

**MINUTES
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORKSHOP MEETING
APRIL 4, 2023**

Mayor Felice called the Workshop Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Chatham to order at 6:30 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.

Executive Session

RESOLUTION 2023-P-07

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. Litigation – Tax Appeal
 - b. Contract Negotiations – Professional Services
 - c. Contract Negotiations – Shared 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.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton moved to adopt Resolution 2023-P-07 to enter Executive Session at 6:32 PM. Committeewoman Ewald 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 7:32 PM.

Mayor Felice led the Flag Salute

Hearing of Citizens

Mayor Felice opened the Hearing of Citizens.

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

Reports

Zoning Board of Adjustment

The Zoning Board of Adjustment 2022 Annual Report was presented by Board Chairman Tony Vivona.

Mr. Vivona reported that applicants usually apply for more than they expect to get. He noted that in 2022 there were 22 applications, of which 13 were heard, 3 were withdrawn and the balance was carried over to this year. Many applicants were seeking pools or home offices. Mr. Vivona said that home offices were generally approved had strict guidelines and he noted typical conditions for approval. He also noted the typical hardships with pools. Building height, accessory structures that can be converted into living space and building height are three things that the Board particularly sticks to, and Mr. Vivona described the typical situations where three stories come into play. Mr. Vivona further described the counsel offered to applicants regarding variances.

Mr. Vivona said that the Board has concerns about lots in the R-4 Zone, noting that builders are knocking down smaller homes and building new homes to maximum coverage. He said that Board is interested in a massing regulation. He said that in the past and again now, the Board recommends using a floor-area ratio (FAR) to determine the allowable building size relative to the size of the property. Committeewoman Ewald said she had heard about the FAR option and wondered why the Committee and Planning Board resisted that approach in the past. Mr. Vivona noted that the larger homes result in bigger ratables and tax revenue. Mr. Vivona also commented on the affordability of houses in Chatham and an interest in a broader diversity of residents who have time to volunteer in the community.

Mr. Vivona discussed corner lots in which new homes are built facing a different direction which results in a smaller backyard. He also commented on home businesses. Mr. Vivona further noted that more leeway is given to residents than builders.

Tax Collector

Tax Collector Ann Marie Silvia, who was appointed to the position in February, was present to meet the Township Committee and answer any questions pertaining to her report.

The Township Committee thanked Mrs. Silvia for the report that she had submitted.

Committeewoman Ewald asked if there are any suggestions that Mrs. Silvia has on how things can be done better. Mrs. Silvia addressed improvements that can be made to tax mailings, as well as better use of communication technology.

Mr. Shehady said that Mrs. Silvia is a proponent of automatic ACH withdrawals. Deputy Mayor Hamilton asked if there is any charge for that option. Mrs. Silvia said that there is not any charge to ACH, and any service charges would be for online credit card or electronic check payments.

Administration

Mayor Felice addressed a proposed resolution to support a new veterans center for Northwest New Jersey.

Mr. Shehady addressed the request for a resolution regarding the Municipal Alliance grants.

Construction

Mr. Shehady said that there is a statistical report from the Construction Department. The new Construction Official started yesterday and will attend the next Workshop Meeting.

Engineering

Mr. Shehady commented on the road paving list that was prepared by Mr. Ruschke in conjunction with the Public Works Director and Water Pollution Control department. He further noted a road safety grant that was received.

Committeeman Choi asked about a previous sidewalk grant that was unused. He also noted that there needs to be a better circulation plan.

Committeeman Lois asked about County roads. Mayor Felice said that the County does not plan to pave any roads in Chatham Township this year based on what she last heard from County officials. Committeeman Lois asked about the prioritization process for road improvements. He cited examples of roads that were toward the top of the list last year that are now lower on the list

this year. Mr. Shehady described how decisions are made for the ranking of streets for paving. He also noted that the list is updated annually and adjusted based on changing conditions.

Finance

Mr. Shehady reminded the Township Committee that the Temporary Budget is still in effect, which was amended at the last meeting.

Committeeman Lois asked about bills for water jetting and use of segregated funds for Edgewood. Mayor Felice said that the Finance Committee will address such matters.

Police Department

Mr. Shehady said that Chief Miller provided a memo with an update on the study regarding the Mountainview Bus Stop.

Public Works

Mr. Shehady said that there will be resolutions at the next meeting for the contract extension for snow plowing and for the contract with Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton asked about a snowplowing issue in the High Gate development. Mr. Shehady said that it has been worked out.

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 8:31 PM. Committeeman Lois seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Gregory J. LaConte
Municipal Clerk