

FREEHOLD TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

July 25, 2023

At 7:00 p.m., the Township Committee met in Mayor's Caucus Room of the Municipal Building. Mayor Walker read the following statement:

"In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, this meeting was announced on January 9, 2023 by: 1.) posting a notice on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building reserved for that purpose, 2.) by mailing such notice to the offices of the official newspapers of the Township and 3.) by filing such notice with the Township Clerk".

In Attendance: Committeeman Cook, Committeeman Preston, Committeewoman Fasano, Mayor Walker

Absent: Committeeman Ammiano (arrived 7:14pm)

Also in attendance: Mr. Valesi, Township Administrator; Mr. Ball Esq. Township Attorney; Mrs. Abouzeina, Municipal Clerk, Ms. Bartolomeo, Deputy Clerk

Mr. Ball read the following resolution:

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 10:4-13 of the Open Public Meetings Act permits the exclusion of the public from meetings of public bodies in certain circumstances which are set forth in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (b); and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Freehold is of the opinion that such circumstances currently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Freehold as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from the discussion of any action upon the hereinafter specified matters
2. The nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:

1. ATTORNEY -CLIENT PRIVILEGE

- 1A. Pending Litigation
- 1B. Union Contracts

2. PROPERTY ACQUISITION

- 2A. Various Parcels

3. It is anticipated at this time the above-stated subject matter will be made public approximately thirty (30) days or at such time as any litigation discussed is resolved

The foregoing resolution was moved by Mr. Cook and seconded by Mr. Preston

VOTE:

AYES: Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, and Mayor Walker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Mr. Ammiano

ABSTAIN: None

At 7:00 pm, the Township Committee adjourned to Executive Session.

Executive Session adjourned at 8:00pm.

At 8:00pm, the Regular Meeting was called to order.

Mayor Walker re-read the following statement:

“In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, this Meeting was announced on January 9, 2023 by: 1.) posting a notice on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building reserved for that purpose, 2.) by mailing such notice to the offices of the official newspapers of the Township and 3.) by filing such notice with the Township Clerk”

Pledge of Allegiance

In Attendance: Committeeman Cook,
Committeewoman Fasano, Committeeman Preston
and Mayor Walker

Absent: Committeeman Ammiano

Also in attendance: Mr. Valesi, Township Administrator; Mr. Ball
Esq., Township Attorney; Mrs. Abouzeina, Municipal
Clerk and Ms. Bartolomeo, Deputy Clerk

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Mr. Preston moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes and Executive Minutes from 6/27/2023, seconded by Mr. Cook.

VOTE:

AYES: Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, and Mayor Walker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: Mr. Ammiano was absent

REPORTS

Mrs. Abouzeina read the report of the Tax Collector for the Month of June 2023:

Net Receipt:	General Fund	\$	414,235.95
	Water Account	\$	434,875.93
	Sewer Account	\$	801,329.81

ABC Social Affair Permits – Freehold VFW Post 4374 – 50 Waterworks
Road - 8/17/23 - Bike Night – 4pm to 10pm

Silvermead Community Club – 160 Grove Place
8/19/23 – Country Jamboree – 4pm to 9pm

Mrs. Abouzeina stated that the social affair permits were in order and approved by the Chief of Police

PRESENTATIONS

Proclamation – “Overdose Awareness Day” – August 31, 2023

The recipient of this award was not in attendance. This proclamation will be presented at a future Township Committee meeting, date to be determined.

Certificate of Achievement – 2023 Girl Scout “Gold Award” – Ilana Sharon
Ilana received a day in her name, presented by Mayor Walker

OLD BUSINESS

R-23-178 – Resolution Acknowledging Receipt and Review of Planning Board
Report Re: Ordinance O-23-16

Mr. Preston read R-23-178 and moved it for adoption, seconded by Mr. Cook.

Vote:

AYES: Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

O-23-16 An Ordinance Adopting the ‘South Freehold Shopping Center’
Redevelopment Plan and Amending Chapter 190, Land Use, Article
XI Zones and Schedule of Requirements, and Article XIII, Zoning
Regulations, of the Revised General Ordinances of the Township of
Freehold, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey

Mayor Walker opened Ordinance O-23-16 for public hearing and asked for any comments or questions.

There being no comments from the public, Mr. Ammiano moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Cook.

Vote:

AYES: Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Mr. Ammiano moved to adopt Ordinance O-23-16, seconded by Mr. Preston

Vote:

AYES: Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

O-23-17 Ordinance Authorizing the Purchase of Block 101, Lot 51.0
Located at 122 Hendrickson Road

Mayor Walker opened Ordinance O-23-17 for public hearing and asked for any comments or questions.

There being no comments from the public, Mr. Ammiano moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Preston.

Vote:

AYES: Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Mr. Ammiano made motion to adopt Ordinance O-23-17, seconded by Mr. Cook.

Vote:

AYES: Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing – Freehold Liquor LLC – Liquor License 1316-33-020-002

Mr. Ball gave a brief background on the license. He stated that the license has been inactive since March 2011 and that the Township has reiterated its desire to activate the license since that time. He outlined correspondence that occurred over the years including from Mr. Valesi, Township Administrator, on April 25, 2022 warning that failure to activate the license by the end of 2022-2023 term would result in the termination of the license. Mr. Ball acknowledged the Township 's receipt of a Place-to-Place transfer application on July 24, 2023 for the transfer of the license to 350 Mounts Corner Dr., Vincent's Italian Restaurant.

Lindsey Farina, Esq. of Skene Law Firm presented an application for a Place to Place Transfer and Corporate Structure Change Application on behalf of Freehold Liquor LLC. She informed the Committee that Vincent's restaurant at 350 Mounts Corner Dr. is seeking to obtain 1% of the license.

Mr. Ball asked for comments from the Public. There being no comments, Mr. Ball asked for comments from the Township Committee.

Mr. Preston expressed concerns that the license has been in pocket for 12 years and that this is not good for the town. He further expressed concern that in three to six months the Town would find itself in the same position. He stated that he is reluctant to do anything without assurances or conditions that this transfer is going to happen.

Mr. Ammiano reiterated that it has been 12 years that he has been hearing about the efforts put forth to sell the license and that every time it has fallen through. He said that he feels the Township needs assurances that this time the transfer is actually going to happen.

Francine Tajfel - In house counsel for the applicant. Ms. Tajfel said she is familiar with history of the liquor license and was personally involved in with arranging for the transfer of the license. She said that she understood that the Township was losing patience with the situation. She outlined the steps taken over the years to find tenants who might want to utilize the license, including hiring a broker to assist in the process. She explained that there is currently a signed arrangement with an Italian restaurant that is not finalized but the intention to make the transfer happen quickly.

Mr. Ammiano asked if there was a signed agreement with the restaurant and asked to see a copy of it, which was provided.

Mrs. Fasano reiterated that the concern is that this transfer will also fall through. She stated that the residents of Freehold Township would like a new place to go to and that they have been waiting for that for 12 years.

There being no further comments, Mr. Ball advised that based upon the commentary there is the possibility that the Township can attach a special condition to the approval of the license renewal limiting the renewal only to the pending Place to Place transfer with Vincent's Restaurant. He also reminded Ms. Tajfel and Ms. Farina that the proper background investigations still needed be done and approved, at which time the process can proceed. He further stated that if the application fails, then the condition would not be met and the license could be revoked at that time.

Mr. Cook said he appreciated the efforts that have been made but stated that 12 years is a long time. He stated that the condition will help make the Township comfortable that this will be resolved one way or the other.

Mr. Preston asked how long a Place to Place Transfer usually takes and was informed by Ms. Abouzeina that it was about a three-month process.

Mr. Valesi spoke about the application process and that there are still significant steps that need to be taken in order for this application to be complete and approved.

Mayor Walker informed Ms. Tajfel and Ms. Farina that he feels this is the "finish line" and therefore there is willingness on the Committee's part to give the benefit of the doubt, but that this will be the last opportunity.

Mayor Walker asked for a motion on the application. Mr. Cook made a motion to approve the application with special condition as noted.

Mr. Valesi clarified that all the Township has is an application that has not been reviewed yet and that the motion would be only about the application for the annual renewal.

Mr. Ball read the motion and stated that it is a motion to approve the annual renewal of the inactive license with special conditions limited to the pending Place to Place transfer. He clarified that the license would be revoked upon failure of the application. He noted that the resolution would be on the next agenda, August 22, 2023 for formal adoption.

Mr. Preston seconded the motion.

R-23-179 - Resolution Approving Consolidated Bills List

Mrs. Fasano read Resolution R-23-179, the Consolidated Bills List in the amount of \$28,880,356.38 and moved it for adoption, seconded by Mr. Cook

Vote:

AYES: Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

FORMAL ACTION – CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS

Matters listed under the items of “Consent Agenda” are required to conduct the day-to-day operations of the Township, and will be enacted by one (1) motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion of any item is desired, that item will be considered separately.

- R-23-180 Resolution Authorizing Added Tax Lien
- R-23-181 Resolution Authorizing the Township of Freehold to Execute the Settlement Agreement Amendment and Mutual Release Re: Countryside Developers, Inc.
- R-23-182 Resolution Authorizing Execution of a Shared Services Agreement with Freehold Soil Conservation District for Information Technology Services
- R-23-183 Resolution Awarding a Contract for Jackson Mills Road Water Treatment Plant Generator Replacement
- R-23-184 Resolution Awarding a Two Contract for the Furnishing and Delivery of Township Work Uniforms
- R-23-185 Resolution Authorizing the Township’s Participation in the Sourcewell Co-Op for Contract Number 091521-NAF, Cars, Trucks, Vans, SUV’s, Cab, Chassis and Other Vehicles with National Auto Fleet Group
- R-23-186 Resolution Amending 2023 Budget (Chapter 159) to Insert Modification to the Special Item of Revenue and Appropriations for Stormwater Assistance

Mr. Cook read the Consent Agenda resolutions and moved them for adoption, seconded by Mr. Ammiano.

Vote:

AYES: Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

There being no further business, Mayor Walker asked for any comments or questions from the public.

Michael Murphy - 31 Schaeffer Lane. Mr. Murphy thanked the Township Committee, Chief Baumann and the Freehold Township Police Department for their collective efforts with the issues that have been occurring on Schaffer Lane. He informed the Committee that there is a better quality of life on the block and he is sincerely thankful to all.

Keith Liuzzo - 26 Schaeffer Lane. Mr. Liuzzo also thanked the Township for steps taken to rectify the issues happening on Schaffer Lane. He informed the Committee that there has been a noticeable increase in police presence over the last 30 days which has resulted in a drastic improvement in the problems that were occurring. He reported that there is almost a zero presence of the Pagan Motorcycle Club on the block.

There being no further comments from the public, Mayor Walker asked for comments from the dais.

Mr. Cook thanked the Chief and Police Department on the efforts made in the Winfield area. He also congratulated Girl Scout Ilana Sharon on her very clever idea.

Mr. Preston stated that he knew it wasn't as fast as the residents had wanted it to be but that he was glad things were moving in the right direction on Schaffer Lane.

Mr. Ammiano thanked the Chief of Police and the Freehold Township Police Department for their efforts. He stated that Freehold Township day was a big success and that while the Pagan Motorcycle Club was there, they had a peaceful presence.

Mr. Valesi emphasized that although sometimes progress takes time, the safety and well being of the residents is always the main priority of the Township. He praised Chief Baumann for continuing to move the Police Department in a good direction. He also mentioned that there are rarely residents who come out to say thank you and it is appreciated. This was echoed by the other Committee members.

Mrs. Fasano addressed the three children and informed them that they had just witnessed their government at work. She said that allowing residents to speak freely and work with the town is what makes everyone happy and safe.

Mayor Walker informed the Public that National Night Out is scheduled for Tuesday, August 1 at iPlay America and welcomed everyone to come out.

Mayor Walker Adjourned the Meeting at 8:39pm

Sanabel Abouzeina, Township Clerk