmember Mascola questioned why we are purchasing so many computers.

Ms. Ruane said they are all over five years old and need replacing.

9. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE:

a. through e. No comments were made.

10. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH:

a. No comment was made.

11. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW:

a. and b. No comments were made.

12. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ENGINEERING:

a. through c. No comments were made.

d. This item regarding refunding of performance bond to Walmart was added at the meeting.

13. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS:

a. No comment was made.

b. Council President Karabinchak asked if this is an outside contractor.

Ms. Ruane said "yes".

c. through f. No comments were made.

g. Councilmember Dr. Prasad asked how many snow plows we are purchasing.

Ms. Ruane said we are buying four.

14. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION:

a. and b. No comments were made.

15. FROM THE CHIEF OF FIRE:

a. through d. No comments were made.

16. FROM THE CHIEF OF POLICE:

a. Councilmember Dr. Prasad asked if these are computer systems.

Deputy Chief Anderko said they are not they are mounted radios for the patrol cars.

b. and c. No comments were made.

17. FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK:

a. through c. No comments were made.

18. FROM THE COUNCIL MEMBER TO THE PLANNING BOARD:

Councilmember Mascola reported that on October 27, 2014 three applications were heard. The first was a location on Amboy Avenue and no variances were needed and it was approved. The next was to construct four new homes on Plainfield Road, no variances were needed and it was approved. The last was a subdivision on Oak Tree Road to build three new homes and it was given preliminary approval.

19. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

ORDINANCES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND PUBLIC HEARING:

O.1885-2014 No comment was made.

O.1886-2014 No comment was made.

O.1887-2014 No comment was made.

O.1888-2014 No comment was made.

O.1889-2014 No comment was made.

O.1890-2014 No comment was made.

19. COMMUNICATIONS:

a. This was added at the meeting regarding a reappointment to the Housing Authority.

20. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Council President Karabinchak:

a. through f. No comments were made.

Councilmember Diehl:

Absent

Councilmember Gomez:

None

Councilmember Lombardi:

None

Councilmember Mascola:

None

Councilmember Prasad:

- a. He asked where we stand with the Police and Fire contracts.

Ms. Ruane said they are in the beginning stages of negotiations.

- b. He asked if the volunteer ambulance services have a contract yet with JFK as it has been over a year since they were told they would have a contract shortly.

Ms. Ruane they have a contract in hand and are very close to an agreement.

Councilmember Dr. Prasad said at the time this was given to JFK we were told the volunteers would have a contract quickly. He felt JFK should be a good neighbor and be able to accommodate them.

Councilmember Shah:

- a. She said there will be a Resolution of Recognition for Teresa Balka. She is the Managing Director of Bianca's Kids, an organization that provides help to the homeless, including Christmas gifts for children. They also won an award as the top non-profit organization.

The Council retired to Closed Session at 7:14 p.m., on a motion made by Councilmember Gomez, seconded by Councilmember Mascola and duly carried. The Township Clerk read the following Resolution into the record:

CLOSED SESSION RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Article VI of the Open Public Meetings Act provides that a public body may hold a closed session; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council will during this meeting enter into discussion of the following matters:

- 1) Tax Appeal Settlements

WHEREAS, the matters to be discussed in closed session are to remain in the strictest of confidence by all Council Members in furtherance of their fiduciary duties to the Township of Edison;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, matters discussed at this meeting will be released to the public when the reasons for discussing and acting upon them in closed session no longer exists.

The Council returned from Closed Session at 7:40 p.m., on a motion made by Councilmember Gomez, seconded by Councilmember Mascola and duly carried.

On a motion made by Councilmember Gomez, seconded by Councilmember Mascola, with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

22. ADJOURNMENT

Robert Karabinchak
Council President

Cheryl Russomanno
Acting Municipal Clerk

