

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Oceanport, New Jersey
April 1, 2004

- REGULAR MEETING:** The Regular Meeting of the Oceanport Mayor and Council was called to order on April 1, 2004 at 8:07 P.M. with Mayor Gatta stating the meeting had been properly advertised in accordance with law.
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councilpersons Kahle, Mahon, Holden, Chaump, Johnson, Briscione and Mayor Gatta.
- OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Borough Clerk, Patricia L. Varca and A/Borough Attorney, Martin A. McGann.
- INVOCATION:** Borough Chaplain Berry gave the invocation.
- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mayor Gatta led the audience and members of the Council in the flag salute.

As copies of the minutes from the regular meeting held on March 18, 2004 had been made available to the members of the Governing Body, Councilwoman Chaump moved to waive the reading of same and approve the minutes as presented by the Borough Clerk. It was seconded by Councilman Holden and unanimously approved by Council.

CLERK'S REPORTS:

1. Raffle application made by the Lions Club of Oceanport for a 50/50 cash-on premise raffle to be held on May 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30, 2004.

The Clerk advised that the paperwork was found to be in order after which Councilwoman Johnson moved to approve the raffle application. It was seconded by Councilman Briscione and unanimously approved by Council.

2. Application for "special membership" to the Port-au-Peck Chemical Hose Fire Company made by Charles Cook.

The Clerk advised that a background check had been conducted by the Police Department and they had approved the application after which Councilman Holden moved to approve the membership application. It was seconded by Councilwoman Kahle and unanimously approved by Council.

COMMITTEES:

COUNCILWOMAN KAHLE: Councilwoman Kahle reported that the Oceanport Fire Department has had three fire alarms this month, a carbon monoxide alarm, a drill and a brush fire for a total of 87 man hours. She also commented that the Hook & Ladder held training for the Explorer Program and this is to have more leaders in this program and there is much interest in this program.

Councilwoman Kahle stated that the Hook & Ladder will be holding their annual ham dinner on Sunday from 12 to 4 p.m. and it is one of the annual fund drives and she encouraged everyone to attend.

Councilwoman Kahle wanted to take a moment to comment on the last few months and continued that the budget process is a very difficult one and is a collaborative effort every year and this year was no exception. She continued that through it all by working together and coming together as a team we have all benefited and stated that the team is not only made up of Council members but also of citizens and many of them coming to our meetings to sit and listen and some to share their concerns and comments and we all appreciate the input we have received. She stated there has been a lot of insight from the comments like Mr. Kelly, Mr. Sharkey, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Briskey and she brings this up because there have been a lot of negative comments about this whole process but she looks at it as a positive because from these efforts we have taken a lot of action and we have audited out bills, we are looking into shared services, looking at every line item in a horizontal way from year to year and we have taken an active part in all aspects where our money is going and making everyone accountable for every dime even if it is not one of our Committees. Councilwoman Kahle stated that even though the budget has been passed we will continue in the next few months to scrutinize line items and individual budgets and some that have more that doubled since 2002 and we will continue to move forward with a heightened awareness of all aspects of spending and she can only think of this as positive. She stated that besides looking at budgetary spending, this Council is also formulating a "pay for play" ordinance and eliminating no bid contracts for this Borough and these are also positive steps. Councilwoman Kahle commented that she is looking forward to the coming year and she hoped everyone was too.

COUNCILMAN MAHON: Councilman Mahon asked the Clerk to read resolution **R-04-33** hiring Special Council for a tax appeal after which he moved to approve said resolution. It was seconded by Councilwoman Johnson and unanimously approved by Council.

Councilman Mahon then moved to approve an additional bill submitted by the contractor who had repaired the pipe on Port-au-Peck Avenue and during the repair, found a large section of broken pipe that needed to be repaired the cost of \$737.50. It was seconded by Councilman Holden and unanimously approved by Council.

Councilman Mahon reported that new security lighting had been installed at the Community Center and the Public Works Department has completed installing new directional signs to the Maple Place School.

Councilman Mahon stated that Wes Whalen who works in the Construction Department had offered his services as a member to the Borough's Building Committee for the future improvements for Borough Hall and will be contacting him shortly in that regard.

Councilman Mahon reported that with the arrival of the new pick up truck for the Public Works Department, the Superintendent has requested that we retire the old car presently being used, which was a Police vehicle previously and offer that vehicle be included in the municipal auction at Tinton Falls in May and was not sure if that needed to be approved by resolution, to which the Clerk advised that when she hears back from all the Departments, one resolution will be adopted and advertised listing all the vehicles to be sold at that auction.

Councilman Mahon advised that Tom Crochet, Superintendent of Public Works has presented the Council with the new updated ratings of the Borough's roads and we will continue this discussion

at our next workshop meeting in an effort to make decisions as to which roads are going to be addressed this year and he thanked Tom for his work in this area.

COUNCILMAN HOLDEN: Councilman Holden stated that he has recently received his Committee assignments and will have a report at the next meeting.

COUNCILWOMAN CHAUMP: Councilwoman Chaump reported the First Aid Squad recently held a dinner celebrating their 55th year of service in the Borough and awards were given out to members for 10, 20, 30 and 40 years of service in the Squad. She also advised that the Squad has purchased two new defibrillators through their fund raising efforts and the police department will be given the older ones so that each police vehicle will have defibrillators in them.

Councilwoman Chaump thanked Tom Crochet for installing the directional signs for Maple Place School.

COUNCILWOMAN JOHNSON: Councilwoman Johnson reminded all residents that the annual Health Screening will be held on Saturday, April 4th at the First Aid Squad Building between 8 and 11 a.m. and they have 114 residents signed up for this program.

Councilwoman Johnson offered her condolences to the family of Ed Woodfield who passed away last week and stated that she had the opportunity of working with him and stated that he was a fine man and would be missed.

Councilwoman Johnson stated that now that the budget has been finally adopted and is now in place, she looked forward to hopefully working together for the residents of the Borough and working together as a Council and hopefully now the negativity will end and we can move forward in a very positive manner.

COUNCILMAN BRISCIONE: Councilman Briscione called for the introduction of an ordinance with regard to the acquisition of Block 88, Lot 24.06 for public purposes and asked the Clerk to read the proposed ordinance by title only, as follows:

Councilman Briscione then moved to approve this ordinance on first reading. It was seconded by Councilwoman Chaump.

The Clerk called the roll:

AYES: Councilpersons Kahle, Mahon, Holden, Chaump, Johnson and Briscione.
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.
ABSTAIN: None.

Councilman Briscione moved to hold the public hearing on this ordinance at the regular meeting scheduled to be held on April 15th and to advertise same in accordance with law. It was seconded by Councilwoman Chaump.

The Clerk called the roll:

AYES: Councilpersons Kahle, Mahon, Holden, Chaump, Johnson and Briscione.
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

Councilman Briscione thanked both the Mayor and the Engineer for getting the striping and turn arrows at the intersection of East Main and Port-au-Peck Aves. finally completed.

Councilman Briscione reported that the Planning Board has approved the 46 units age restricted development at that same intersection and it was unanimously approved by the Board and the NJ Sports & Exposition Authority will be before the Board again on April 28th to begin their application on the Village Center.

Councilman Briscione commented that in regard to the race track, he spoke with Mr. Jim DiBaush, Public Information Director for the Sports Authority yesterday and the enabling Legislation that will allow the Sports Authority to move forward in exploring the possibility of leasing Monmouth Park has stalled in the Senate and no additional Stakeholders meetings will be held until this legislation has passed. He continued that the casinos, the Horsemen's Association and the Sports Authority are continuing to negotiate an agreement that would provide for purse supplementation over the next few years, however, the agreement has yet to be finalized. He also advised that he and the Mayor will be meeting with Dennis Drazin, Legal Counsel for the Thoroughbred Horsemen to discuss current issues involving Monmouth Park.

MAYOR GATTA: Mayor Gatta read a proclamation proclaiming April as Alcohol and Drug Awareness in the Borough as requested by the Coastal Alliance, of which the Borough is a member.

Mayor Gatta commented that she attended the DARE Graduation last week and complimented Sgt. Tagerty and Det. Barcus for the excellent job they are doing with this program.

Mayor Gatta stated that following the CERT graduation a couple of weeks ago, the members met again and at that time we established Team Leaderships and Darryl Smith took on the responsibility of the CERT Team Leader and then there were two leaders appointed, Philip Barrecca and Rich Barnes who will be location leaders and our Team Administrator is Bobbi Baldanza and there will be continued training especially in the area of CPR/defibrillators and weather emergencies. She also advised that Captain Sutton is looking to begin another class in the Fall for anyone who wants to be a part of this team and urged any residents interested to contact him.

Mayor Gatta stated although it took much longer than we had hoped, the turn lane arrows and striping have finally been painted by the County who found it necessary to have a private contractor do the work which is what some of the hold up was, but she was also quite upset with the new completion date estimated for the bridge work and read a letter she had received from the County Engineer, since she had been in contact with him recently about word she had received that the bridge would not be completed until August. She stated in the letter the Engineer for the County advised that they would be putting on extra crews when required and working six day weeks in order to have the bridge completed in order to open the roadway by July 10th and she was quite upset since with the track opening in May, this is the second busiest season for our businesses which are experiencing a very difficult time, since the road was closed during the holiday season back in December and she is trying to get the County to do whatever is necessary in order to move that completion date back as much as possible and will continue to be in contact with the County in this regard.

Mayor Gatta stated that she has received some additional suggestions with regard to the fire grant application that had been denied and will forward this on to the Fire Department for their review

and hopefully it will be helpful in the next round of applications for grants which she believed Mr. Phil Payne was already working on for the Department.

Mayor Gatta reported she attended a meeting on Saturday regarding Save the Fort where Congressmen Pallone and Holt spoke to about 200 residents who attended and they advised they will be working to keep the Fort here and keeping the communities advised of what is happening.

Mayor Gatta stated that April is also National Volunteer Month and she wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of our volunteers in the Borough and let them know how much we are all aware of how important they are to the community and how much we appreciate the time they give to the Borough.

Mayor Gatta offered her sympathies to the family of Ed Woodfield stating that he was part of the Oceanport family and will be missed.

Mayor Gatta wished all our residents a joyous Easter and a blessed Passover.

Mayor Gatta recognized Gloria Gledhill who is here from New Jersey Water Company.

Ms. Gledhill stated she wanted to stop in and see if there is anything she can do to help serve the Borough but before that she wanted to point out that her office has moved to Lawrenceville where the corporate offices have moved in October and she is now closer to the Borough and had handed out packages to the Mayor and Council with her business card included with her new phone numbers for any problems or questions they may have in the future or anything else that she can help then with in the future.

Mayor Gatta stated she would appreciate Ms. Gledhill having someone look into the pop valves on Main Street near Pan Gardens since we are receiving complaints from the neighbors that when trucks drive over them, the valves are completely popping off and there were concerns about people getting injured, to which Ms. Gledhill stated she would have someone out very soon to check out this situation.

Councilman Mahon pointed out that we will be doing some road re-construction and will be requesting some additional hydrants and Councilwoman Chaump addressed the issue of the lack of water mains on several sections of streets in the Borough to which Ms. Gledhill stated she would be happy to contact Councilwoman Chaump and go out and speak with the residents involved and explain how the process could work for them.

Mayor Gatta thanked Ms. Gledhill for coming this evening and for offering her assistance in the issues raised.

Mayor Gatta then opened the meeting to the public for any comments or questions they might wish to make.

Mr. Peter Deller, Sr., 1262 Turf Drive advised that he has received one schedule from the Baseball Association and gave her a copy and stated it was quite extensive with many dates included.

Mr. Deller stated he is happy the budget is passed and everyone was allowed to have their say in this matter and hopefully the Council can now get back together and work as a team again. He also hoped that we would be looking down the road in the future to help save more tax dollars

and his comments tonight are on the so called Recreation budget and he does plan to have a meeting with the Recreation Committee but wanted to make several comments.

Mr. Dellera felt that the budget process was something in the realm of the Council and not the Recreation Committee, since it is only a recommending force and he had problems with the expenditure of funds for a new batting cage and why we still have to support programs like baseball which receives \$2,000 while other sports programs only get \$750 and down to wrestling which only receives \$250 and the associations should be able to support themselves. Mr. Dellera stated that the Community Center is in dire need of repairs with broken tables and chairs and this is not discussed, but more of a priority is to have the batting cage repaired which he did not feel was necessary and if it was felt it was, then the Baseball Association should raise the funds because this is not a taxpayers problem. He continued that we have a football team that has no where to go and no set place to practice and no one pays any attention.

Mr. Dellera then commented that he felt that \$40,000 to replace the fencing around the tennis courts because someone scratched their hand is a sufficient reason to spend this much money or when we speak of the money to install a sun screen for 40 year old men to stop the sun from blinding them doesn't make sense either and he is still waiting for an answer as to what that is going to cost the taxpayers. He stated he cannot understand why we cannot just turn the softball field in question around and put it in the southeast corner and then you won't have the sun problem.

Mr. Dellera stated that he planned to go over the Recreation Committee budget now that the budget was approved because he felt strongly that there were many items that could be reduced and the money could be used elsewhere and would be discussing his views with the Committee shortly as well as some of the salaries included in the Committee's budget.

Mr. Dellera asked Councilman Briscione if there were any updates with regard to the boat ramp to which Councilman Briscione advised he had just given more specs to the Borough Engineer with regard to portable ramps that could be considered for that location and thanked Alan Johnson for bringing them to his attention.

Councilman Briscione also commented that he wanted to say that perhaps the coaches and parents involved in the sports programs could do more fund raising but we are not giving them very large amounts and he has coached himself and gone into other towns and we feel like the poor stepchild when you see the uniforms the other teams have in other towns and the fields they have and maintain.

Ed Ryan, 24 Willow Court stated that now that the budget has been passed, he stated that he has been in the fire department for 48 years, first aid squad member for 45 years and we have never had the problems between the two emergency services before and he wanted everyone to work together and stated that the fire department always went for safety first and never bought anything they didn't need and it is the same with the first aid squad. He also stated that he recently spoke to someone about a town up north that had 450 first aid calls a year and their squad only made one out of six calls and had to call mutual aid and they put it out to bid and wanted the Council to realize that the first aid squad had 750 calls not counting anything extra that they do, and that town with 450 received the lowest bid was \$350,000 for 450 calls and he felt that this is something that everyone has to think about because the emergency services in this town only purchase what they need.

Alan Johnson, 30 Belmar Ave. stated he attended the Board of Education budget presentation for the residents and even though the Borough has passed its budget, its only the first round, since the Oceanport Board of Ed wants an increase of 9.6 cents and he was quite upset when comparing

the criticism that the Council got for the original 3.3 cent increase and there were only twelve people at the Board's budget meeting and half of the twelve were senior citizens.

Mr. Johnson stated to Councilwoman Kahle that at the last meeting she had stated that the first aid's budget should be \$29,000 and he asked that she explain that to which Councilwoman Kahle stated she did not say that and commented that Councilwoman Chaump said something about not being able to compare the first aid and the fire budgets because the fire is the Department and not the fire house, since there is Hook & Ladder who have their own budget; Port-au-Peck has their own budget and then you have the budget for the fire department. She continued that for First Aid you have the whole first aid department and in your budget you are like a fire house and not like a department because in the first aid budget is everything, the line items include their paper, their administrative, landscaping, etc., to which Mr. Johnson stated that these are the expenses involved with the first aid. Councilwoman Kahle stated you cannot compare these budgets to which Mr. Johnson asked why not and Councilwoman Kahle stated we are talking about two different things. Mr. Johnson asked if she had a separate line item budget for the Hook & Ladder, to which she stated she did not nor did she have a separate line item budget for Port-au-Peck and only had a line item budget for the fire department and they are not combined, to which Mr. Johnson asked how much money do you know you will need if you can't review these items. Councilwoman Kahle stated that is the point and that is what Councilman Briscione said that is the point because you cannot compare them.

Mr. Johnson stated he is not asking her to compare first aid and fire but pointed out that first aid gives the Council a complete list of expenditures in order to have the Council understand how much it costs and this is how much we receive from the Borough and how much we raise from fund raising and contributions in order to serve this town, to which Councilwoman Kahle stated so does fire. Mr. Johnson then stated that Councilwoman Kahle then said at that time that the first aid budget should be \$29,000 to which she said she did not say that but commented that if you added up your first aid supplies like the oxygen bottles, bandages, etc. should be \$29,000 and stated that the defibrillators were not on the list, which she has a copy of and Mr. Johnson stated that you cannot find a total for the fire department because there are two houses and that makes no sense to him.

Councilwoman Kahle again stated that we are not looking at the two fire houses and we are only looking at the fire department and what is needed to run the fire department and Mr. Johnson stated that is what they do in the first aid by giving the Council a full line item of what we need to run the first aid squad and pointed out that the Borough fully funds the fire department but you only fund 35% of the first aid squad. Councilman Kahle responded that we do not fully fund the fire department and a lengthy discussion ensued with regard to the budgets of the fire and the budgets submitted by the first aid squads with Mayor Gatta asking that both Mr. Johnson and Councilwoman Kahle sit down together and try and address the concerns raised to which Councilwoman Kahle stated that she felt this was all a moot point since the new Public Safety Committee would be reviewing all the budgets anyway to see if we can share supplies and purchasing.

Councilwoman Kahle stated that she just felt that all the budgets were creeping up year after year and stated we cannot have budgets doubling in one year and we have to look at the bottom line and look at the taxpayer's dollars.

Councilman Briscione stated he just wanted to clarify what he said and commented that he said you cannot compare the budgets based on the current reporting format.

Councilwoman Chaump stated that she felt that Councilwoman Kahle misunderstood her comments because she was not comparing First Aid to the fire department, but all she had said that

in order to be accountable to the taxpayers she need to make an informed decision by having the proper documents on what we were purchasing and she needed to be accountable to that as she was accountable to first aid and she was not comparing them, but merely asking for additional information.

Jane Ciani, Captain of the Oceanport First Aid wanted to say to Councilwoman Kahle, who is the second Council Liaison to the Squad, on behalf of the Squad, they are very disappointed because she is not behind us 100% and reminded Councilwoman Kahle that she has not been to one of their meetings yet and she would not want her to sit in on one of her meetings if Councilwoman Chaump is unable to attend. She continued that the Squad's budget doesn't include food which they pay for through their own fund drives and this has nothing to do with the fire department budget. Captain Ciani stated every supply used on every first aid call is garbage and has to be replaced and nothing can be re-used and she would also like to know what the fire department purchases with the proceeds from their fund drives and she has not seen it yet and this is nothing against the fire department, but the Squad tells the Council exactly what they do with each and every penny that they raise and that the Borough gives us.

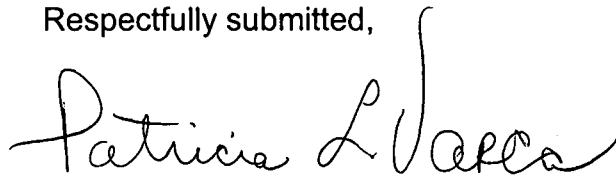
As no one else from the public wished to be heard, Mayor Gatta closed the public portion of the meeting.

Councilman Mahon moved to approve the vouchers on the Bill List dated April 1, 2004. It was seconded by Councilwoman Johnson and approved by Council. TOTAL CAPITAL TRUST \$9,481.87. TOTAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRUST \$1,000.00. 2003 VOUCHERS PAID \$58,851.08. 2003 VOUCHERS PAID THIS MEETING \$4,214.83. TOTAL 2003 VOUCHERS \$63,065.91. 2004 VOUCHERS PAID \$4,098,618.14. 2004 VOUCHERS PAID THIS MEETING \$920,486.81. TOTAL 2004 VOUCHERS \$5,019,104.95. (SEE BILL LIST)

Mayor Gatta stated it is necessary for the Council to go into executive session when we return to our regular work shop meeting and asked the Clerk to read resolution **R-04-34** regarding the executive session relative to a matter of personnel, after which Councilman Mahon moved to approve same. It was seconded by Councilwoman Chaump and unanimously approved by Council.

At 9:18 p.m. Councilwoman Chaump moved to adjourn this meeting until the next regular meeting scheduled to be held on April 15, 2004 at 8:00 P.M. It was seconded by Councilman Briscione and approved by Council.

Respectfully submitted,



PATRICIA L. VARCA
BOROUGH CLERK