

**BOROUGH OF LAKEHURST
WORK SESSION/REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 15, 2021
MINUTES**

MEETING OPENED AT 7:30 PM BY MAYOR HARRY ROBBINS.

ALL STOOD FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE.

PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT READ INTO RECORD BY MUNICIPAL CLERK CAPASSO:

“IN COMPLIANCE WITH N.J.S.A. 10:4, OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT, NOTICE WAS GIVEN TO TWO NEWSPAPERS, AND POSTED, THAT A WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL IS SCHEDULED FOR THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF APRIL, 2021, WITH THE WORK SESSION TO BEGIN AT THE HOUR OF 7:30 P.M. AND THE REGULAR MEETING TO BEGIN IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING AT THE LAKEHURST COMMUNITY CENTER, 207 CENTER STREET, LAKEHURST, NEW JERSEY, AT WHICH TIME, THE BUSINESS OF THE BOROUGH WILL BE CONDUCTED.”

ROLL CALL:

COUNCILMAN DAVIS: ABSENT	COUNCILMAN LOWE: ABSENT
COUNCILMAN DiMEO: PRESENT	COUNCILMAN McCARTHY: PRESENT
COUNCILWOMAN HODGES: PRESENT	COUNCILMAN OGLESBY: PRESENT
MAYOR HARRY ROBBINS: PRESENT	

WORK SESSION:

REVIEW OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA:

Municipal Clerk Capasso reviewed the regular meeting agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Time opened: 7:32 p.m.

NO PUBLIC COMMENTS

Time closed: 7:32 p.m.

Alana Scott, 611 Willow Street, discussed the need and the importance of the Special Education Parent Advisory Group (SEPAG). Mrs. Scott stated she is a parent and an advocate for special needs children adding she is starting SEPAG, a parent-driven group charged with providing input to the local school district on system-level challenges in

special education and related services. Mrs. Scott also stated SEPAG encourages the public to participate and added the group welcomes anyone who touches special education students lives both directly and indirectly like parents, caretakers, grandparents, siblings, students, school administration, and community leaders. Mrs. Scott further stated SEPAG is a state advocacy network that is helping her to become a parent leader for the group and added all information that she receives is from the state that helps her, and parents, to be the voice for the unvoiced.

Mrs. Scott quoted N.J.A.C 6A:14-1.2(h), “Each district board of education shall ensure that a special education parent advisory group is in place in the district to provide input to the district on issues concerning students with disabilities”. Mrs. Scott stated this regulation allows parents and school district leaders to create and run an advisory group that meets local needs. Mrs. Scott further stated SEPAG is structured for all students with disabilities, not a single group of students, or a single issue.

Councilman McCarthy asked if Mrs. Scott has established contact with Lakehurst Elementary School.

Mrs. Scott answered she has spoken with the Board of Education.

Mr. McCarthy questioned SEPAG being a mandated law and the Lakehurst School’s policy reflecting that law.

Mrs. Scott responded she is not aware if the school had done so in the past adding she has now “stood up” as the parent leader to create SEPAG.

Mr. McCarthy asked Mrs. Scott if she will be attending the Board of Education Meeting.

Mrs. Scott answered she will be presenting the information at the April 28th meeting.

Mrs. Scott stated she is a parent of two autistic children, one is 16 years old and the other is 6 years old adding she has been active for the past 12 years. Mrs. Scott also stated she has education from SPAN Parent Advisory Network, she is a Special Education Volunteer Advocate, and has taken classes in NAMI, National Alliance for Mental Illness.

Mr. McCarthy acknowledged that Mrs. Scott is the right person for “the job” and made her aware that he is the liaisons to the Board of Education and will help in anyway if needed.

Councilwoman Hodges questioned the necessity at the elementary level.

Mrs. Scott responded there is absolutely a need at the elementary level.

Mrs. Hodges asked if she will be working with the high school as well.

Mrs. Scott answered the student will have an IEP plan when they transition to the high school adding she will educate the parent to be an advocate for their child so that the child receives the services that are outlined in the IEP.

Mrs. Hodges asked if she will also be communicating with the Manchester Board of Education as an advisor for SEPAG.

Mrs. Scott explained that Manchester has their own SEPAG.

Council President Oglesby asked if SEPAG has an Autism Alert Form that can go to emergency services.

Mrs. Scott responded that form comes from the Parents of Autistic Children, POAC, they provide training as well and added Lakehurst Police Department has been trained.

Mr. Oglesby asked if the parents in SEPAG will provide the emergency services information on how to deal with their specific child adding there is a wide spectrum of autism.

Mrs. Scott responded she will educate parents to be an advocate for their child not only in school but in everyday life.

Councilman DiMeo stated one of the issues of being a parent of a child with an IEP is not knowing where to get the information you need adding the school is not forthcoming with all the information the parent needs. Mr. DiMeo further stated it was not until he advocated for his child, he learned all the rights his child had both inside and outside of school.

Mrs. Scott responded that is always going to be a battle for parents of special needs children adding SEPAG will give the parents the “ground bases” and the voice for their child.

Mayor and Councilmembers thanked Mrs. Scott for the information and for being an advocate for parents with special needs.

Mr. DiMeo asked where 6 Union Avenue was at with regards to the demolition.

Mayor Robbins responded he had reached out to the Pinelands Commission adding they said they were waiting on the application to be submitted and will expedite it as soon as they receive it.

Borough Attorney Ian Goldman responded the last communication was with the attorney representing 6 Union Avenue, Joseph Coronato, making him aware that the Pinelands Commission will expedite the application once it is received adding he will reach out to the attorney once again to see if the application was submitted.

Mayor Robbins suggested Mr. Goldman reach out to the Pinelands Commission first to see if the application was submitted; if not, then the borough will issue a summons.

Mr. Oglesby reported he and the Mayor are working on expanding the services of LED streetlights to other borough streets.

Mayor Robbins asked the councilmembers their thoughts on the “quaint” lights along Union Avenue.

Mrs. Hodges responded the lights are insufficient and should be removed unless there is no other streetlight at that location.

Mr. Oglesby stated the borough will focus on the corner streetlights first and added he will reach out to Chief Kline for suggestions as well.

Mayor Robbins stated once a list is compiled, he will reach out JCP&L to have the streetlights switched to the more efficient LED lighting.

Mr. Oglesby questioned the removal of trees that are causing damaged to sidewalks.

Mayor Robbins asked Mr. Goldman if anyone had reached out to him in regard to generating a letter to residents to opt-out of the tree removal and taking full responsibility for the tree and sidewalks.

Mr. Goldman responded he is not familiar with such letter.

Mayor Robbins stated there was discussion of the trees that are causing sidewalks to lift. Mayor Robbins also stated it was discussed that if a resident was in favor of keeping the tree, then they would sign-off stating they would take full responsibility maintaining the tree as well as the sidewalks.

Mr. Oglesby asked if the tree is in the right-of-way, is the borough responsible for that tree.

Mr. Goldman responded if the borough planted the tree, it is the borough’s decision to decide if the tree needs to be removed. Mr. Goldman stated he will look into matter further.

Councilman McCarthy questioned the generic Hold Harmless Agreement.

Mr. Goldman responded he just forwarded the agreement to him.

ADJOURNMENT OF WORK SESSION:

Motion by: Steven Oglesby

Seconded by: Patricia Hodges

To adjourn work session. Roll call vote held. All votes affirmative.

COMMITTEE/COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilwoman Hodges reported the budget was introduced tonight and added the Public Hearing will be on May 20th here at the Lakehurst Community Center at 7:30 p.m. Mrs. Hodges stated there will be a three-cent increase and further stated all department heads came together and made conscientious cuts. Mrs. Hodges also stated there was a tremendous increase in pension costs and is going to reoccur every year adding the Finance Committee needs to look at a “long range” plan.

Mayor Robbins commanded the Finance Committee and all department heads for working hard to get the budget where it is now.

Mrs. Hodges also reported the Ordinance Committee is working on the Lake Ordinance and will be meeting next week to finalize.

Councilman DiMeo reported the Youth and Recreation Committee is circulating the Town Wide Yard Sale flyer adding the date for the sale is May 15th. Mr. DiMeo asked everyone for ideas and recommendation for summer events and asked to send them to the Youth and Recreation Facebook page.

Mr. DiMeo also reported the “unofficial” Technology Committee will have a report during executive session.

Mr. DiMeo further reported the Finance Committee discussed the cost of phone services and the possibility of going to a cloud service, VoIP, Voice over Internet Protocol and added the timing is right due to the fact AT&T is doing away with analog phone lines. Mr. DiMeo stated he will gather more information and reach out to different providers to get quotes.

Council President Oglesby reminded everyone whether they had a vaccine shot, or not, to continue to wear their mask and stay safely distance apart adding the faster it will be over.

Councilman McCarthy reported he met with the Fire Chief and spoke about items that are no longer needed. Mr. McCarthy stated the fire department returned the larger generator back to the State Forest Fire Service and added that they obtained the titles for the Humvee and kitchen trailer, which have exceeded the statute of limitations, can now be sold, and the money will be put back into their general fund. Mr. McCarthy also reported the fire department has established an eBay account to sell the items, although the setup cost quite a bit of money, they feel they can get a stronger price. Mr. McCarthy did state the items do not have to be sold on GovDeals. Mr. McCarthy further reported the fire department is negotiating with the state concerning the 6 by 6 adding the truck does belong to the state; however, the fire department put a lot of money into the truck over the years and added they have a good relationship with Whiting and would like to give the truck to them. Mr. McCarthy stated the Scott Paks were successfully donated to Manchester. Mr. McCarthy went on to say the president of the fire department and fire

chief are establishing a budget for new air packs adding the cost for air packs is \$10,000 per fireman. Mr. McCarthy commended the Fire Chief for all his efforts.

Mr. McCarthy reported the Board of Education meeting has been moved to April 28th and will have a report for the next meeting.

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC:

Time opened: 8:08 p.m.

Bruce Margenson, 5 Geneva Road, questioned the county roads and meeting with county officials.

Mayor Robbins responded due to COVID-19 restrictions, the county sent out a questioner to municipalities in regard to the county roads adding he sent in his requests and has not received a response back as of tonight.

Mr. Margenson asked if the restrooms at Lake Horicon are now open to the public.

Mayor Robbins answered Public Works are in working getting electricity to the restrooms. Mayor Robbins stated Lake Horicon officially opens when the lifeguards are on duty adding the restrooms will be ready at that time as well.

Mr. Margenson asked if there will be a Memorial Day Ceremony.

Municipal Clerk Capasso responded she reached out to the Fleet Reserve and they said the ceremony will take place this year.

Time closed: 8:12 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION:

Municipal Clerk Capasso reads resolution to go into closed session:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P. L. 1975, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances, **and**

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Lakehurst, County of Ocean, State of New Jersey, as follows:

