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HAINESPORT TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MINUTES January 2, 2024 7:00 P.M.

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. This meeting of January 2, 2024 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 Gilmore, Committeeman Montgomery, Committeewoman Evans, Committeeman Clauss and Committeewoman Tordy. Also present were Township Clerk/Administrator Paula Kosko and Attorney John Gillespie.

2. MINUTES

A. APPROVAL OF REGULAR COMMITTEE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 12, 2023

B. APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES OF DECEMBER 12, 2023

Motion: Committeeman Clauss. Second: Committeeman Montgomery. Abstain: Committeewoman Tordy. All yes.

4. REPORTS

A. Tax Collector – December 2023, 4th Quarter 2023, Year End 2023

B. Code Enforcement – December 2023

C. Fire Official – December 2023

D. Construction – December 2023, Year End 2023

E. Emergency Services Reports – December 2023

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

F. NJSP In-Person Report – December 2023

Not present.

5. DISCUSSION/PRESENTATION

A. Referral of Housing Element and Fair Share Plan to JLUB

Mr. Gillespie explained that this is just a referral. It is part of the Master Plan, so it is a Land Use Board document. This was prepared by our Affordable Housing Planner, as we are working to satisfy the affordable housing obligation in Hainesport. It incorporates the terms of the settlement approved by the Superior Court. The purpose tonight is for the Township Committee to refer this to the Joint Land Use Board for them to review the plan for consistency at their January 17th meeting. They will consider it and presumably approve it. Then it will come back to the Committee to review their recommendations. **Mrs. Evans** had an observation on pg. 30, the sentence "...as such all lots capable of supporting additional affordable housing are located in the northern section of Hainesport above Creek Road". She does not believe that is 100% accurate. We may need to adjust the wording. **Mr. Gillespie** said we could adjust it and change the line of demarcation to above the RR5 line instead. **Mrs. Evans** said she will make the motion, but it does not mean she is blanket endorsing everything in this plan. She reserves the right to vote against some things in this plan in the future.

Motion to refer to Joint Land Use Board as revised:

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

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

Louis Lopez, Mt. Holly resident – asked for an explanation of resolution 2024-36-1 Authorizing Contract for ADA Compliance Updates to Township Website with CivicPlus. **Ms. Kosko** explained that municipal websites must be ADA compliant. This program offered through our website host will provide all the ADA requirements to keep us in compliance with all Federal and State laws as related to accessibility.

7. ORDINANCES

A. ORDINANCE 2024-1 – Amending Chapter 104 Entitled “Land Use” to Establish a New Affordable Accessory Apartment Provision (First Reading and Introduction) (Public Hearing and Final Adoption January 30, 2024)

Mr. Gillespie said this is consistent with our housing element Fair Share plan and our means by which we will achieve our number that satisfies Hainesport’s Constitutional obligation. The plan provides for nine accessory apartments. This ordinance creates the mechanism and parameters for such units. He made a few corrections - typos on page 3, and deleting section seven for Faulkner Act towns.

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

8. RESOLUTIONS

A. **RESOLUTION 2024-34-1** – Establishing the 2024 Temporary Budget

Motion: Committeeman Clauss. Second: Committeewoman Tordy. All yes.

B. **RESOLUTION 2024-35-1** – Establishing Rate of Compensation for Certain Positions Effective January 11, 2024

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

C. **RESOLUTION 2024-36-1** – Authorizing Contract for ADA Compliance Updates to Township Website with CivicPlus

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

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

Debra Harris, 7 Elsinore Drive - said the Hainesport Democrats had a donation drive for the Friends of Burlington County Animal Shelter. She thanked everyone who donated. Their next meeting is January 29th at 7 pm at the Street Center. At 5 pm tonight, breaking news, Senator Menendez has another scandal involving another foreign nation and his acceptance of gifts. Her comment is about gifts and government officials and whether they should accept gifts. She thanked Anna Evans for coming out and making this issue known. She looked at the gift giving policy – it is about six lines. The Committee spent over an hour in December in ethics training with Mr. Gillespie. One of the things he recommended was a maximum of \$50. She acknowledged that Mr. Gillespie was shaking his head no in disagreement. She said many of the things he went over in training were not in the policy. There is nothing specific as to what a gift is and nothing listed as best practices. She recommends reviewing the policy and adding some things from training to make it easier to follow.

Louis Lopez, Mt. Holly resident – asked if there was an update on backyard chickens. **Mayor Gilmore** responded no. He asked when there would be progress on the affordable housing. **Mr. Gillespie** answered that it was just introduced tonight for accessory apartments which will go to the Planning Board. That will come back to the Township Committee January 30th. We have a public hearing with the court on February 6th. Mr. Lopez wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Bruce Levinson, 2 Fox Court – commented on the issue of the gift given from our engineer. He made note that the same person that made the comment about the gift also attended a breakfast put on by that same engineering firm and was actually greeted by the owner of the engineering firm, so that person also accepted a gift. It seems hypocritical to him that you would complain about one thing about that organization, but accept a gift from that same organization.

10. COMMENTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Ms. Kosko wished everyone a Happy New Year. She thanked the Committee for the opportunity to serve the residents of Hainesport for another year. She thanked the staff for all of their support. She is looking forward to 2024 and celebrating Hainesport's 100th anniversary.

11. COMMENTS FROM THE SOLICITOR

Mr. Gillespie echoed Paula's comments. He thanked the Committee for the privilege to allow him to serve this year. He enjoys Hainesport tremendously. He looks forward to 2024 and working with the Committee.

12. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Committeewoman Evans – said since it came up, we are only responsible for what we do. We cannot control what other people do. We have to have our own ethics. For her, having a luxury gift delivered to her house is a different thing from her attending an event at the New Jersey League of Municipalities conference where she probably ate less than \$25 worth of food. Having said that, she doubts that she will receive any more gifts from Alaimo, or be invited to the brunch in the future. It should not be a problem going forward. No one knew that Alaimo gave out luxury gifts until she posted about it. She asked why did no one know. Why members of the Committee did not post pictures of the Lenox gravy boats. She voted not to appoint Alaimo for Township Engineer. Cost is one part of ranking system we are given. Alaimo was significantly more expensive than the other bids and they ranked lowest with other criteria. Some of the other engineers were \$50 - \$90 an hour less. She thanked everyone for coming and wished them a Happy New Year.

Committeewoman Tordy – wished everyone a Happy New Year. She only had one comment on the gifts. At Christmas time, people give gifts. It is a very common thing. It is her understanding that the gravy boat, when you buy in bulk like Alaimo does, is about \$20.

Committeeman Clauss – thanked everyone for coming. Since we are talking about gifts, a gift is something that does not have to be repaid. As for influencing a business decision with a gift – that is wrong. It is wrong to let a gift influence you to give a contract or not to give a contract - either way is unethical. We do hire other engineers for special projects, like road paving which gives us the opportunity to look at other firms. We stick with one engineer that is the best for our town and local, especially for emergency situations. He cited the Marne Highway debacle years ago with the bridge. The last set of beams were made wrong and the bridge was closed another 3 months. Those are the types of problems that can happen. If we have to spend a little more to get the best, he will do it. All this talk about gifts, he questions the whole idea. Whether it's a dinner, lunch, or a gift if it is going to influence, it will influence. None of this influences him. We have gone to other engineering firms and given them jobs that we feel comfortable with. Some of them worked out well, some not so much.

With the smaller firms, you have to limit what you give them because they can only handle so much. We need a firm that is deep, to handle the bigger projects. That is why we stick with the engineering firm we have for our township. He does not think we are doing anything wrong.

Committeeman Montgomery – thanked everyone for coming tonight. He feels the gifts have been covered. He is not influenced by compliments or gifts. If he were, he would not accept it. He remembers from the ethics training; it was much over \$50 that would be of concern. It was in the hundreds. He is looking forward to 2024, serving with the Committee members, working with the people on our 100th Anniversary Committee and all the people in town getting involved and participating. Please participate in the fundraisers. They help us make as many free events as possible. He is looking forward to the 100th celebration. He congratulated all the new appointees and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Mayor Gilmore – wished everyone a Happy New Year. She looks forward to working with everyone at the Township, including staff, professionals and volunteers. It should be an exciting, busy year.

13. BILL LIST

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

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. **RESOLUTION 2024-37-1** – Resolution to Enter into Executive Session

1. Public Safety/Attorney Client Privilege

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

Motion to re-enter regular meeting

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

15. ADJOURNMENT @ 8:36 P. M.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Paula L. Kosko

Administrator/Municipal Clerk

OFFICIAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN ON ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Township Committee Meeting
January 2, 2024
7 pm

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2. YouTube Live

Tonight's meeting will also be available for live viewing on Hainesport Township's **YouTube Live** channel:

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***Public questions or comments *may 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.