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HAINESPORT TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MINUTES

September 5, 2023

6:30 P.M.

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. This meeting of September 5, 2023 with instructions for internet access was included in a meeting notice sent to the Burlington County Times and Courier Post on August 11, 2023 and advertised in said newspapers on August 16, 2023, and August 17, 2023 respectively posted on the website and the bulletin board in the municipal building on August 10, 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 AUGUST 8, 2023**

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

B. **APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES OF AUGUST 8, 2023**

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

4. **REPORTS**

- A. **Tax Collector** – August 2023
- B. **Code Enforcement** – August 2023
- C. **Fire Official** – August 2023
- D. **Construction** – August 2023
- E. **Emergency Services Reports** – August 2023
- F. **NJSP In-Person Report** – August 2023

Not in attendance.

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

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

Louis Lopez, Mt. Holly resident – asked if our ordinance 2023-8 was creating a Green Team tonight. **Mayor Clauss** answered we are not creating the Team tonight, but this is the first step. Mr. Lopez added Mount Holly has had many grant opportunities and it will be great for Hainesport.

Debra Harris, 7 Elsinore Drive – asked if we had received an EMS report and if it covered the recent accidents at Hainesport-Mt. Laurel Road and Fostertown Road. **Ms. Kosko** responded that we do not get reports by location, we just get the number. Specific accident reports would come from the State Police.

6. **ORDINANCES**

A. **ORDINANCE 2023-7** – Appropriating the Sum of \$725,000 in Funding from the General Capital Fund Balance for Various Projects throughout the Township (**Public Hearing and Final Adoption**)

Mr. Montgomery pointed out that the money is broken out into three categories: \$500,000 would go to recreation/park improvements, \$215,000 to the Fire Department and the rest to computer software. He is happy to see money being allocated toward these projects. **Mrs. Evans** noted that \$250,000 would be going to Creek Turn Park improvements, but we have not seen a site plan yet. **Mayor Clauss** said the first step is to allocate funds before we hire anyone to do a site plan. **Ms. Kosko** explained that in order to expend the funds from the Capital budget, we must have an ordinance authorizing those expenditures. The next step will be the conceptual design of the park with these funds freed up to pay for that. Mrs. Evans asked if the money carried forward to the next year if the project was not complete. Ms. Kosko answered yes. **Mr. Gillespie** added that the \$250,000 would not be spent without the approval of those expenditures.

Motion to open public comment

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

Debra Harris, 7 Elsinore Drive – asked if the allocation for the Chase Park has a plan yet, or is it the same situation as Creek Turn Park. **Mayor Clauss** answered that it is the same process. **Ms. Kosko** added that we will be receiving proposals for the basketball and the tennis court repairs and minor playground improvements. Mrs. Harris asked about the handball court and Ms. Kosko responded it is not on the list yet.

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

B. **ORDINANCE 2023-8** – Establishing a Green Team Pursuant to Sustainable New Jersey (**Public Hearing and Final Adoption**)

Mrs. Evans acknowledge what Louis Lopez said. We did look at Mt. Holly when we were investigating examples of a local community receiving money through the Green Team program. We will nominate our team in January to start our Hainesport projects.

Motion to open public comment

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

Debra Harris, 7 Elsinore Drive – said she was thrilled to see this on the agenda. She is looking forward to volunteering and seeing the progress.

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

C. ORDINANCE 2023-9 – Creating a Length of Service Award Program (Public Hearing and Final Adoption)

Motion to open public comment

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

No comments.

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

7. CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS

The items listed below are considered routine by the Township of Hainesport and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no formal discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, this item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

A. RESOLUTION 2023-102-9 – Approve a Firefighter into the NJ State Firemen’s Association

B. RESOLUTION 2023-103-9– Award Contract for Engineering Services for the Municipal Hockey Rink Reconstruction Project

C. RESOLUTION 2023-104-9– Governing Body Certification of the Annual Audit

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

8. BUSINESS

A. Approval of Business Licenses (See Attached)

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

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

Sue McMullen, 129 Merion Way – said she was offended by Anna Evans’ comments in the previous minutes about District 2. Mrs. Evans is assuming a lot about people she does not know. Ms. McMullen said she lives in the Glen at Mason’s Creek where 50% of the residents are single homeowners, mostly widows, certainly not rich. Her family has been here for 3 generations and given countless volunteer hours to Township projects. She also commented about the fashion show fundraiser. There should be no problem filling the room. Non-residents also attend these events to be with friends and family. She has two tables reserved. Before Mrs. Evans keeps offending the old people of District 2, she needs to realize they are the ones volunteering to help the Township and supporting events run by the Township.

Elyse Vahjen, 110 Merion Way – spoke about The Glen at Mason’s Creek, District 2. It is an over 55 community which also has residents in affordable housing and they vote. The community contains many races and religions, Veterans and people with many different occupations. Some are richer than others. They are no richer than other Districts. Communities should not be labeled by wealth. Label a community by their rights to make the township better for the next generation 100 years from now. We should all celebrate the 100th anniversary. We will have so many events, mostly free. Some must be paid for in order to have the free ones. Another free idea – go to the Friends Quaker Cemetery graveyard in Mt. Holly on Garden Street and pay your respects to Barclay & Lydia Haines, the Lippincots, the Middletons, the Parrys the Roberts, Stokes, Busby, Burrs, Evans and the Shinns. They built this community. We should celebrate and honor them.

Louis Lopez, Mt. Holly resident – thanked Anna Evans, Debra Harris and Bob Mode for letting him know about this meeting. He asked about warehouses in Hainesport. How do we collect taxes if the buildings are empty. **Mayor Clauss** answered that we still collect taxes whether the building is empty or not. He asked about the Senior Citizens meetings for his mother. **Mrs. Gilmore** responded that the meetings are held the second and fourth Thursday of each month at the Street Center. He asked if the municipal building could host an after-school program. **Mayor Clauss** said the school has its own facilities, but they would have to go through the proper channels to apply for the space.

Robert Mode, 202 Lumberton Road – he is looking forward to the 100th anniversary celebration. He has volunteered to help, but has not gotten a call yet. He thanked everyone for coming out to the Democrats meet & greet. They had a nice turnout with many Democrat candidates in attendance. He thanked Anna Evans for emceeding the event.

Debra Harris, 7 Elsinore Drive – Chair of the Hainesport Democrats, thanked everyone for coming out to the meet & greet. They had some great discussions. The Harris/Mode platform will be coming soon to their campaign Facebook and Instagram pages. On September 29th, they are sponsoring the Movie in the Park “Lyle, Lyle Crocodile” at dusk. They were outraged at the vandalism against Big Rusty and she is glad the suspects have been identified. At the August meeting, she asked Ken Montgomery several questions about the Hainesport Education Foundation (HEF). The questions remain unanswered. She repeated her questions about the nonprofit status, tax filings and donations. She asked why the Economic Development Committee did not have minutes, as she was denied them in an OPRA request. Is it defunct? If not, what are they working on? The 2020 Montgomery campaign promised “to create more business on the Route 38 corridor” however there has been an increase in vacant properties, like the Wawa. We need more community friendly businesses to benefit residents. The Township has greenlighted 4 warehouses in a town that is roughly 6.7 square miles.

Karen Tordy, 4 Easton Way – recalled the busy month. The kickball tournament was fun and it was nice for everyone to enjoy together. In service to the community, she has been volunteering at the concession stand for the concerts. She congratulated Frank Vellucci for winning the 100th anniversary logo contest. As a member of the tea & fashion show committee, she is looking forward to the event at the Bradford. Please contact her if you have any new items to donate for the prize baskets. On behalf of the Hainesport Republican Club, she thanked everyone who supported their 2 fundraisers. They sold 99 tickets for the Trenton Thunder game. They were able to invite over thirty

residents who might otherwise not have been able to go. The pound cake fundraiser was also a huge success. She hopes with the election drawing near that everyone is treated with respect and dignity and keep Hainesport first in our hearts.

10. COMMENTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

No comments.

11. COMMENTS FROM THE SOLICITOR

Mr. Gillespie announced that the Superior Court approved Hainesport's 3rd round affordable housing obligation and Settlement Agreement with fair share housing center. We were also granted immunity against any Builder's Remedy litigation. Judge Covert commended the Committee for their work over the past five years initiating this process that led to what she considers a fair, reasonable and doable plan for Hainesport to meet their obligation.

He addressed Mrs. Harris's comments about the Economic Development Committee. As she was told with her OPRA request, there is no need for them to take minutes. They are a subcommittee of the Governing Body. It is an advisory board. They are not a "sunshine" body. There are many subcommittees formed under statute and they are not required to keep minutes. There should be no suggestion or innuendo that they are defunct because there are no minutes on the website. They convene when projects present themselves.

Mayor Clauss thanked Mr. Gillespie for the affordable housing agreement. He added the projects that come before the Economic Development Committee that are successful end up before the Joint Land Use Board so they do become public. **Ms. Kosko** explained that the Committee provides a screening method for potential applicants for professional guidance to introduce our Code and standards. The Committee is not a decision-making committee and the applicant can still choose to move forward. The applicants pay the professional fees for their time involved.

12. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Committeewoman Evans – apologized to the District 2 residents for any offense taken over her comments concerning the 100th anniversary fundraiser. None was intended. She loved the idea of visiting the graveyard. She agreed with Karen Tordy that it was fun to play kickball together and beat Mt. Holly. Big Rusty continues to be a popular attraction and she is glad the vandalism suspects have been identified. She congratulated Frank Vellucci on winning the 100th anniversary logo contest and thanked all that submitted entries and voted.

Committeeman Levinson – thanked John & Paula for their guidance through the affordable housing agreement. It was a long process. He said the area around the ground depression by the gazebo will be a new rain garden. It will sustain pollinators and improve water quality. The QR codes are for information to recreate the look at home. The garden is a gift from Pinelands Preservation Alliance at Rutgers University. Residents will get up to \$600 from the state if they install a rain garden on their own property. Ms. Kosko has a QR code to learn more about funding and installation. Volunteers are still needed for the project at 7 am tomorrow morning at the gazebo.

Committeewoman Gilmore – thanked everyone for coming. Tish Kelley, Chairperson of the senior citizen's group, wanted her to announce that their meetings are the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month. She is honored that John Gillespie is our solicitor, as he has been nominated again for the Best Lawyers in America list.

Committeeman Montgomery – thanked everyone for coming. He enjoyed the kickball tournament and congratulated Frank Vellucci on winning the 100th anniversary logo contest. He also thanked the other participants for their entries. He is happy that we have a fair, reasonable and doable affordable housing plan as deemed by the Judge. We also have responsible planning by the Economic Development Committee and great help by our award-winning solicitor John Gillespie, Paula, this committee and committees of the past that helped us get to this point. He hopes to see many volunteers at 7 am tomorrow at the rain garden.

Mayor Clauss – said he is really looking forward to the 100th anniversary. It is dear to his heart. He was here for the 50th anniversary with Mayor Robert Shinn. The kickball tournament was fun, but he was sore for 3 weeks. We are still exploring the chicken issue. We are lucky to have John Gillespie and the administration here. Trunk or Treat is coming up on October 13th, the cruise theme dinner & dance on September 22nd. We have had an issue with some homeless people in town. He is getting involved with some committee members, residents and business owners to work on a solution and help them. Please contact him if you want to get involved.

13. **BILL LIST**

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

14. **ADJOURNMENT @ 7:20 P. M.**

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Paula L. Kosko
Administrator/Municipal Clerk

OFFICIAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN ON ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Township Committee Meeting
September 5, 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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Access Code: 981-990-165

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2. YouTube Live

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*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.