

Tabernacle Township Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 26, 2024
6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hartman called the meeting to order at 6:30pm, followed by the flag salute.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT STATEMENT BY CLERK

The Clerk read the Open Public Meetings Act statement into the record.

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Committee:

<u> A </u>	Mr. McNaughton	<u> ✓ </u>	Mr. Sprague	<u> ✓ </u>	Deputy Mayor Stone
<u> ✓ </u>	Mayor Hartman	<u> ✓ </u>	Mr. Moore		

Professionals/Department Heads:

<u> ✓ </u>	Mr. Leisse	<u> ✓ </u>	Mr. Burns
<u> ✓ </u>	Mr. Haines	<u> ✓ </u>	Ms. Brown

REPORT FROM THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON FORMER TOWN HALL

Tom Boyd- Gave a photo presentation documenting the degradation of the Old Town Hall Building.

Mayor Hartman- Read aloud the four building options and alternatives, including costs, recommended by Pennoni for the Old Town Hall.

PUBLIC COMMENT (For comments including consent agenda items)

- Rae Voss, 201 Skylar Court
 - Discussed the roads in her development of Seneca Reserve and asked if there has been any consideration from the Committee to adopt the roads. Residents of the neighborhood are paying out of pocket for services to plow but are tax paying residents. Questioned the possibility of roads being damaged while they are paved, how often this has happened historically, cost to repair... as this was the reason presented at last meeting for the reluctance of the township to plow before the roads were turned over.
- Raymond Ward, Old Indian Mills Road
 - Feels Town Hall has fallen into bad shape, wants to know why it has become so neglected. Stated his opposition to shared services, claims they are unconstitutional, and a form of maladministration.

- Rick Franzen, Tabernacle Historical Society
 - Spoke on behalf of the Historical Society in opposition to the Old Town Hall building being demolished. The building has a rich history and is a keystone to the town's social and political events.
- John Druding
 - Is against the changes imposed by the DEP for Wharton State Forest, has started a petition against proposed road closures.
- Gary Cohen, Carranza Road
 - Opposed to the proposed DEP shutdown of Wharton State Forest Roads. Has had family here for generations and has enjoyed the forest, agrees with protecting the forest by enforcing current laws, not implementing new ones.
- Tim McGarvey, Shamong
 - Urging the committee to put together a resolution against the overreach of the DEP. Also does a radio show spreading awareness on the issue for anyone interested.
- Joe McNally, Flagstone Drive
 - Asking again if there has been any discussion on an economic development committee. Feels that bringing cannabis cultivation to Tabernacle would be beneficial in helping to generate revenue to offset costs of new township projects.
- Mike Broadbent, Skylar Court
 - From Seneca Reserve urging the Committee to take over the roads in the development. Urges the town to evaluate all of Rockwell's work before releasing the bond. -Maryalice Brown, Township Administrator, addressed Seneca Reserve neighbors to let them know that the reports and studies have been received from Rockwell, and the basins have been approved. Mr. Gray from CME will be invited to the next meeting regarding any questions and anticipates the township taking over the roads at that time.
- Dr. Maria Schultheis, Schultheis Farm
 - Following up from her presentation at the October 2023 Committee meeting. Has only received the ordinance currently in place regarding cannabis. Feels that allowing cannabis cultivation would be good tax revenue for the town.
- Lance Saunder, Valerie Way
 - Appreciates the update on Seneca Reserve. Wanted clarification on whether the town outsourced snow removal or if it was all done in house. -Maryalice Brown, Township Administrator, clarified that the township does snow removal through Public Works, but in the event of a large storm, there is a local landscaper contracted to help.
- Jason Howell, Pinelands Preservation
 - Spoke about the Wharton State Forest map, the original map was from 1966 and the parks service is trying to produce an accurate map to better accommodate anyone who visits. There is a public process under way now and urges people to please share your comments on the places in the forest they use.

- Stuart Brooks, Moores Meadow Road
 - Commented on the state of the old Town Hall building, wants to know what work has been done to stabilize it during the last 3 years. Urges the Committee not to rush into making a decision.
 - Had questions regarding the bridge near Moores Meadow road that remains damaged, and when repairs are to be made.
- Ron Wiggins, Powell Place Road
 - Hunts in Wharton State Forest and is urging the committee to reconsider road closures inside the forest. Asks that the Committee please listen to what the townspeople want.
- Fran Brooks, Moores Mead Road
 - Took issue with an agenda item regarding Tabernacle Athletic Association, wants to know who will be paying these fees? The Township built the snack stand but does not receive any revenue for it.
 - Feels that any employee who takes courses paid for by the Township should be made to compensate the Township for those fees.
 - Had questions regarding the GIS meeting on the agenda.
- William Redman, 23 Hawkins Road
 - Would like the Committee to create a resolution against DEP road closures in Wharton State Forest.
- Dave Benson
 - Stated that if the DEP does pass the road closures, he would like to thank all who stood up against it. Would like to see the roads remain open.
- Lynn Hedden, Tabernacle Athletics Association
 - Spoke in regard to the snack stand that is used by the TAA, the stand was primarily built by grants and community partners that donated time and resources. The TAA pays for usage of lights and gas from money it generates through snack sales. Volunteers 20 hours a week to help maintain and run the association and the stand. The only thing the Township pays for is liability and insurance for the fields. Also announced that a scoreboard is being donated by TAA to the fields in memory of Rick Sozio who was also a volunteer to the TAA.
- Donald Gerber, Zimmerman Road
 - Spoke about Old Town Hall, his family has lived here for generations and were members of the United American Mechanics who helped build Town Hall. Stated that the Town Hall was meant to serve the community and the building is part of Tabernacle History and is opposed to its demolition.
- Ryan Jeffery, Hill Road
 - Demands that the Committee acts on behalf of the public, they have sworn an oath of office and should be held to it.

- Jaimie Wood
 - Supports everything Lynn Hedden stated. Also added that she supports a new map for Wharton State Forest, as an EMS responder it would be very helpful.
- Bruce Pittman, 27 Lakeview Drive
 - Opposed to road closures in Wharton State Forest, it would be a shame for future generations to not enjoy the forest.
- Heather McGarvey, Shamong
 - Supports open trails in Wharton State Forest, feels that New Jersey is overtaxed, and political overreach has got to stop.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- January 22, 2024- Regular meeting
Motion Made by Committeeman Moore, 2nd Deputy Mayor Stone
Ayes: Moore, Sprague, Stone, Hartman Absent: McNaughton
CARRIED
- January 22, 2024- Executive meeting
Motion Made by Committeeman Moore, 2nd Deputy Mayor Stone
Ayes: Moore, Sprague, Stone, Hartman Absent: McNaughton
CARRIED

SUBMISSION OF BILLS AND CLAIMS \$3,771,613.76

Motion Made by Committeeman Moore, 2nd Deputy Mayor Stone
Ayes: Moore, Sprague, Stone, Hartman Absent: McNaughton
CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES –First Reading –

Ordinance 2024-1 Change of Street Name

Motion Made by Committeeman Moore, 2nd Deputy Mayor Stone
Ayes: Moore, Sprague, Stone, Hartman Absent: McNaughton
CARRIED

Discussion on Former Town Hall

- Committeeman Sprague
 - Disappointed to learn of another study done on town hall, the money spent is a waste in his opinion. Misunderstood the subcommittees creation, was under the impression it was only for the new building. Wants civic groups and residents to be involved in the subcommittee.
- Bill Burns, Solicitor
 - Pointed out that the minutes that were voted on earlier reflect the subcommittee was formed by Committeeman Sprague to include the old and new building and approved spending of up to \$5,000 for a study. Asked if any changes needed to be made to the approval of the minutes.
- Committeeman Sprague
 - States that he misspoke.

- Committeeman Moore
 - Asked if Tom Boyd could explain what the timeline for building degradation looks like, and if the building has been deemed an unsafe structure.
- Tom Boyd, Construction Official
 - Read the uniform construction code regarding unsafe structures. Let the Committee know that the choice was up to them, but this issue has been known for at least 2 years now and without any action the building will continue to deteriorate.
- Deputy Mayor Stone
 - Feels that the money issued for the study was well spent, and that putting off any action previously has resulted in the building degradation seen now. Made motion to demolish town hall, immediately put up safety fencing around the premise and authorize administration to move forward with what needs to be done.
- Bill Burns, Solicitor
 - Motion for Resolution 2024-46 to demolish 163 Carranza Road, immediately install safety fencing on the perimeter of the building and authorize the administration to move forward on bids has been made.
- Committeeman Moore
 - 2nd the motion to demolish, it is a very difficult decision but seeing the state of the building it is what needs to be done.
- Committeeman Sprague
 - Stated that this has been kicked around a long time and feels that this topic needs more discussion, suggested waiting until the upcoming workshop meeting to explore this more.

**RESOLUTION 2024-45-Demolition of Town Hall Building at 163 Carranza Road,
installation of safety fencing, authorization of Administration to move forward with work.**
Motion Made by Deputy Mayor Stone, 2nd Committeeman Moore
Ayes: Moore, Stone, Hartman Nays: Sprague Absent: McNaughton
CARRIED

RESOLUTION 2024-45

A RESOLUTION TO DEMOLISH THE CURRENT STRUCTURE LOCATED AT 171 CARRANZA ROAD, TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWNSHIP PROFESSIONALS AND TOWNSHIP CLERK TO DO ALL THINGS LEGALLY NECESSARY AS WELL AS TO INSTALL A SAFETY FENCE AROUND THE STRUCTURE

WHEREAS, as per the Township Committee's request, RYEBREAD Architects provided a report, dated October 1, 2021, which identified structural concerns of the former Tabernacle Township Town Hall located at 171 Carranza Rd, Tabernacle; and

WHEREAS, on May 18, 2022, the Construction Official issued an unsafe structure notice deeming the property unfit for occupancy; and

WHEREAS, in June 2022 Township staff were moved out of the former Town Hall into temporary facilities due to the unsafe structure status; and

WHEREAS, during the Township Committee meeting on February 26, 2024, the Construction Official presented evidence of additional structural concerns and further degradation of the former Town Hall, the Construction Officials presentation included a photos that detailed the current condition of the former Town Hall;

WHEREAS, the Construction Official stated that the former Town Hall was a public safety concern and recommended that immediate action be taken.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Tabernacle, County of Burlington, State of NJ, in an effort to protect public health and safety, that the current structure located at 171 Carranza Rd be demolished,
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Professionals as well as the Township Clerk are authorized to do all things legally necessary to move forward with the demolition and to protect the public health and safety; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Clerk be authorized to have temporary, safety fencing installed around the structure.

OLD BUSINESS – ORDINANCES – Second Reading & Public Hearing- NONE CONSENT AGENDA – RESOLUTIONS

(NOTE: consent agenda items are considered to be routine and will be enacted with a single motion; any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certificate of Availability of Funds; and item can be removed from the Consent Agenda and discussed separately at the request of any Committee Member)

- **RESOLUTION 2024-46- Renewing Shared Service with Medford Lakes for Municipal Court**
Motion Made by Committeeman Moore, 2nd Deputy Mayor Stone
Ayes: Moore, Sprague, Stone, Hartman Absent: McNaughton
CARRIED

RESOLUTIONS/PROCLAMATION- None

APPLICATIONS- None

REPORTS

- a. Clerk/Administrator –
 - OPRA Report – January
 - Monthly miscellaneous- January- \$261,775.00
 - 67 Richter Rd settled- \$46,000.
 - Had a department meeting with Fire Department- reviewed procedures & budget items.
 - Stag's Leap Rd- paving issues
 - Meeting with TAA- field usage-drafting ordinance setting fees for usage.
 - Recreation field- scoreboard was donated from the Family of Rick Sozio (former baseball director) 12-15week delivery.
 - Street Sweeping memo (Tier A Stormwater)
 - GIS meeting- attended kickoff meeting with Pennoni & Barclay Phillips
- b. Tax Collector-
 - January- \$956,848.64
- c. CFO- no report
- d. Engineer-
 - Monthly report
- e. Solicitor – no report
- f. EMS- no report
- g. Fire Chief- no report
- h. Recreation Director-
 - Commented that without a Town Hall building, the Recreation Committee no longer has anywhere to have their tree lighting or parade.
- i. Public Works Director –
 - See submitted report.
 - 207 Days accident free

COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

Mr. McNaughton- Absent

Mr. Sprague

- Expressed his disappointment in the vote to demolish Town Hall, feels this is not what the people want and it is a shame to take it away from Tabernacle.

Mr. Moore

- Sees the emotion in the room, and it is not easy. Being a leader comes with disappointment, stated he cares for the town and assures that every decision he makes is for the benefit of the town. This has been the hardest decision he has made.

- In regard to the Wharton State Forest, the DEP has control of the park, let them hear the public comments and see what the final map looks like before taking a stance.

Deputy Mayor Stone

- Asked how many people in the past 15 years have people stepped up to be on the committee? I spend hours making informed decisions and learning what would be most beneficial to the town. Joined the committee because she loves this town.
- Feels that the answer to the Wharton State Forest issue is for there to be stricter enforcement of the current rules rather than limiting it any further. Urges people to call the DEP and voice their concerns during public comment.

Mayor Hartman

- Motioned that Cuyler Vena be appointed to the Townhall Subcommittee, 2nd by Deputy Mayor Stone.

Ayes: Moore, Sprague, Stone, Hartman

Absent: McNaughton

CARRIED

RESOLUTION 2024-47 Authorization to Enter into Executive Session.

- Shared Service Agreement for Plumbing & Electric

Motion to enter Executive Session Made by Committeeman Moore, 2nd Deputy Mayor Stone

Ayes: Moore, Sprague, Stone, Hartman

Absent: McNaughton

CARRIED

Returned from Executive session at 9:12 p.m.

Moved by Committeeman Sprague, 2nd by Deputy Mayor Stone to close the Executive session and reconvene the public portion of the meeting.

Ayes: Moore, Sprague, Stone, Hartman

Absent: McNaughton

CARRIED

Motion to approve Resolution 2024-48 Authorizing Shared Service with Pemberton for Plumbing and Electric

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stone, 2nd Committeeman Moore

Ayes: Moore, Sprague, Stone, Hartman

Absent: McNaughton

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Committeeman Moore, 2nd by Deputy Mayor Stone to adjourn at 9:26 p.m.

Ayes: Moore, Sprague, Stone, Hartman

Absent: McNaughton

CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Maryalice Brown, RMC

Township Clerk/Administrator