

**MINUTES OF
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
WORKSESSION MEETING
July 21, 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 6:08 p.m. by Council President Karabinchak, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Also present were Acting Township Clerk Russomanno, Deputy Township Clerk Kenny, Township Attorney Northgrave, Business Administrator Ruane, Recreation Director Halliwell, Public Works Director Roderman, Township Engineer Medina, Police Captain Kelly 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.

Irene Wall, 205 Fleet Avenue, said she has lived here for 46 years and is having difficulty with the building of a Mosque in her neighborhood. She said she filed several OPRA's and has not been satisfied with the responses she has received. There was a fence violation issued in 2013 but the fine was never collected. She felt the Township is not enforcing our laws and she asked how this matter can be resolved. She felt the Mosque should be made to conform to the original plan and trees should be planted in lieu of paying into the tree fund. She has been asking for the building height since April and only received a response today.

Council President Karabinchak said she brings up some good points and he will look into this with the Township Attorney.

Walt Stochel, 2118 Oak Tree Road, commented that Ms. Wall's issue sounds similar to the Faith Hope Ministries that was built on Oak Tree Road. He said two weeks ago there was a large sink hole on Harding Avenue and he asked for the status of this. He also asked for a response to a previous request regarding truck traffic on Stephenville Parkway. He asked if any summonses were issued for this.

Mr. Roderman said a section of the sanitary sewer collapsed on Harding Avenue and was replaced.

Captain Kelly said he will check to see if any summonses were issued for truck traffic on Stephenville Parkway.

Mr. Stochel said the Open Space Committee is upset that the one cent open space tax has expired and has not been renewed. He said this is a question that has to be placed on the November ballot and in order to do that it would have to be submitted by August 3rd and there is not enough time to do this for this year. He asked that this be started on early next year in order to increase public support. He asked for the fire report on the James Monroe School fire.

Ms. Ruane said it cannot be released as it is still under investigation.

Mr. Stochel said that he sees JFK ambulances sitting and idling all over town which he believes is a violation. He urged the Council to look into the Beechwood property lawsuit before adopting the Flexible Business Zone ordinance.

Council President Karabinchak said he brings up a lot of good points and will check into the Beechwood lawsuit.

Lois Wolke, 10 Peake Road, said as a Point Of Light she would like to congratulate everyone involved in the July 4th festivities. She said this was a very nice event. She questioned why we are lowering the tree ordinance requirements from two years to one year.

Council President Karabinchak explained that the law requires a maximum of two years and we are lowering the requirement for residential only.

Ms. Wolke said she thinks two years is better. She said she agrees with Ms. Wall regarding problems with enforcement in Edison. She feels no one is afraid of doing anything wrong in Edison because there are no repercussions. She felt we need to improve the quality of life and make Edison look nice.

Councilmember Shah said she appreciates Ms. Wolke's concern and is working with the Engineering and Health Departments, collecting information regarding quality of life issues and will have share the information when her report is finalized.

Walt Shneer, Park Way, asked when No Name Street behind the white church will be paved.

Mr. Roderman said the Township has accepted this as a thru street. He said there are many other issues besides just paving such as irregular curbs and as of now the project has not been discussed.

Esther Nemitz, 162B Fay Street, gave the Council a list of concerns from the Neighborhood Preservation Committee regarding the changes to the AAR Zone. She said she attended the Planning Board meeting but felt the public was misled as far as the public comment was concerned. She agreed with Mr. Stochel that the Open Space tax should have been considered earlier and been reinstated.

Fred Wolke, 10 Peake Road, asked why it is too late to reinstate the Open Space tax for this year.

Council President Karabinchak explained and felt if we do it for next year there will be more time to garner support.

Walt Stochel, 2118 Oak Tree Road, suggested we have the Finance Committee figure out how much money we need to raise for open space.

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

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Accepted as submitted.

**6. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA:
FROM MAYOR LANKEY:**

- a. No comment was made.

7. REPORTS FROM ALL COUNCIL COMMITTEES:

Councilmember Diehl said the Dismal Swamp Commission has received funding so they will be meeting more often and we will be seeing more of them. They will be having a booth at the Metuchen Fair in October to provide public awareness on environmental issues. They have met with the family of Jane Tousman to decide what type of tribute would be fitting to honor her. They have come up with several good ideas and at the next meeting they will be presenting a Resolution proposing what will be done for Jane.

Councilmember Gomez said the Finance Committee will be wrapping up their meetings with all directors and presenting a budget amendment for introduction at a Special meeting to be held on August 14th.

8. POINTS OF LIGHT:

Councilmember Diehl offered condolences on the passing of John Spiess. He said John was part of every special event that the Township held. He said last Friday a memorial was held at Minnie B. Veal community center and he commended and thanked everyone involved. He commented that it was unusual to hold the memorial service in a public building, but it was a very fitting tribute to a great man and he asked that at Wednesday's meeting a moment of silence be held.

Council President Karabinchak commented that John Spiess was a unique person and he never asked for anything.

Councilmember Dr. Prasad offered his condolences to the family.

Councilmember Gomez thanked Jay Elliot and the Turnpike Authority for all the hard work they did to close up the area by the turnpike and also clean up the Greenway.

9. FROM THE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR:

a. No comment was made.

10. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE:

a. through f. No comments were made.

11. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW:

a. No comment was made.

b. Councilmember Diehl felt that this is a significant piece of legislation and would like to hold it until Councilmember Mascola is present as he will not be present on Wednesday to vote on this.

Council President Karabinchak said he is willing to hold this until the next meeting.

Councilmember Shah said she agrees with Councilmember Diehl. She would also like to know how this affects property values in the surrounding areas.

Council President Karabinchak commented that this ordinance was looked at by Township professionals at the Planning Board.

Councilmember Lombardi felt that we cannot stay the course if we are to attract new businesses and he believes that this is something that needs to move forward.

c. Councilmember Diehl asked that this also be held until Councilmember Mascola is present to vote on it.

d. No comment was made.

e. Councilmember Dr. Prasad felt this too should be held until all Councilmembers are present.

Councilmember Gomez felt that holding this will delay something that we desperately need and will not have a negative impact on the Township. It will produce a large rateable.

f. No comment was made.

- 12. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY:**
a. No comment was made.
- 13. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ENGINEERING:**
a. through d. No comments were made.

e. Councilmember Lombardi asked if one of the properties on Oak Tree Road goes towards our COAH obligation.

Mr. Medina said “yes”.

f. Councilmember Shah asked for an explanation and Mr. Medina explained.

g. No comment was made.
- 14. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS:**
a. through c. No comments were made.
- 15. FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION:**
a. through c. No comments were made.
- 16. FROM THE CHIEF OF FIRE:**
a. Councilmember Shah asked if any of these repairs can be done in-house.

Ms. Ruane explained that these are specialized vehicles, they are Fire trucks.
- 17. FROM THE CHIEF OF POLICE:**
a. Councilmember Shah asked for an explanation.

Ms. Ruane said these are two Police vehicles that East Brunswick used for their canine unit which they no longer have so they no longer have any use for these vehicles.
- 18. FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK:**
a. and b. No comments were made.

c. A Resolution appointing a member to the Zoning Board was added at the meeting.

d. A Resolution for a liquor license renewal was added at the meeting.
- 19. FROM THE COUNCIL MEMBER TO THE PLANNING BOARD:**
Councilmember Mascola was absent.
- 20. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
ORDINANCES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND PUBLIC HEARING:**

O.1872-2014 No comment was made.

O.1873-2014 No comment was made.

O.1874-20143 No comment was made.

O.1875-2014 No comment was made.

O.1876-2014 No comment was made.

21. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Council President Karabinchak:

a. He asked if we contacted the person that we could not find and what happened.

Mr. Northgrave said he will get an update for Wednesday.

b. through f. No comments were made.

Councilmember Diehl:

a. He said that the Battle of Short Hills has been placed on the list of Historic Places by the State of New Jersey.

Councilmember Dr. Prasad left the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Councilmember Gomez:

None

Councilmember Lombardi:

None

Councilmember Mascola:

Absent

Councilmember Prasad:

Absent

Councilmember Shah:

None

On a motion made by Councilmember Diehl, seconded by Councilmember Gomez, with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Robert Karabinchak
Council President

Cheryl Russomanno
Acting Municipal Clerk