

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 16, 2022

The regular meeting of the Frelinghuysen Township Committee was held in the Municipal Building, 210 Main Street, Johnsonburg, New Jersey on Wednesday, March 16, 2022 and was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Keith Ramos.

SUNSHINE LAW STATEMENT:

Under the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting was provided by posting notice on the Township bulletin board and by e mailing notice to the New Jersey Herald and The Express-Times.

ROLL CALL:

Those present were: Mayor Keith Ramos, Deputy Mayor Chris Stracco, Committeeman Todd McPeek, Committeeman Robert Stock, Attorney Rich Beilin, CFO Ashley Wilson, Deputy CFO Danette Dyer, and Municipal Clerk Donna Zilberfarb.

PROCLAMATION:

Mr. Ramos explained to the public and Committee members the proclamation given for the NW Girls basketball team. The proclamation was read and accepted by the Lady Patriots. Each player was handed a copy by the Mayor.

IN HONOR OF NORTH WARREN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL 2022 LADY PATRIOTS

BASKETBALL TEAM WHEREAS, The North Warren Regional High School 2021-2022 Lady Patriots Basketball (the “Lady Patriots”) team won their state sectional championship of the NJSIAA North 1 group 1 tournament; and WHEREAS, The Lady Patriots compiled a total record for the 2021-2022 season of 22 wins and 7 losses; and WHEREAS, Head Coach Jill Masker, Assistant Coaches Rachel Pier, Dan Delaney and Jen Mercurio, and Student Manager Josh Mercurio-Masker, provided the Lady Patriots with excellent guidance, inspiration and coaching; and WHEREAS, Lady Patriots members Quincey McGuinness, Tiffani Szkarlatiuk, Clare Kelly Saalfield, Madison Paseler, Emma Ramos, Shaelin May, Kyla Gillen, Karissa Shaffer, Alaina Shramko, Finley Saalfield, and Kirin May, exemplified teamwork and admirably represented the North Warren Regional High School community in athletic competition; and WHEREAS, the Lady Patriots won the NJSIAA Section 1, Group 1, State Sectional Championship in Women’s Basketball with a 47-35 victory over Kittatinny Regional High School; and WHEREAS, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges that it created, the Lady Patriots hard work and dedication led them to the State Sectional Championship, and, NOW, THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED on this 16th day of March, 2022, by the Frelinghuysen Township Committee, on behalf of the residents of the Township of Frelinghuysen, that we hereby convey our deepest and greatest congratulations to the Lady Patriots on achieving the State Sectional Women’s Basketball Championship for the 2021-2022 season. May your futures always shine as bright as this moment. We wish all of you the best in all your future endeavors. Donna Zilberfarb, Clerk Keith Ramos, Mayor Motion was made by Mr. Stracco to accept, seconded by Mr. McPeek. All were in favor.

MINUTES:

- Minutes of March 9, 2022 work session meeting were approved on a motion by Mr. Stock, seconded by Mr. Stracco. All were in favor.
- Minutes of March 9, 2022 executive session meeting were approved as amended on a motion by Mr. Stracco, seconded by Mr. Stock. All were in favor.

RESOLUTIONS:

#2022-36 TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS FOR OPERATING PURPOSES WHEREAS, the 2022 Temporary Budget of the Township Committee of Frelinghuysen Township, as adopted January 1st, 2022, appropriated sufficient funds to cover the Town’s financial obligations for the first three months of the calendar year, and WHEREAS, due to a revision in the State budget calendar the 2022 budget will not be adopted by March 30th, NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Committee of the Frelinghuysen Township, that the temporary budget be extended and that the appropriations be increased by one twelfth of appropriations made for all purposes in the budget for the year 2021 excluding appropriations made for debt service, capital improvement fund and public assistance in the amount of \$119,184. **CERTIFICATION: I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the governing body of the Township of Frelinghuysen at a meeting held on March 16, 2022.**

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Mr. Boynton						x
Mr. McPeek	x		x			
Mr. Ramos			x			
Mr. Stock		x	x			
Mr. Stracco			x			

#2022-37 RESOLUTION APPROVING PAYMENT OF BILLS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2022

WHEREAS, the Finance Committee of the Township of Frelinghuysen have reviewed the bills submitted by the Municipal Clerk to the Frelinghuysen Township Committee for the MONTH OF MARCH 2022; and WHEREAS, the Finance Committee find the bills to be in order and recommend to the Township Committee that they be paid by the Chief Finance Officer.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Frelinghuysen Township Committee that all bills submitted for the above named date are reasonable and proper and are to be paid from their appropriate account.

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Mr. Boynton						x
Mr. McPeek	x		x			
Mr. Ramos			x			
Mr. Stock			x			
Mr. Stracco		x	x			

#2022-38 SETTING EXECUTIVE SESSION WHEREAS, it is necessary to discuss items dealing with contract negotiations, attorney client privilege, and pending litigation. WHEREAS, under the Open Public Meetings Act (number 7 of the permitted exceptions to the requirements that a public body hold its meetings in public) it is permissible that such matters be discussed in executive or private session. NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on March 16, 2022 that the Township Committee of the Township of Frelinghuysen will adjourn to private or executive session to discuss the above mentioned and results or portions of that discussion will be made known in reasonable length of time.

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Mr. Boynton						x
Mr. McPeek		x	x			
Mr. Ramos			x			
Mr. Stock			x			
Mr. Stracco	x		x			

OLD BUSINESS:

- *There was no old business discussed*

NEW BUSINESS:

- The capital needs were discussed and after discussion it was determined that the bond ordinance for 2022 be prepared for first reading on April 13, 2022 with adoption scheduled for May 18, 2022.
- Mr. Ramos read the letter for the intent to purchase 1993 Navistar fire truck and explained it to the committee. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. McPeek, seconded by Mr. Stracco to send the letter of intent to the Fairmount Fire Company. Roll call vote: Mr. Boynton-absent; Mr. McPeek-yes; Mr. Ramos-yes; Mr. Stock-yes; Mr. Stracco-yes. The intent letter will be mailed.
- Field maintenance was awarded to Horticare pest service on a motion by Mr. McPeek, seconded by Mr. Stock. All were in favor.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS: *1-15

Motion was made by Mr. Stracco for a consent agenda for department reports 1-12, seconded by Mr. Stock. All were in favor.

OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC:

Motion was made by Mr. McPeek, seconded by Mr. Stock limiting it to 20 minutes to open meeting to the public. All were in favor. Spoke were:

- Dale Durling, Allamuchy Road, spoke and stated he has concerns with starting a fire department. Mr. Durling offered to sit down with Green Township and talk to them. He asked that his remaining time and the time of a few others be given to James Drylie.
- Dr. James Drylie, Allamuchy Road, stated he has been a resident since 2000 and was the former OEM coordinator for the township and shared his credentials. He explained his concern for the purchase of an older fire truck. He offered to look at feasibility and give any help if the committee would like this. He asked who was making this assessment and asked what their credentials are and are they ok to purchase the fire truck. He also asked what each committee member knows about it. Mr. Stracco and Mr. Ramos both stated that someone will be at the meeting on the 13th to discuss all of these questions.
- Mr. Ramos explained that the offer was made to sit down and talk to Green Township in November. They said no and wanted all monies or they would pull coverage. He explained that the committee tried via Nick Pachnos.
- Mr. Durling thinks it can be salvaged and asked who would man the fire department.
- Shannon Drylie, Allamuchy Road, she stated that 50% of the town does not have fire coverage and explained that she can't understand why this is happening and asked why now.
- Mr. Stock stated that it is not fair to all the people that are coming out to discuss on April 13th.
- Mike Swistak, Kerrs Corner Road, discussed the fire truck purchase and had talked to a few people about the use of trucks. He stated the price of this truck is 1/5 of what a new truck would cost. It doesn't make any sense to him to buy a 30 year truck before we have a fire department in place and asked about a substation. Mr. Ramos explained that the committee did discuss a substation prior. Mr. Swistak asked what the coverage is right now. Mr. Ramos stated the same as it has been.

- Colin Kellaheer, Saddle Ridge Road, asked to address what Mr. Pachnos tried to negotiate and read the letter from Mayor Phillips regarding the attitude of the committee. He asked how much of our money have we spent on this litigation? Mr. Ramos stated that he was not sure at that moment. Mr. Beilin stated this is in litigation and to please move on. Mr. Kellaheer again asked what the cost is.
- Alan DeCarolis, Heller Road, stated as one of the largest tax payers in the township, can you exercise option to utilize Allamuchy or Fredon or another fire department with a 5 year plan? Mr. Ramos stated they've tried.
- Ms. Drylie asked Mr. Beilin that back when the handshake deal was made, was that your firm at that time. Mr. Beilin explained due to litigation that he could not answer. She also asked about the agreements that were made for the fire trucks. Mr. Stracco explained the separate resolution and explained that the town has paid for fire trucks and is continuing to pay through this year, which honors that agreement.
- Mr. DeCarolis asked if there was a fire in town wouldn't mutual aid have to cover? Mr. Kellaheer explained that the responsible department is dispatched and then they dispatch mutual aid. Mr. Kellaheer also asked if Mr. DeCarolis wanted porrr response times. He also stated that no one will not respond.
- Mr. Ramos addressed former Mayor Durling and Mr. DeCarolis and explained that if the fire department asked for an amount they'd come back higher when the town would go lower. He also discussed the substation and feels that it would help and that Chief Slater of Blairstown Hose Company agreed that a substation would help.
- Bennett Bean, Main Street, discussed the "he said she said" amount of monies. He'd like to know the amount they want and what it would cost to start a fire department. He asked if that information could be brought back at the meeting on the 13th.
- Mr. Stock again stated that although good points everyone is making, they should postpone this discussion until the meeting on the 13th.
- Siefried Mueller, Greendell Road, explained that he has 31 years experience in fire departments and let the committee know that he is available to chat and help. He stated there is a lot of opportunity here moving forward.
- Mr. Kellaheer asked if Mr. Mueller would give his opinion if Fredon was a better choice than Green. He did not offer an opinion.
- Mrs. Drylie asked the committee to sit with Mr. Durling and sit with Green and give it one more try. Mr. Ramos stated it was ok if Mr. Durling wants to go to Green. Mr. Stock supported that decision.

Motion was made by Mr. Stock to allow Mr. Durling, Sr. to sit with the Mayor and then sit with Green Township, seconded by Mr. McPeek. All were in favor.

Motion was made by Mr. McPeek to amend motion to add Mr. DeCarolis into those discussion, seconded by Mr. Stock. All were in favor.

- Cathy Bao Bean, Main Street, asked if the public could nominate other people for those meetings. Mr. Stracco explained that no as the appropriate people, Mr. Durling and Mr. DeCarolis were approved.
- Kim Mantz, Ramsey Court, asked if the meeting on the April 13th would be moved to a larger building. Mr. Ramos stated yes if needed.
- Doreen Pandiscia, Main Street, asked if they could get financials prior to April 13th. Mr. Ramos explained that those numbers would be given to Mr. Durling and Mr. DeCarolis. He also mentioned that by approving the Ordinance, there are a lot of grants that can be applied for.
- Dan Kohuth, Greendell Road, asked what the \$25,500.00 on the bills list was for going to Belvidere. Mr. Ramos explained it was our portion of the municipal court agreement.
- Debra Natyzak Osadca, Old Stage Road, asked what the Clarke Moynihan check was for. Mr. Ramos explained the salt shed.
- Ms. Bao Bean asked where she should send donations to. Mr. Ramos stated to whom you've sent them to in the past.

Motion was made by Mr. Stracco, seconded by Mr. McPeek to close to the public. All were in favor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion was made by Mr. Stracco to enter into executive session, seconded by Mr. McPeek. All were in favor.

No action was taken.

Motion was made by Mr. Stock to exit executive session, seconded by Mr. McPeek. All were in favor.

RETURN TO REGULAR MEETING:

Mr. Beilin explained that executive session was conducted for matters of pending litigation and attorney client privilege.

Mr. Beilin discussed ARP monies being allocated to broad band, and that the CFO has the ability to release those funds with the State and Local Contract Laws and explained that no bid was needed. Motion was made by Mr. Stracco to allow Mayor Ramos to sign documents via Planet Networks, seconded by Mr. McPeek. All were in favor.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Warren County Planning Department – Resolution to Office of information and Regulatory Affairs and the Office of Management and Budget.
- Warren County Community College – Casino night fundraiser
- Warren County Mosquito Commission – Annual packet of information regarding adult mosquito control program. (posted in townhall)
- Warren County Mosquito Commission – Tick borne diseases chart
- Gail Possehl, 939 Route 519, Frelinghuysen Township – letter to the Allamuchy Green first aid squad.
- Morris Downing Sherred, LLP – Letter to Gail Possehl, 939 Route 519, Frelinghuysen Township resident
- Dolan and Dolan – Brag Farm Notice of public hearing
- Blairstown Hose Company – February 2022 report

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, motion was made by Mr. McPeek, seconded by Mr. Stock to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. All were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna Zilberfarb, RMC