REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Oceanport, New Jersey
July 19, 2001

REGULAR MEETING: The Regular Meeting of the Oceanport Mayor and Council was called to order on July 19, 2001 at 8:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilpersons Apruzzi, Gatta, Lyons, Wolfe, McGann Silkworth and Mayor Gemma.

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Deputy Borough Clerk, Kimberly Jungfer and Borough Engineer, Thomas K. Rospos

INVOCATION: Borough Chaplain Berry gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Gemma led the audience and members of the Council in the flag salute.

As copies of the minutes from the regular meeting held on June 21, 2001 had been made available to the members of the Governing Body, Councilwoman Silkworth moved to waive the reading of same and approve the minutes as presented by the Borough Clerk. It was seconded by Councilman Wolfe and unanimously approved by Council.

Mayor Gemma announced that there were once again representatives from Monmouth County to describe the changes to the intersection improvements at Monmouth Boulevard and Myrtle Avenue.

Kevin Nugent introduced himself and stated he was the project manager for this project. He continued that the signal being installed was for traffic safety and since the last meeting he had tried to address the concerns the Oceanport Mayor, Council and residents expressed at the last meeting the County attended. He explained that the right hand turn lane would now have an arrow that would be green and yellow and ending with a red ball creating a stop condition and longer gaps onto Myrtle Avenue helping those exiting from Gooseneck Point Road. Mr. Nugent stated that the draw back would be a longer queue on Monmouth Boulevard to the entrance at Blue Point Cove.

Mr. Nugent also addressed the drainage concerns brought up at the previous meeting and stated they met with the property owners along the affected portion of Monmouth Boulevard. Mr. Nugent stated that the geometry of the plan could not really be modified and he explained in detail why this was the case.

Rob Villac, traffic engineer with Monmouth County was introduced and explained the actual operation of the signal and the physical make up of the signal itself. He described that it would function much differently than under the previous yield condition because people are less likely to disregard a traffic signal then a yield or stop sign. This is anticipated to create more gaps then the previous signage that was proposed.

Mr. Villac stated that an advisory speed sign was place on the bridge coming out of Little Silver warning people coming over the bridge that there is a sight restriction problem and to slow down.

Mr. Villac explained the additional queuing that will result on Monmouth Boulevard will be due to the design change of the traffic signal especially during peak traffic hours.

Councilman McGann asked if the right on red from Monmouth Boulevard could still be made and Mr. Villac said yes but experience has shown that with the red signal less people actually make that right on red then would under normal conditions.

Councilman McGann referred to the traffic signal at Seven Bridges and Rumson Roads where there is a sign that says "No Right Turn on Red Arrow" and asked why that could not be done at the intersection in question.

Mr. Villac explained that the DOT Manual on Traffic Control lists a number of criteria, which must be met to install the no turn on red signal, and explained that the intersection at Monmouth Boulevard and Myrtle Avenue does not meet any of those criteria.

Councilwoman Gatta asked what the criteria was for installation of a no turn on right and Mr. Villac stated the most common reason is sight restriction.

Mayor Gemma asked if sight conditions or any of the other criteria warranted it in the future, at some point would the County be willing to revisit the intersection and put in a no turn on red signal and Mr. Villac responded that if there were any type of problems in the future the County would come out and look at it, but to install a no turn on red would probably not be possible.

Councilman McGann asked about the video cameras on the plans to which Mr. Villac explained they are traffic sensors to change signals and they have found they work much better and need less repair than the in pavement sensors.

Mr. Rospos asked about the left side of Myrtle where property would be taken, and if it was in the County right-of-way and was told yes.

Mr. Rospos asked about the Adrian Intersection, which was discussed at the last meeting to which Mr. Nugent stated that there were no plans for any changes to the intersection but would be adding some additional striping. He also mention he suggested that the property owner who was going to build on the site closest to Myrtle front any new construction on Driveway.

Councilwoman Silkworth asked for the start and completion dates of the project.

Mr. Nugent stated that at the last Freeholders Meeting authorization was given to go to bid and they would hope to advertise Friday, July 20, 2001. He further explained he would hope to award the contract the end of August 2001 with work to start as soon thereafter as possible and hopefully the project would be done by the end of the year.

Chief Bebout asked about the right turn signal, which was explained, to him.

Chief Bebout asked that if there were problems down the road would the County be willing to come back and review the situation and was told yes by Mr. Nugent.

PUBLIC:

Robert Kelly, Gooseneck Point Road, asked about the criteria for installing a no turn on red sign to which Mr. Villac stated he did not have the manual with him but there are four or five conditions one of which has to be met, the most common being sight restrictions.

Mr. Kelly stated that he was of the understanding after speaking with a representative from Najarian that since the design of the intersection in not a true 90-degree turn or true right on red it would then be a 3-point traffic offense if cars proceeded thru the red light. He was also under the impression that there would be video camera surveillance.

The County representatives were not aware of the 3-point traffic offense but they explained the purpose of the video cameras as to control the changing of the signals not for surveillance.

Mr. Kelly felt that the design with a right on red would not make the situation any better and felt that the situation was back to square one with regard to the residents on Gooseneck Point Road.

Councilman McGann stated he too had received conflicting information with regard to the right hand turn situation and he felt it needed to be clarified especially the DOT Manual with regard to the mentioned criteria.

Mr. Nugent stated he would be willing to supply the Borough Engineer and the Mayor and Council with those sections of the DOT Traffic Manual stating the criteria set for a no right on red turn. He further explained that it was the opinion of those working on the project that the signal now proposed for the right lane would cause longer gaps in traffic flow thereby assisting those trying to enter Myrtle Avenue from Gooseneck Point Road.

Councilwoman Silkworth asked that in this case, as in most cases aren't there exceptions or waivers from the mentioned criteria that would allow the no turn on red to be installed. She also asked about clarification on the true 90-degree right turn and the one proposed at the intersection in relation to the right on red.

Mayor Gemma added that the right turn question was an important clarification for the police, who of course issue traffic violations.

Mr. Villac stated he believed that if it is a red arrow then a right on red is not permitted, but at this intersection it would be a red ball, not the arrow.

Mayor Gemma asked that because of the criteria a red arrow could not be placed at the intersection, which Mr. Nugent said that was the case, and it would cause a significant backup on Monmouth Boulevard.

Mayor Gemma asked that if, as Mr. Kelly as inquired, a review at a later date indicates it would be more beneficial to have a red arrow would one be installed and Mr. Nugent answered that the matter could be reviewed at a date after installation.

Mr. Frank Montalvo, 230 Monmouth Boulevard, stated that he did want the light but he lived on the corner where the most property was being taken and he was very concerned about increased flooding to his property since he would now be the lowest point in the area. He was deathly afraid of getting water in his house.

Councilman Lyons asked if the concern was based on the storm of 92, just normal rainfall or both and was told both by Mr. Montalvo.

Councilman McGann asked the County Representatives if there would be lawn drains on Mr. Montalvo's property and Mr. Nugent said there would be because the grade of the road will be higher than Mr. Montalvo's property. He further stated that with the more common rains there would be less occurrence of flooding. A larger storm, like that in 1992, would affect most everyone in the town.

There was discussion between the County representatives and Mr. Montalvo regarding where exactly the road did and did not flood and Mr. Montalvo's complaint is that he is still lower than another area.

Councilwoman Gatta asked why wasn't the area across the street by Borough Hall used to which Mr. Nugent explained that property could not be taken because of the tapering of the traffic going northbound on Myrtle Avenue.

Mr. Montalvo stated that there was almost 6 feet being taken from the corner by his home which he did not feel was necessary and would effect the value of his property and Mr. Nugent explained to him the necessity of taking that much property because of the design of the intersection.

Mayor Gemma addressed Mr. Montalvo's drainage concerns asking that the lawn drain be explained as to the location of the drain, the system it would be draining to and the size of the pipe being used were discussed.

Mr. Rospos explained how this new system would work stating it was a positive effect and went as far as to guarantee Mr. Montalvo he would have less flooding then he has presently.

Donna Montalvo, Monmouth Boulevard, just wanted to state that maybe raising the road will help some of the flooding, but she is concerned that the foundation of her home will be just two to three inches higher than the road and the flooding potential really scares her.

Councilman McGann stated that the road being higher than homes is common in many areas around Oceanport.

Al DeSantis, Blue Point Cove, expressed concern about the traffic back up on Monmouth Boulevard and also had sight concerns coming west on Monmouth Boulevard around the curve if there were a traffic back up and wondered if the speed limit could be reduced there.

Mr. Villac explained that with the signal the traffic should move along a lot faster with less queuing along Monmouth Boulevard.

Mr. DeSantis didn't necessarily agree with this scenario and further discussion ensued regarding this matter.

Mr. Kelly, Gooseneck Point Road, stated that with the poor sight conditions trying to turn out of Gooseneck Point Road is treacherous and now that there will not be a no turn on red, he felt the 57 home owners on Gooseneck Point are stuck and getting underrepresented by the engineering department in the County. He said he would organize the people on his street and make an issue of this situation. He felt that taking the no right on red turn out of the plan was wrong. He further stated the County's only concern is to move people through Oceanport as quickly as possible.

Mayor Gemma asked Mr. Kelly if he thought the installation of the light as proposed, without the right on red, will make it better or worse then the current condition.

Mr. Kelly stated in his opinion the present plan would make it worse for the residents of Gooseneck Point Road because a shoot has now been built to make it easier for the cars to blow through.

Councilwoman Silkworth asked Mr. Kelly if he would blow through a red light with the possibility of traffic coming the other way or rather pause and stop and look.

Mr. Kelly said this is what is done now, nobody stops for that stop sign, and it is a joke. He continued that all that is needed is a no turn on red, realizing there would be a queuing problem on Monmouth Boulevard, but safety should take priority.

After a lengthy discussion between all the parties it was decided that the County would revisit the operation of the traffic signal within 6 months of the beginning of operation and make a report of their findings at a Council meeting and interested parties would be notified of such meeting.

Mr. Kelly stated that though the signal is a benefit to Oceanport as a whole with regard to traffic and safety, it will also create a nightmare for those living on Gooseneck Point Road and he just wanted that to be on the record.

Councilwoman Silkworth asked if the County has the authority to reduce the speed over the bridge approaching the intersection in question and was told it could be done with the speed study and if study would warrant such a reduction.

Councilman McGann asked if the intersection would be closed at some point during construction and was told that is not anticipated.

Mayor Gemma asked that the Borough Engineer and Police Department be present at the preconstruction meeting to discuss the timing and closing of lanes, to which the County agreed.

Mayor Gemma thanked all the representatives from the County for coming to the meeting and the effort on their behalf to make this project work.

CLERK'S REPORTS:

1.The Deputy Clerk announced that she had received the police reports for the months of May and June, which were distributed and would be posted.

2. The Deputy Clerk reported that she had received an application for a raffle license from the New Hope Foundation to be held 8/25/01 for a trip to Hawaii. She stated that all paper work was in order and asked for a motion to approve same. Councilwoman Silkworth moved that the raffle license be approved which was seconded by Councilman Lyons and unanimously approved by Council.

COMMITEES:

COUNCILMAN APRUZZI: Councilman Apruzzi commented on the June Police Report stating that the dispatchers received 1,163 calls and the officers answered 831 calls, so they are very busy.

Councilman Apruzzi reported that the fireworks and Summer's End Festival is scheduled for the Sunday after Labor Day. Funds are being sought for the fireworks with the Recreation Committee working on ways to get additional funding, including an envelope that will be mailed with the Bulletin and a phone bank was started which has had a good response.

Councilman Apruzzi announced that the renovation of the fields at Blackberry Bay would begin in the fall.

Councilman Apruzzi offered his condolences to Gregg and Steve Widmaier and their family on the passing of their father, Art.

COUNCILWOMAN GATTA: Councilwoman Gatta extended her sympathies to the Widmaier family.

Councilwoman reported that the there was a very successful blood bank at the First Aid Squad in memory of Ward Coles and she thanked all those involved.

Councilwoman Gatta explained that a letter was received from a patrolman in Rumson who wrote about an auto accident with a very serious injury. It went on to say that before the First Aid could arrive a member of the Oceanport First Aid Squad stopped and assisted the injured party whereby preventing the injury from worsening. Councilwoman Gatta thanked this first aider, Kenny Fujimoto, and commended him for his actions.

Councilwoman Gatta announced that the First Aid was beginning their fund drive with letters going out to all residents and she couldn't impress upon everyone enough to be as generous as possible.

COUNCILMAN LYONS: Councilman Lyons commented that the lightening strike from earlier in the week silenced the Borough alarm system. He continued that this is a significant problem for emergency services personnel and the Borough should be looking to restore or replace the system. This siren serves the residents of the Borough for other matters besides emergencies and needs the highest attention.

COUNCILMAN WOLFE: Councilman Wolfe asked the Deputy Clerk to read Resolution **R-01-58,** authorizing veteran's tax deductions after which he moved to approve same. Councilman Apruzzi seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Council.

Councilman Wolfe asked the Deputy Clerk to read Resolution **R-01-59** extending the grace period for the third quarter taxes after which he moved to approve same. Councilwoman Gatta seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by Council.

Councilman Wolfe paid his respects to the Widmaier family saying Art was a very dedicated volunteer and will be missed.

COUNCILMAN MCGANN: Councilman McGann also gave his condolences to the Widmaier family.

Councilman McGann commented that the Borough has completed the year 2000 road program with some carry over to 2001 paving six streets and he felt it was prudent for the Borough to continue in this venue.

COUNCILWOMAN SILKWORTH: Councilwoman Silkworth also sent condolences to the Widmaier family.

Councilwoman Silkworth reported that roof specifications are about to be drawn up, however with the lightening strike, this may be held up until the costs from damages incurred by the lightening strike are determined.

MAYOR GEMMA: Mayor Gemma sent his condolences to the Widmaier family.

Mayor Gemma stated that in addition to the loss of the siren from the lightening strike the Police Department also lost a few other items.

Mayor Gemma reported that he had a meeting that morning with New Jersey Professional Management regarding the draft report on the possibility of pooling Municipal Court services with Monmouth Beach with a full report due in the near future.

Mayor Gemma announced that on August 1st at 12:30 p.m. at the Eatontown Municipal Building there will be meeting of what is known as the Neighborhood Communities with the County and sponsored by New Jersey Professional Management. The State is divided into regions and the Borough is in the "Neighborhood" that is very similar to what comprises the member towns of the Two River Council of Mayors. The purpose is to look at issues on a more professional level for shared services, pooled services, and joint contracting and he invited the Council to attend this meeting.

Mayor Gemma then opened the meeting to the public for any comments or questions they might wish to make, but seeing none, closed the public portion of the meeting.

Councilman Wolfe moved to approve the vouchers on the Bill List dated July 19, 2001. It was seconded by Councilman Apruzzi and approved by Council with Councilwoman Silkworth abstaining on the payment to Denise Silkworth. TOTAL 2001 VOUCHERS PAID THIS MEETING $1,886,978.76. TOTAL 2001 VOUCHERS $1,975,199.50. TOTAL RECREATION TRUST $482.28. TOTAL DOG REGISTRY $430.60 TOTAL TRUST $1,444.56. TOTAL CAPITAL $20,000. (SEE BILL LIST)

At 9.35 p.m. Councilwoman Gatta moved to adjourn this meeting until the next regular meeting scheduled to be held on August 16, 2001 at 8:00 P.M. It was seconded by Councilman Apruzzi and unanimously approved by Council.

Respectfully submitted,

KIMBERY A JUNGFER
DEPUTY BOROUGH CLERK