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HAINESPORT TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 11, 2023

6:30 P.M.

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. This meeting of April 11, 2023 with instructions for internet access was included in a meeting notice sent to the Burlington County Times and Courier Post on January 4, 2023 and advertised in said newspapers on January 6, 2023, and January 10, 2023 respectively posted on the website and the bulletin board in the municipal building on January 4, 2023 and has remained continuously posted as required under the Statute. In addition, a copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the Office of the Municipal Clerk.

1. **FLAG SALUTE**

2. **ROLL CALL** - present were Mayor Clauss, Committeeman Montgomery, Committeeman Levinson, Committeewoman Gilmore and Committeewoman Evans. Also present were Township Clerk/Administrator Paula Kosko and Attorney John Gillespie

3. **MINUTES**

A. **APPROVAL OF REGULAR COMMITTEE MINUTES OF MARCH 14, 2023**

Motion: Committeeman Levinson. Second: Committeewoman Evans. All yes.

4. **REPORTS**

A. **Tax Collector** – March 2023, 1st Quarter Ending March 2023

B. **Code Enforcement** – March 2023

C. **Fire Official** – March 2023

D. **Construction** – March 2023

E. **Emergency Services Reports** – March 2023

All in favor.

F. **NJSP In-Person Report** – March 2023

Not in attendance.

6. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC – Agenda items only (Comments are limited to 5 minutes)**

Debra Harris, 7 Elsinore Drive – commented on Resolution 2023-63-4 Opposing the Reduction in State Aid Award to the Hainesport Public School District. She asked if the resolution was just symbolic and if it would be published or submitted anywhere. She asked if the Committee was aware of any current or future shortage at the school.

She understands their budget is separately controlled, but would think they would communicate with the Township if there were an issue. She has a young child in the school and she is concerned about the reduction in funding.

Kent Pipes, 35 Mt. Laurel Road – wanted to comment on the Planning Board. **Mayor Clauss** advised him that this comment section is for agenda items only. He needed to speak at the open public comment time later in the meeting.

7. ORDINANCES

- A. **ORDINANCE 2023-3** – Amending Chapter 104 Section 33 of the Code of the Township of Hainesport Entitled General Provisions (**First Reading and Introduction**) (**Public Hearing and Final Adoption May 9, 2023**)

Mr. Montgomery asked what was being addressed in this ordinance. **Mr. Gillespie** explained that it allows the Township to recover escrow and legal fees if an applicant for the Land Use Board has not finished paying what they owe. **Mrs. Evans** asked if this is similar to other towns' ordinances and if it would be retroactive. **Mr. Gillespie** answered yes, it is similar to other towns, but it would not be retroactive.

Motion: Committeeman Montgomery. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

- B. **ORDINANCE 2023-4** – Authorizing and Approving a Temporary Access Easement Agreement with PMS II LLC for a Portion of Property Currently Known as Block 100, Lots 10 & 11 (**First Reading and Introduction**) (**Public Hearing and Final Adoption May 9, 2023**)

Motion: Committeeman Levinson. Second: Committeewoman Gilmore. All yes.

8. RESOLUTIONS

- A. **RESOLUTION 2023-51-4** – Introduction of the 2023 Budget

Motion: Committeewoman Gilmore. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

- B. **RESOLUTION 2023-52-4** – Authorizing an Agreement with Electronic Recyclers International, Inc. for E-Waste Collection and Recycling

Motion: Committeeman Levinson. Second: Committeewoman Evans. All yes.

- C. **RESOLUTION 2023-53-4** – Establishing Rate of Compensation for Certain Positions for 2023

Motion: Committeeman Levinson. Second: Committeewoman Gilmore. All yes.

- D. **RESOLUTION 2023-54-4** – Approve a Firefighter into the New Jersey State Firemen's Association

Motion: Committeeman Montgomery. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

- E. **RESOLUTION 2023-55-4** – Requesting Permission for the Dedication by Rider for Storm Recovery Trust Fund Required by PL2013, c.271 and N.J.S.A. 40A:4-62.1

Motion: Committeeman Levinson. Second: Committeewoman Gilmore. All yes.

- F. **RESOLUTION 2023-56-4** – Authorizing the Township of Hainesport to Execute an Agreement with Burlington County for Cooperative Participation in the Community Development Block Grant Program and Home Investment Partnerships Program Years (Federal FY) 2024 – 2026

Motion: Committeewoman Gilmore. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

- G. **RESOLUTION 2023-57-4** – Authorizing Issuance of Bingo and Raffle Licenses to the Ladies Fire/EMS Auxiliary

Motion: Committeewoman Gilmore. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

- H. **RESOLUTION 2023-58-4** – Authorizing Execution of Escrow Agreement with Haines Mobile Home Park, LLC

Motion: Committeewoman Gilmore. Second: Committeewoman Evans. All yes.

- I. **RESOLUTION 2023-59-4** – Authorizing the Cancellation of Taxes for a 100% Disabled Veteran Block 63, Lot 18

Motion: Committeeman Montgomery. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

- J. **RESOLUTION 2023-60-4** – Authorizing the Cancellation of Taxes for a 100% Disabled Veteran Block 114.07, Lot 21

Motion: Committeeman Montgomery. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

- K. **RESOLUTION 2023-61-4** – Authorizing the Cancellation of Taxes for a 100% Disabled Veteran Block 100.14, Lot 2

Motion: Committeeman Montgomery. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

- L. **RESOLUTION 2023-62-4** – Authorizing Payment No. 1 in the Amount of \$52,632.00 to Mac-Rose Contractors, Inc., for Storm Sewer Improvements Adjacent to 22 Bancroft Lane

Motion: Committeewoman Gilmore. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

- M. **RESOLUTION 2023-63-4** – Opposing the Reduction in State Aid Award to the Hainesport Public School District

Mayor Clauss commented that he spent many years on the school board. Every time there was a reduction in state aid, it resulted in a tax increase for the residents. This is his first year being Mayor and he is glad he has something to say about it. This resolution is for the benefit of our Township residents. **Mrs. Evans** asked if it will do anything, or is it just symbolic. Mayor Clauss explained that if enough towns express their displeasure, it may have an effect.

Motion: Committeeman Levinson. Second: Committeeman Montgomery. All yes.

9. BUSINESS

A. Approval of Business Licenses (See Attached)

Motion: Committeewoman Gilmore. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

10. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (Comments are limited to 5 minutes)

Kent Pipes, 35 Mt. Laurel Road – commented on the Planning Board meeting and the application of Beacon of Hope. He said he was deeply disappointed and angry that Beacon of Hope was denied. Our ordinances prohibit churches in the business district on Route 38. That was the basis for the denial as he understands it. It never got to the site plan considerations. Federal law specifically says that churches should be allowed in any district. Case law has supported that interpretation across the country. He also said we do not have diversity in the representation of the Joint Land Use Board. When this case goes to appeal, the Board will lose hands down. He encouraged them to talk to the applicant and avoid a lawsuit. The Board should represent everyone regardless of beliefs.

Deborah Plaia, 50 Bancroft Lane – asked if Ordinance 2023-4 granting the temporary easement across the Kleiner property had anything to do with the Diamantis easement request since it is a public property being used for private means.

Chief Paul Bush & Captain James McKenzie Hainesport Volunteer EMS – reported that as of April 17 the Squad will be staffed 7 nights a week, 6 pm to 6 am. They have many new members that have passed their EMT class. The daytime response is staffed 2 -3 days per with an ambulance available. **Ms. Kosko** asked them if we could start receiving the monthly reports again to see the metrics. They responded yes. Mr. Bush stated the numbers should increase substantially now. They were only responding to 30% of calls, but now they have a lot more people local. May 23rd they have an EMS open house event to celebrate EMS week. The public is invited. They will introduce their mascot “TQ” (short for tourniquet). Ms. Kosko asked if our missed calls were being responded to by Mt. Holly and/or Lumberton. Mr. Bush said yes. Hainesport has an average response time of 13 minutes, which is below the national average and Hainesport does not charge for services while some other towns do. Ms. Kosko asked if those towns are currently billing our residents for their responses. Mr. Bush stated yes.

Jim & Michelle Prescavage, 51 Easton Way – asked for an update on the Fire/EMS review and asked if it had been finalized. **Ms. Kosko** answered that we do not have the final report yet. We should have it in a month or two. They asked if there was a plan to implement the recommendations. **Mayor Clauss** responded that we have to wait and see what the recommendations are before we can decide.

Catherine McNelis, 407 Bischoff Avenue – asked if anything had been done about the Street Center closet situation with the seniors. **Mayor Clauss** answered not yet because we have not had our meeting to discuss it. **Mrs. Gilmore** said she was told the chairs were being moved out of the closet. **Ms. Kosko** added that the Emergency Squad and other groups use the facility and need storage space there as well.

Karen Tordy, 4 Easton Way – had two brief comments. She encouraged the Committee to continue to pass budgeting policies that have allowed us to become debt free and keep our taxes low. She commended the past Committees and professionals for being proactive in developing the taxable businesses and policies that have kept our municipal taxes below the 6.5% rate of inflation. She also thanked Mrs. Gilmore for passing on the appreciation from the Have a Heart shoe box donation project for the homeless. She and her students have participated for the last two years and enjoyed decorating and filling the boxes. It was a great community service project for her 8 year old students and it is helpful for them to hear how much they were appreciated. She will share the messages with her class on Monday.

Bud Burns, 2515 Fostertown Road – asked why Ms. McNelis cannot get an answer about the Street Center.

11. COMMENTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

No Comments.

12. COMMENTS FROM THE SOLICITOR

Mr. Gillespie answered Ms. Plaia's question about Ordinance 2023-4. The easement in the ordinance has nothing to do with the Diamantis project.

13. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Committeewoman Evans – thanked Donna Casey and the volunteers for making the Easter Egg Hunt such a success. She and the other Committee members enjoyed it. She congratulated Paul Bush and the EMS crew for increasing membership. She looks forward to hearing the reports in months to come. She met with Janice Ludden and Paula Uhland from the Environmental Commission to work on the Sustainable New Jersey Program. She would like to have 2 – 3 citizen volunteers to join the Green Team. She will be putting the word out in the E-newsletter and the website, but please email her if interested. She has an idea for a logo contest for residents for the 100 year anniversary celebration. Hopefully it will encourage some of the young people to get involved with their excellent design skills. She also wanted to say that the easement has to do with some very exciting developments, to be revealed in a few months at Creek Turn Park.

Committeeman Levinson – hoped everyone had a great Easter and Passover. He thanked the residents for attending the Easter egg event. There must have been between 200 – 300 people in attendance and it was a great time. He thanked the volunteer Fire Department, EMTs and State Police for being there as well as all the volunteers that help set up and take down the events. Regarding debt, Hainesport is surrounded by towns that have debt between \$10 - \$42 million dollars. With a conservative 2.5% interest on these amounts, their residents will have to pay back their borrowed amounts plus between \$250,000 and \$1,062,778 in interest respectively. By responsible budget management, Hainesport has managed to maintain a very stable municipal rate and is debt free. Regarding school funding, the

State provides school funding from the taxes that we pay. Hainesport School, students and parents, in his mind, are being regularly punished with fund reductions. The State has a giant budget surplus. If the school's budgetary needs are not met with current funds, they will have to be met with an increase in taxes to our residents. He urged the Committee members to support Resolution 2023-63-4 Opposing the Reduction in State Aid Award to the Hainesport Public School District. This resolution supports the school, students, parents and taxpayers. He listed the continued reductions in aid to the school over the last few years.

Committeewoman Gilmore – thanked everyone for coming. She reminded everyone about Clean-Up Day at the Street Center and the Earth Day event at the Municipal Park both on April 22nd. There will be a scavenger hunt and a special guest to read to the children. The Easter egg hunt was wonderful even though it was a week late. The bunny and Scrunchie the Shoprite bear did a great job. She thanked Shoprite for their participation.

Committeeman Montgomery – thanked Shoprite for their bear who joined with the Easter bunny at our event. He hopes everyone had a happy Easter and blessed Passover. He thanked the State Police, Fire and EMTs for attending. He commented on the budget. We have a flat increase. One of the residents just mentioned inflation being at 6.5% and we are at a 2.2% increase in Hainesport which is less than a dollar a month increase for the average homeowner. Our part of the budget is staying flat, but we only represent 14% of the budget at the municipality. The rest goes to the schools, the County and a number of other things. It is a concern when our school is being handcuffed with certain things. We are fortunate that our employees are great at getting grants. We have almost \$350,000 in grants to help out. He commended Chief Bush on what he is doing with the EMS and encouraged everyone to attend the May 23rd event. He mentioned the 5 minute time limit for public comments. It can be uncomfortable, but it makes it fair for everyone. He encouraged people to do their research before making broad, sweeping comments. He finds it hard to believe comments are being made on a broad group of people. That in itself is discriminatory. He encouraged people to be careful when pointing fingers because when you do, you have three fingers pointing back at yourself so be careful.

Mayor Clauss – said he likes Anna Evans idea for the logo contest. He would like to get the school involved in developing a criteria for the logo. We can let the 100th Anniversary Committee approve it and bring it before the Township Committee. The Easter egg hunt went fabulous. It was very well done, but could have been warmer. He thanked everyone for coming.

14. **BILL LIST**

Motion: Committeeman Montgomery. Second: Committeeman Levinson. All yes.

15. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A. RESOLUTION 2023-64-4 – Resolution to Enter into Executive Session

1. Potential Litigation

Mr. Gillespie announced that no Executive Session would be needed.

16. ADJOURNMENT @ 7:22 P. M.

Motion: Committeeman Levinson. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paula L. Kosko

Administrator/Municipal Clerk

OFFICIAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN ON ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Township Committee Meeting
April 11, 2023
6:30 pm

The public may electronically submit questions or comments to pkosko@hainesporttownship.com or in written letter form to the Clerk's Office at the Municipal Building (can drop in Tax Payment Drop Box as well) no later than 4pm the Monday prior to the Committee Meeting. Name, address and phone or email must be included. Previously submitted questions or public comment shall be read aloud and addressed during the public meeting. Duplicated written questions or comments may be summarized and shall be done consistently.

To eliminate background noise so that all meeting participants can hear, please mute your microphone and remain in listening mode only. The Clerk will place all remote attendees on this platform on mute as well. During public comment period(s), the Clerk will unmute all remote participants. If you do not have a question or comment, please manually re-mute your microphone. The Clerk will manage the remote users for public comments. All remote users must state their name and address at the beginning of his/her public comment.

Should a member of the public that is using the GoToMeeting platform become disruptive, that person will be kept on mute and warned that continued disruption may result in being prevented from speaking or removed from the remote meeting. If time permits, the disruptive individual shall be allowed to speak after all other members of the public have been given the opportunity to speak.

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2. YouTube Live

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Search on YouTube – Township of Hainesport Live Stream

*Public questions or comments will not be responded to on YouTube Live. Please use the GoToMeeting platform for all remote communication.

The governing body requests that **questions or comments on agenda items be directed to the Administrator/Municipal Clerk by 4pm on the Tuesday of the meeting.** All questions and comments will be considered by the Township Committee and entered into the official minutes of the meeting.

Individuals calling into the phone number or accessing from a computer will be able to fully participate in the meeting. However, all persons calling in will be asked to place their phones on mute unless speaking and being recognized to speak during a Public Hearing or Comments from the Public. A non-public dial in number will be used if executive session is required.