

**MINUTES  
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
WORKSHOP MEETING  
MAY 6, 2025**

Mayor Choi called the Workshop Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Chatham to order at 7:34 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 8, 2025; notice was posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building on January 8, 2025; and notice was filed with the Township Clerk on January 8, 2025.

**Roll Call**

Answering present to the roll call were Committeeman Alperowitz, Committeewoman Ewald, Committeeman McHugh, Deputy Mayor Rowland and Mayor Choi.

Committeewoman Ewald and Committeeman McHugh participated via Zoom.

Mayor Choi led the Flag Salute.

**Hearing of Citizens**

Mayor Choi opened the Hearing of Citizens.

1. Tyler Barth, Randolph, asked if someone could make sure the front door is unlocked.
2. Dennis Williams, River Road, asked if sewers are being brought to River Road.

Mr. Shehady said that the letter recently sent out was about potentially removing a portion of River Road from the sewer service area. He said that Mr. Ruschke will be addressing the matter during his report.

Mr. Williams asked if the Township would consider bringing sewer service to the portion that still has septic systems. Mr. Ruschke said that would be unlikely.

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

**Reports**

**Engineering**

Mr. Shehady said that Mr. Ruschke will be reporting on iBank documents for WPC upgrades.

Mayor Choi asked about asked about alleged prior work at the Fenske Property. Mr. Ruschke said that a prior owner considered development, but those plans would not be practical with current environmental protections. Committeewoman Ewald said that there were discussions if a portion of the property would be viable for affordable housing, and it was not. She said that the possibility of recreation fields was also considered. Mr. Ruschke recommended that the Township apply for a Letter of Interpretation regarding the wetlands, which will be needed for any development. Committeewoman Ewald said she thought that there was prior discussion about some portion of the property being developable. Mr. Ruschke said that there is a category 1 stream on the property, so DEP flood hazard regulations also restrict development. He also said that perhaps there could be passive recreation opportunities such as trails.

Mr. Ruschke stated that a preliminary cost estimate was prepared for the sewage treatment plant. He noted that the plant was first constructed in the 1960's, and major renovations will be costly. Mr. Ruschke said that the loan application with the NJ iBank would be approximately \$6,000,000 and he discussed the interest rates through the iBank program. Mr. Ruschke also noted the Federal requirements that are included with iBank loans. He further provided an

overview of the work that will be performed, and he said that he would like to get a jumpstart on the DEP permitting process. Deputy Mayor Rowland asked if there is any risk that anything could change at the Federal level that could impact the Township's ability to obtain funds. Mr. Ruschke said that is a wild card, but he is not aware of any move to cut funding for this program. He also noted that it is a loan program rather than a grant program. Mr. Ruschke also said that the bond counsel will need to be involved in securing the loan. Mr. Shehady noted that a capital ordinance would need to be adopted. Committeeman McHugh asked if the soft costs are included in the \$6,000,000 estimate. Mr. Ruschke said they are included. He also said that the project should be engineered enough to get accurate bids.

Mr. Ruschke reported on the River Road Sewer Service Area, and said that consideration is being given to removing a portion from that future service area. He said that it is an area not suited for more intense development. Mr. Ruschke commented on the public meeting that was held on this topic, and only four residents provided comments. He said that the comments were mixed, with two residents supporting the removal of the portion of the sewer service area, and the other two wanting a sewer line installed. Committeewoman Ewald asked if any additional written comments were received. Mr. Ruschke said that the written comments received were from residents who also attended the public meeting. Mr. Shehady said that the delineation area is proposed to be changed. He also noted that sewer service is not paid for through property taxes but rather through a separate utility charge. Mr. Ruschke noted that when sewer service is extended, a special assessment is levied. Mr. LaConte noted that many of the properties along that stretch of River Road have replaced their septic systems over the past 15 years, and there has not been any organized effort among the residents to lobby for sewer service. Committeeman Alperowitz asked if there is an existing sewer line in the area. Mr. Ruschke said that there is not currently sewer service, and the developed properties have septic systems. Committeewoman Ewald asked about notice to the residents about the public meeting. Mr. Ruschke said that letters were sent through regular mail. Mayor Choi asked if the map was posted online. Mr. Shehady said that it is not. Committeeman Alperowitz recommended that a third opportunity be afforded to residents to provide input on this matter.

#### Administration

Mr. Shehady said that there will be an ordinance on the next agenda for introduction to amend the Local Emergency Management Committee.

#### Clerk

Mayor Choi noted the increase in dog license registrations in April. He asked if other permits and licenses can be issued online. Mr. LaConte said that some licenses can.

Committeewoman Ewald asked about promotion of online registration for pet licenses. Mr. LaConte said that the online option can be promoted at the rabies clinic in November, and the Board of Health will be promoting pet licensing at National Night Out in August. He also noted that targeted messages were sent to those who registered in the past.

Mayor Choi asked if there were any technical issues. Mr. LaConte said that so far things ran smoothly.

#### Finance

Mr. Shehady stated that the capital budget amendments may be on the next agenda if the Finance Committee is able to meet. He reported that there will be budget amendment resolutions on the next agenda for grants that have been received. Mr. Shehady noted that there will be a resolution for LOSAP contributions and he explained how the LOSAP system works.

Committeeman Alperowitz noted that the LOSAP for the Chatham Emergency Squad is funded by both the Township and the Borough, and he asked if Harding Township contributes to the Green Village Fire Department LOSAP. Mr. Shehady said that there is not a contribution from Harding. Committeeman Alperowitz said that it would be a small token of appreciation for Harding to make a contribution as the Green Village Fire Department serves a portion of Harding. Mayor Choi said this can be investigated.

### Police Department

Mr. Shehady said that there has been discussion about improvements to the intersection of Green Village Road and Shunpike Road. While it is a County intersection, there would be need for an interlocal agreement for cost sharing before the County will make the improvements the Township requested. Committeewoman Ewald asked if the County will hold public hearings. Mr. Shehady said that can be requested. Committeewoman Ewald asked that the plans for the improvements be posted to the Township website. Mr. Shehady noted issues that have arisen at that intersection due to ageing equipment.

### Public Works

Mr. Shehady explained two resolutions that will be on the next agenda for purchase chemicals for WPC.

### Tax Assessor

Mr. Shehady reported that the Township is working through the various State approvals for the revaluation process and the tax maps are being updated. Committeewoman Ewald asked about the timeline of the inspections. Mr. Shehady said that things are still moving along according to schedule.

### Hearing of Citizens

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

Deputy Mayor Rowland moved to adjourn at 8:42 PM. Committeeman Alperowitz seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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Gregory J. LaConte  
Municipal Clerk