

**MEETING MINUTES
BOROUGH OF METUCHEN
COUNCIL MINUTES
April 21, 2014
7:30 PM**

The Regular Meeting of the Borough Council was held in the Council Chambers of Borough Hall on Monday, April 21, 2014.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Mayor Vahalla and he read the Open Public Meetings Act statement which stated, "Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, pursuant to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231. The Mayor advised that adequate notice was provided by an annual notice sent to the Home News Tribune and the Star Ledger and is posted in the Borough Clerk's office and posted in Borough Hall according to law.

The Invocation was given by Council President Muldoon and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present were Councilmembers Wallace, Rasmussen, Inserro, Grayzel, Cammarano and Council President Muldoon.

Also present is Mayor Vahalla, William E. Boerth, Borough Administrator, Denis Murphy, Borough Attorney and Borough Clerk Katie Cirulli.

Agenda Session

Council President Muldoon made a motion to open the Agenda Session, second by Councilwoman Rasmussen, with all in favor, the Agenda Session was opened.

Councilman Cammarano asked what is happening with the burned-out home at 230 Center Street. There was a discussion. They want a status report and any actions taken with moving forward with the demolition of the structure.

Councilwoman Inserro stated that six months ago the Borough passed the Complete Streets Policy. The Resolution reads "*Within six (6) months of adoption of the Complete Street Policy, the Borough Administrator, Borough Planner, Borough Engineer, Zoning Officer, a representative of the Police Department and the DPW Director shall report to the Borough Council regarding: steps taken to implement this resolution, plans for continued implementation in the coming year, revisions implemented and/or needed to codes, ordinances, rules, plans and procedures, and any desired actions that would need to be taken by the Borough Council or other Borough departments...*". She wants to know if there have been any formal plans put into place. There was a discussion as to the different actions that have already been taken and what actions are in the process. They would like a formal report as to what is being planned and what is in the process of being done.

Council President Muldoon made a motion to close the Agenda Session, second by Councilwoman Rasmussen, with all in favor, the Agenda Session was closed.

Discussion-Insurance Renewal-R2014-86.

Bill Boerth explained the process that has taken to look at different insurance policies for the Borough. A

discussion ensued on the process, costs and getting quotes of medical plans for the employees.

Michael Atkinson gave a summary of the year-end process to the renewal process. A discussion ensued on the proposed plan for renewal.

Introduction of 2014 Municipal Budget-R2014-88.

Council President Muldoon moved to introduce the 2014 Municipal Budget, second by Councilwoman Rasmussen.

The Borough Clerk read the following statement:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following statement of revenues and appropriations shall constitute the Municipal Budget for the year 2014

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that said Budget be published in the Ho9me News Tribune in the issue of April 25, 2014

The Governing Body of the Borough of Metuchen does hereby approve the following as the Budget for the year 2014.

General Appropriations for:

1. Appropriation within "CAPS" –	
A. Municipal Purposes	\$11,731,497.82
2. Appropriations Excluded from "CAPS"	
A. Municipal Purpose	\$ 3,496,940.56
Total General Appropriations Excluded From "CAPS" –	\$ 3,496,940.56
3. Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	\$ 783,397.89
4. Total General Appropriations	\$16,011,836.27
5. Less: Anticipated Revenues Other than Current Property Tax	\$ 4,774,395.38
6. Difference: Amount to be Raised by Taxes for Support of Municipal Budget:	
A. Local Tax for Municipal Purposes Including Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	\$10,538,497.45
C. Minimum Library Tax	\$ 698,943.44

Notice is hereby given that the Budget and Tax Resolution was approved by the Governing Body of the Borough of Metuchen, County of Middlesex, on April 21, 2014.

A Hearing on the Budget and Tax Resolution will be held at the Borough Hall on May 19, 2014 at 7:30 P.M. at which time and place objections to said Budget and Tax Resolution for the year 2014 may be presented by taxpayer or other interested persons.

There was a discussion as to the changes that have been made to the Employee Health Benefit calculations and other minor changes.

Mayor Vahalla asked for a roll call vote.

COUNCILMEMBER	YES	NO	NV	AB	COUNCILMEMBER	YES	NO	NV	AB
CAMMARANO	X				MULDOON	X			
GRAYZEL	X				RASMUSSEN	X			
INSERRO	X				WALLACE	X			

MOTION	MULDOON	SECOND	RASMUSSEN
X – INDICATES VOTE	AB- ABSENT	NV- NOT VOTING	

Introduction of 2014 Municipal Budget passed, 6-0

Public Comment

Mayor Vahalla opened the Public Comment to anyone wishing to speak.

Sandra Flight, 194 Highland Ave, Metuchen, President of the Friends of Metuchen Library, stated that they have concerns with the Library Budget. She asked if the budget was flat. Mr. Boerth stated that the Library is actually receiving a slight increase. Ms. Flight appreciates the increase, even though it wasn't much, and the vote of confidence the Borough has in the Library as a valuable resource for the residents of Metuchen.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Mayor Vahalla closed Public Comment.

Proclamation and Resolutions Honoring

Councilwoman Rasmussen presented a proclamation honoring Arbor Day.

ARBOR DAY PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, in 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees; and

WHEREAS, the Borough will hold their "National Arbor Day" observance on April 25, 2014 and is the 142nd anniversary of the holiday; and

WHEREAS, "National Arbor Day" is now observed throughout the nation and the world; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of trees as part of a stable global environment are well recognized; and

WHEREAS, the special importance of trees in urban areas in reducing energy use and maintaining an awareness of the natural world is also evident; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Metuchen is committed to preserving and renewing its numerous and beautiful trees which enhance the quality of life in our community;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, THOMAS VAHALLA, MAYOR OF THE BOROUGH OF METUCHEN, COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, do proclaim April 25, 2014 as the official celebration of Arbor Day in the Borough of Metuchen; and urge all the people of Metuchen to celebrate Arbor Day and to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands. Further, I urge all citizens to plant trees as a source of joy and spiritual renewal and to promote the well-being of this and future generations.

Ordinance – Public Hearing

Ordinance 2014-02

Seeing no one wishing to speak, Mayor Vahalla closed the Public Hearing.

Council President Muldoon made a motion to pass Ordinance 2014-04 on second reading and published according to law, second by Councilwoman Rasmussen.

Mayor Vahalla asked for a roll call vote.

COUNCILMEMBER	YES	NO	NV	AB	COUNCILMEMBER	YES	NO	NV	AB
CAMMARANO	X				MULDOON	X			
GRAYZEL	X				RASMUSSEN	X			
INSERRO	X				WALLACE	X			
MOTION	MULDOON				SECOND	RASMUSSEN			
X – INDICATES VOTE		AB- ABSENT			NV- NOT VOTING				

Ordinance 2014-04 was passed on second reading and is to be published according to law, 6-0.

Communications Consent Agenda, Items A - B

Council President Muldoon moved Communications Consent Agenda, Items A and B, second by Councilwoman Rasmussen, with all in favor, motion passed, 6-0.

- A. Receive and Accept Environmental Commission Minutes for January and February 2014.
- B. Receive and Approve American Legion Poppy Month for the Month of May

Reports of Councilmembers

Council President Muldoon

- Mayor, Borough Administrator and he met with Police Chief and Captain to discuss some of the pedestrian safety enforcement efforts that are currently under way. In May the Bike Patrol will be reactivated.
- Metuchen Senior Citizens, Metuchen Police Department and representatives of NJ Department of Transportation will be conducting a Senior Walking Accessibility Workshop on June 4th at the Metuchen Senior Center from 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM.

Councilman Wallace

- Stated that he has seen the increase presence of the Police.
- The Daddy/Daughter Dance was a couple of weeks ago. It was a huge success.
- The Easter Egg Hunt was last Saturday. The Easter Bunny arrived via the Fire Department. There were many who participated in the Hunt. He thanked every person on the Recreation Committee for being there and helping out.
- The Recreation Department will be printed a book of all the programs that they have to offer. It should be ready in about a week.
- Traffic and Transportation met last week. They had some good comments from Sergeant Flaherty. They spoke about the flags and light repairs and some other general items.

Councilwoman Rasmussen

- Shade Tree Commission had their tree giveaway as part of the Sandy Recovery Program. It was a huge success. There are still Douglas Firs, Silky Dogwoods, Willow Oak or Northern Red Oak if anyone is still interested in receiving one, email her at drasmussen@metuchen.com

- The Spring Planting will take place around May 7th and will be planting homeowners' requests that were applied for only.
- The Shade Tree Commission also received notification of a grant award for Green Communities from NJDEP for the amount of \$3,000.00
- Arbor Day Celebration is Friday, April 25th at the Old Franklin School House at 3:30 PM. They will be planting some seedlings and read the proclamation and having refreshments.
- Environmental Commission watched a video on how to create a rain garden. They are still waiting to hear if they have been awarded a grant that has been applied for.

Councilwoman Inserro

- Would like to remind everyone that this Friday at 7PM at the Campbell School, Metuchen Municipal Alliance is having their Magic Show Fundraiser to raise money for the Youth Services Board. Admission is \$10.00 per adult with one child free and each additional child is \$3.00. They are also funding a speaker at the High School in June for Juniors and Seniors.
- The Board of Health is meeting this week on Wednesday at 7:30 PM.
- The Senior Citizen Commission will not be meeting again until June. If there are any citizens who are interested in working with the Senior Citizens on special projects later in the year, please contact Councilwoman Inserro.

Councilman Grayzel

- Tomorrow night is the first meeting of the Accessibility Committee Council. He will have a report at the next Council meeting. Councilman Muldoon asked that someone from the Accessibility Committee be a part of the Senior Citizen Walkability Workshop as the same challenges may affect the Physically Challenged.
- Presently in the Rotunda is the work of Monroe Artist Thelma Reed.
- This Sunday, April 27th from 12:00 to 2:00 PM there is a Gallery opening and the public is invited.
- The Arts Council and the Gallery are sponsoring an event called "Sheep on Show". This event will cost \$20.00 per sheep and each participant will receive a wooden sheep to decorate and supplies to decorate the sheep. They can be put on display on the lawns. It will be held on May 18th at the Old Franklin School House between 1:00 and 5:00 PM. If you would like to reserve a sheep email info@boroughimprovementleague.org or call 862-368-2202.
- The Cable Technology Advisory Board will be meeting again this Thursday to discuss the negotiations with the Cable provider.

Councilman Cammarano

- He wants to recognize the Friends of the Library for all their hard work and generous donations to the Library.

Reports of Officers

Denis Murphy, Esq.

- Does not have a report at this time.

Bill Boerth, Administrator

- Work started today on the Jersey Avenue Pump Station. It is anticipated that they will be almost completed by the end of the week.

Report of the Mayor

- There was a great response from the Metuchen Fire Department today at the Metuchen Food on Central Avenue.

- The new Pumper Fire Truck will be in on Friday.
- JFK is opening its new Emergency Center today.
- He enjoyed being at the Tree Giveaway the other day. They gave out 288 trees.
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New Business Consent Agenda, R2014-81 through R2014-88

Council President Muldoon made a motion to approve New Business Consent Agenda, R2014-81 through R2014-88, second by Councilwoman Rasmussen, with all in favor, motion passes, 6-0.

RESOLUTION 2014-81

**RESOLUTION REFUNDING SIDEWALK ESCROW FEE #14-001
LOCHIATTO PAVING MASONRY CO. – 572 MAIN STREET**

WHEREAS, Lochiatto Paving Masonry Co. posted \$72.00 for sidewalk escrow fees at 572 Main Street; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board Secretary has requested that the escrow fees be refunded to Lochiatto Paving Masonry Co.,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Lochiatto Paving Masonry Co. be refunded \$72.00 from the Sidewalk Inspection Escrow account.

RESOLUTION 2014-82

**RESOLUTION REFUNDING SIDEWALK ESCROW FEE #13-015
FOX & FOXX DEVELOPMENT, LLC – 13 JUNIPER STREET**

WHEREAS, Fox & Foxx Development, LLC posted \$615.00 for curb, apron and sidewalk escrow fees at 13 Juniper Street; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board Secretary has requested that the escrow fees be refunded to Fox & Foxx Development, LLC,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Fox & Foxx Development, LLC be refunded \$615.00 from the Sidewalk Inspection Escrow account.

RESOLUTION 2014-83

**RESOLUTION REFUNDING SIDEWALK ESCROW FEE #13-040
FOX & FOXX DEVELOPMENT, LLC – 14 SYLVAN AVENUE**

WHEREAS, Fox & Foxx Development, LLC posted \$388.50 for curb, apron and sidewalk escrow fees at 14 Sylvan Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board Secretary has requested that the escrow fees be refunded to Fox & Foxx Development, LLC,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Fox & Foxx Development, LLC be refunded \$388.50 from the Sidewalk Inspection Escrow account.

RESOLUTION 2014-84

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector received the necessary amount to redeem the following Tax Sale Certificate on the following property:

<u>Cert #</u>	<u>Block/Lot</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Lienholder</u>
13-00003	210/1	196 Main Street	P Farbaniec/J Malinowski

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Tax Collector be authorized to cancel this lien from the municipal record.

RESOLUTION 2014-85

WHEREAS, the governing body of the Borough of Metuchen desires to further the public interest by obtaining a grant from the State of New Jersey in the amount of approximately \$3,000 to fund the following project:

2013 Green Communities Grant
Community Forestry Management Plan

THEREFORE, the governing body resolves that William Boerth or the successor to the office of the Borough Administrator is authorized (a) to make application for such grant, (b) if awarded, to execute a grant agreement with the State for a grant in an amount not less than \$3,000.00 and not more than \$3,000.00, and (c) to execute any amendments thereto which do not increase the Grantee's obligations.

This authorizes Metuchen Borough Shade Tree Commission and hereby agrees to match \$3,000.00 of the Total Project Amount, in compliance with the match requirements of the agreement. The availability of the match for such purposes, whether cash, services, or property, is hereby certified. 100% of the match will be made up of in kind services (if allowed by grant program requirements and the agreement).

The Grantee agrees to comply with all applicable federal, State, and municipal laws, rules, and regulations in its performance pursuant to the agreement.

RESOLUTION 2014-86

RESOLUTION APPROVING HEALTH INSURANCE THIRD PARTY ADMINISTRATOR AND NETWORK

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of Metuchen adopted a self-insurance program for the Borough's Group Medical and Dental Coverage which shall renew effective on **May 1, 2014**; and

WHEREAS, this self-insurance program shall require a renewal of Insurance Design Administrators as the Third Party Administrator and the renewal of Qualcare as the Insurance Network for in-state members and US Fire Insurance Co. as Reinsurer; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Metuchen do hereby authorize the appointment of the above stated for all currently existing medical and dental programs offered for Borough employees and retirees.

RESOLUTION 2014-87

RESOLUTION APPOINTING MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE COORDINATOR

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Metuchen that Jodi Kopac be appointed as a Municipal Alliance Coordinator with a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Other New Business

Council President Muldoon made a motion to approve the Bill Resolution in the amount of \$**308,329.64**, second by Councilwoman Rasmussen, with all in favor, the Bill Resolution was passed, 6-0.

Public Comment

Mayor Vahalla opened the meeting to the public for comment.

Seeing no one wishing to comment Mayor Vahalla closed the public comment.

Adjournment

On a motion by Council President Muldoon, seconded by Councilwoman Rasmussen, with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Susan D. Jackson,
Metuchen Borough Clerk