

**MINUTES
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORKSHOP MEETING
FEBRUARY 7, 2023**

Mayor Felice called the Workshop Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Chatham to order at 6:35 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 4, 2023; notice was posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building on January 4, 2023; and notice was filed with the Township Clerk on January 4, 2023.

Roll Call

Answering present to the roll call were Committeeman Choi, Committeewoman Ewald, Committeeman Lois, Deputy Mayor Hamilton and Mayor Felice.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton participated by Zoom.

Executive Session

**RESOLUTION 2023-P-04
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: Shared Service Agreements
 - b. Contract negotiations: Professional Services
3. 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.
4. The Committee will come back into Regular Session and may take further action.
5. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Committeewoman Ewald moved to adopt Resolution 2023-P-04 to enter Executive Session at 6:36 PM. Deputy Mayor Hamilton seconded the motion.

Roll call: Committeeman Choi, Aye; Committeewoman Ewald, Aye; Committeeman Lois, Aye; Deputy Mayor Hamilton, Aye; Mayor Felice, Aye.

The Township Committee returned to Public Session at 7:26 PM.

Mayor Felice led the Flag Salute

Roll Call

Answering present to the roll call were Committeeman Choi, Committeewoman Ewald, Committeeman Lois, Deputy Mayor Hamilton and Mayor Felice.

Hearing of Citizens

Mayor Felice opened the Hearing of Citizens.

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

Reports

Finance

CFO Debbie King addressed the proposed Cap Bank ordinance. Mrs. King explained that the Cap bank only affects the appropriations cap and does not affect the levy cap. She noted that having the cap available does not mean that it will necessarily be used, and any unused cap bank will lapse after three years. Mrs. King further explained that there are some appropriations that are inside the cap and others that are outside the cap. She noted that healthcare cost increases for 2023 are 4% in the cap and 17% outside the cap.

Mr. Shehady said that the Cap Bank is a tool that gives the Township Committee and Administration have more flexibility in future budgets.

Committeeman Lois inquired about the appropriations increase last year, which Mrs. King said was not a calculation prepared for this meeting. Mrs. King reiterated healthcare cost increases this year which will impact the 2023 budget.

Mr. Lois asked about the Annual Financial Statement and the Annual Debt Statement. Mrs. King said that the AFS will be available in a few months, and the ADS should already be on the website.

Mr. Shehady explained that the Cap Bank is a tool available to municipalities, and there is not any obligation to use the available funding. He also said that the Township would only hurt itself by not having the leeway.

Mrs. King advised that the ordinance should be adopted. Mr. Shehady said he has never known a municipality to not adopt a cap bank ordinance. He also said that there are some budget gimmicks used last year that were one-time opportunities.

Committeewoman Ewald asked about collection of UCC fees. Mr. Shehady said he will check with the Construction Department.

Recreation

Mr. McCann addressed the need to set Colony Pool Fees for the 2023 season.

Mr. Shehady noted that Colony Pool is not a self-liquidating utility, and revenues did not come close to the expenses in 2022. He recommended an increase of 2% to 3% to help cover costs without dissuading membership renewals. Committeeman Lois addressed increasing revenue rather than increasing fees.

Mr. Shehady reported that the Township needs to bid out the concession stand operation for Colony Pool, as the prior bid was awarded for two years which ended with the last season. He also noted that there was success with the prior vendor. The complexity of the bidding was discussed.

Mr. McCann said that he, DPW Director Rich Young and Mr. Shehady did a walkthrough of Colony Pool to assess potential capital improvements.

Committeeman Lois asked about using a grant from NJ American Water to remove the former base of the Skate Park near the Arbor Green development. Mr. Shehady asked that Committeeman Lois email him the grant information.

Committeeman Lois also asked about using Opioid Settlement funds for purchase of a video game library for the Library of the Chathams. Mayor Felice said she was in touch with the Environmental Commission about using some of the funds for a program. Mr. Shehady said that he and Mrs. King were recently reviewing the agreement to see what the limitations are on the use of Opioid Settlement funds so that potential uses can be proposed.

Engineering

Mr. Ruschke addressed going out to bid to repair Colony Tennis Courts. He said that the bids that came in last year were too high. He also noted the possibility of adding pickleball lines.

Mr. McCann commented on the number of courts available and said each court can accommodate two pickleball courts.

The Committee discussed how many courts to repair. Mr. Ruschke said that there might be some economies of scale by doing all six courts rather than only two. The estimate for two courts is \$90,000. There was also discussion whether or not to include pickleball courts.

The consensus was to hold off on bidding until budget decisions are made.

Committeeman Choi asked if there is a requirement that roads be saw cut when they are opened. Mr. Ruschke said that there is a requirement, and there was recently an issue with PSE&G being noncompliant on Mohawk Trail.

Committeeman Lois asked about a study of the Mountainview Road Bus Stop. Mr. Ruschke said that the Police Department were going to do a field study. Mr. Shehady said that Chief Miller had prepared a report.

Committeeman Lois also asked about study of parking lots at recreation facilities. Mr. Ruschke said that will be done during the fall which is the peak usage period. Committeeman Lois asked about the Shunpike Field parking area. Mr. Ruschke said the lot was designed to be paved and striped however that work was never done. Committeeman Choi commented on the safety issues created by a lack of circulation in that lot.

Police

Mr. Shehady said he would distribute the report from Chief Miller regarding the Mountainview Bus Stop. He noted there has been discussion of moving it to the bottom of Mountainview to be safer.

Mr. King reviewed the draft ordinance regarding car thefts with the Township Committee. He said that he sends ordinances of this nature to the County Prosecutor and the Attorney General's offices for review.

Committeewoman Ewald asked about definitions of private and public property. She also asked for removal of the Whereas clause about "catch and release" laws be removed from the ordinance as it appears political in nature. She also expressed concern about defining "Intent to Steal" as peering into a vehicle, as most car enthusiasts are known to do this in public spaces. Attorney King responded that the ordinance should have an "AND" clause between peering into cars and pulling on door handles. He would amend the draft accordingly.

Committeeman Choi asked about car theft paraphernalia.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton advocated for keeping in the Whereas clause about catch and release laws, and noted that Whereas clauses are supporting clauses rather than the substance of the ordinance. Committeeman Lois noted that Whereas clauses are not codified.

There was consensus for Mr. King to prepare an ordinance for the next meeting.

Public Works

Mr. Shehady reported that there have been more applicants for the vacant mechanic position, and he anticipates that there will be a resolution prepared for appointment of a successful candidate at the next meeting.

Committeeman Lois asked why the bathrooms at Shunpike Field are closed in the winter. Mr. Shehady said that options and alternatives are being reviewed. Committeeman Lois asked about replacement of a statue at Shunpike Field. Mr. Shehady said that is not being done this year.

Tax Collector

Mr. Shehady stated that the new Tax Collector starts on February 9th.

Administration

Mr. Shehady stated that a new Administrative Assistant will start work on February 16th.

Committeeman Lois noted the shrinking workforce in the Township, and asked if the Administrative Assistant position should be a part-time position. Mayor Felice said she has no problem hiring for the position so long as there is adequate volume of work. Mr. Shehady said that the new hire is filling a position that recently became vacant at a comparable rate of pay.

Mayor Felice addressed forming an Affordable Housing Committee that would facilitate planning for future rounds while maintaining attorney-client privilege. One possibility was to have a committee consisting of two members of the Planning Board, the Township Administrator, an Affordable Housing Planner and the Affordable Housing Attorney.

Mr. Shehady pointed out that there is still a lot unknown about how the Fourth Round will take shape.

Committeewoman Ewald discussed the prior effort to have an Affordable Housing Committee comprised of members of the community.

There was consensus to hire an Affordable Housing Planner, and an RFQ will be issued following formal authorization.

Committeeman Lois asked about the purpose of having an Affordable Housing Planner, and addressed the realistic development potential in the Township.

Committeeman Choi noted that there is certainty that the Township will have an obligation. He also addressed the Master Plan.

Committeeman Lois asked about a grant opportunity for fire trucks, and the due date is coming soon. Mr. Shehady said that the Fire Departments have not approached him about the need for new trucks.

Hearing of Citizens

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

Committeewoman Ewald moved to adjourn at 9:25 PM. Committeeman Choi seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Gregory J. LaConte
Municipal Clerk