

**MINUTES
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORKSHOP MEETING
OCTOBER 8, 2024**

Mayor Ewald called the Workshop Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Chatham to order at 7:06 P.M.

Adequate Notice of this meeting of the Township Committee was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was given to both *The Chatham Courier* and the *Morris County Daily Record* on January 3, 2024; notice was posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building on January 3, 2024; and notice was filed with the Township Clerk on January 3, 2024.

Roll Call

Answering present to the roll call were Committeeman McHugh, Committeewoman Rowland and Mayor Ewald

Deputy Mayor Choi and Committeeman Lois arrived during Executive Session.

Executive Session

**RESOLUTION 2024-P-16
RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM IN
THE COUNTY OF MORRIS, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING CONFERENCE OF
THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 of the Open Public Meetings Act permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Chatham is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Chatham, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of the specified subject matter.
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:
 - a. Contract Negotiations
 - b. Potential Litigation
3. The matters to be discussed in closed session are to remain in the strictest of confidence by all Township Committee Members in furtherance of their fiduciary duties to the Township of Chatham.
4. It is anticipated that the minutes on the subject matter of the Executive Session will be made public upon conclusion of the matter under discussion; and in any event, when appropriate pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-7 and 4-13.
5. The Committee will come back into Regular Session and may take further action.
6. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Committeeman McHugh moved to adopt Resolution 2024-P-16 to enter Executive Session at 7:07 PM. Committeewoman Rowland seconded the motion.

Roll call: Committeeman Lois, Absent; Committeeman McHugh, Aye; Committeewoman Rowland, Aye; Deputy Mayor Choi, Absent; Mayor Ewald, Aye.

The Township Committee returned to Public Session at 7:37 PM.

Mayor Ewald led the Flag Salute.

Hearing of Citizens

The Clerk indicated that no written comments were received.

Mayor Ewald opened the Hearing of Citizens.

1. Karen Blumenfeld, Maple Street, said she has comments on two proposed ordinances. Mrs. Blumenfeld commented on indoor construction on Sundays and holidays, and said that the Police Department cannot stop such work as the ordinance only prohibits outdoor work. Mrs. Blumenfeld said that the noise factor should not be measured by decibels, as it is unlikely that sound readings will be obtained on a Sunday. She said that if construction work can be heard, it should be considered an encroachment. Mrs. Blumenfeld further commented on the Parks & Fields Rules & Regulations ordinance, and recommended that the definition of smoking be fully stated rather than having a reference to other sections of the Township Code Book.
2. Jessica Romeo, Pine Street, said she is the troop leader for Troop 97790 GSA. Mrs. Romeo had four Girl Scouts with her who recently received their Bronze Award. The Scouts described their project, which was the preparation of a brochure to serve as a guide for Chatham Trails.

Seeing no public comment, Mayor Ewald closed the Hearing of Citizens.

Reports

Finance

Mrs. King reported that a Note Sale was held. There were two notes sold. A note from Ordinance 2022-16 was rolled over, which was in the amount of \$1,597,000 for Affordable Housing. Mrs. King said it was a taxable note, and therefore generated fewer bidders. The second note was for \$1,385,000 which is for the 2024-14 ordinance. Mrs. King said that the entire ordinance did not need to be bonded at this time. The winning bid was for 4.25% with a premium that brings the net interest cost down to 4.069.

Mr. Shehady said that he and Mrs. King will meet with WPC regarding a capital ordinance, which is anticipated to be fully funded.

Police

Chief Miller was present to discuss signal replacements. He said that following the recent milling and paving at the intersection of Shunpike and Green Village Road, the signal is broken and needs replacement. Chief Miller said that the roadwork damaged the wiring below the intersection. Committeeman Lois asked about the County Co-op's liability. Mr. Shehady said that a claim was filed.

The Fiber Loop Bid was discussed. Mayor Ewald asked what changed from the original bid specs. Mr. Ruschke said that at one point the water treatment facilities were added in, and have since been removed. He also said a meeting was held with a previous bidder to understand why the costs were so high, and the route was changed to bring the costs down. Mr. Ruschke also addressed the costs related to Verizon and JCP&L allowing the poles to be modified. Mr. Shehady addressed the potential of cost overruns in the design phase.

Tax Assessor

Mr. Sherman was present to address the upcoming tax revaluation. He said that the maps need to be updated before other aspects can move forward. The County will be reviewing the maps and providing comments. Mr. Sherman said that he has begun preparing specs based on the standard State specs.

Mayor Ewald asked about the timing of having residents receive their new assessments in November 2026, with a period until the end of that year to ask questions about the assessment. Mr. Sherman said that the dates are set by statute. He said that the letters would be able to go out on November 10th, and the informal assessment meetings should be complete by mid-December. Mr. Sherman also said that if the assessment firm is unable to get access to a home, an assessment still needs to be filed. Such properties would receive a notice that the assessment will be an estimate.

Committeeman Lois asked if an evaluator could come back before a scheduled informal meeting with the assessment firm. Mr. Sherman said that can be done and he described the process.

Mr. Shehady said that there will be a resolution on the next agenda to authorize bidding for the revaluation work.

Engineering

Mr. Ruschke said that he provided a proposal for preparing cost estimates for improvements to the Wastewater Treatment Plan. He will coordinate with the Plant Operator in the process. Mr. Shehady said that the cost estimates would be funded by the most recent capital budget. The funding for the actual project would be sought through I-Bank. A resolution will be on the next agenda for this contract.

Mr. Ruschke reported on the bidding for the Senior Center Lighting Upgrades. One bidder withdrew due to a mistake, however the next lowest and responsive responsible bidder is recommended for the work.

Administration

Mr. Shehady said that the Township Attorney prepared language to update the Parks & Field Rules & Regs ordinance based on the discussion at the last meeting. Mayor Ewald suggested that the language be further modified based on Mrs. Blumenfeld's suggestion. Mrs. Cofoni addressed modified language about golfing restrictions and allowances for practice with a wiffle ball. As Ordinance 2024-18 was tabled, a new ordinance will be introduced at the next regular meeting with the amendments.

Mr. Shehady addressed the suggestion that indoor construction by contractors be prohibited on Sundays and holidays. He noted that there is a separate noise ordinance. The Township Committee discussed whether or not this was a big enough concern to further restrict what people can do on Sundays and holidays. The consensus of the Township Committee was to not take any further action on this matter.

Mr. Shehady reported on a reverse energy auction. A resolution will be on the next agenda to authorize the auction and the execution of the best rate.

Committeeman McHugh reported on a request from the Environmental Commission regarding an ordinance to restrict unsolicited delivery of circulars to residents. Mr. LaConte said that there is a Do Not Knock registry that pertains to solicitors and canvassers. The Township Committee discussed possibly implementing a similar registry that would pertain to delivery of circulars.

Committeeman Lois asked about updates to the Township website. Mr. Shehady said that the original scope of the updates has been completed, and there are some odds & ends to be completed. Mr. Lois asked about posting older ordinances and resolutions. Mr. LaConte said that older ordinances are incorporated into the Code Book, and there is no need to have anything separately posted than those ordinances which have not been codified yet. Regarding old resolutions, Mr. LaConte said that is a time consuming project that would take away from his statutory duties.

Committeeman Lois asked about having workshop meeting documents posted to the website. Mr. LaConte said that draft and deliberative documents are exempt under the Open Public Records Act, and he would need a clear policy from the Township Committee on what draft documents they would want posted for a workshop agenda packet before such posting could begin. The possibility of having departmental monthly reports was discussed. Deputy Mayor Choi suggested that the Township review what other towns do to determine best practices. Mr. Shehady noted the chilling effect that can be had if those submitting reports know that the material will be posted on the Township website.

Committeeman Lois inquired about a Colony Pool revenue report, and particularly asked about the 2021 information. Mr. Shehady said that the 2021 numbers are the same numbers that have appeared in the past few years reports and he is unaware of the methodology used as it was from

before when he became the Township Administrator. Committeeman Lois commented on the Colony analysis that should be done now so that the Township can move forward with the next year's season at an earlier time. Committeeman Lois said that the report has incorrect data from 2021. Mr. Shehady said that the important data is from 2024 and 2023, and the 2021 data is irrelevant at this point for purposes of a 2024 report.

Hearing of Citizens

Mayor Ewald opened the Hearing of Citizens.

Seeing no public comment, Mayor Ewald closed the Hearing of Citizens.

Executive Session II

RESOLUTION 2024-P-17

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM IN THE COUNTY OF MORRIS, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING CONFERENCE OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED

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4. The Committee will come back into Regular Session and may take further action.
5. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Committeewoman Rowland moved to adopt Resolution 2024-P-17 to enter Executive Session at 9:14 PM. Committeeman Lois seconded the motion.

Roll call: Committeeman Lois, Aye; Committeeman McHugh, Aye; Committeewoman Rowland, Aye; Deputy Mayor Choi, Aye; Mayor Ewald, Aye.

Mayor Ewald announced that the Township Committee would not be taking formal action following the Executive Session.

The Township Committee returned to public session at 9:23 PM.

Deputy Mayor Choi moved to adjourn at 9:23 PM. Committeeman McHugh seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Gregory J. LaConte
Municipal Clerk