

Meeting audio can be found at lebanontownship.net.

**Lebanon Township Committee
February 17, 2021**

Minutes of Regular Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Mike Schmidt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and stated that in compliance with the “Open Public Meeting Act” this is a Regular Meeting of the Township Committee as published in the Hunterdon Review, the agenda has been posted at the Municipal Building and distributed to the Hunterdon Review, Courier News, the Express Times, the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Star Ledger.

FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Schmidt asked everyone to please stand for the Flag Salute and for a moment of silence in honor of the First Responders, Health Care Heroes and Servicemen and Women.

ROLL CALL

Present - Mike Schmidt Thomas McKee Marc Laul
 Beverly Koehler Abe Abuchowski

Absent-

Also Present - Attorney Matt Lyons Administrator James Barberio
 Clerk Karen Sandorse (via telecom)

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the January 6, 2021 Reorganization Meeting - Tabled

Minutes of the Regular and Executive Session Meetings of February 3, 2021

Motion by Mr. Laul, seconded by Mr. McKee and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Township Committee approved minutes of the Regular and Executive Session Meetings of February 3, 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – for agenda items only.

Motion by Mr. Abuchowski, seconded by Mr. McKee and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Township Committee opened the public comment portion of the meeting.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion by Mr. Laul, seconded by Mr. Abuchowski and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Township Committee closed the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

No Old Business

ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Mr. Barberio has spoken to the Risk Management Consultant and he will attempt to schedule Ethics training sometime mid-March to early April.

Mr. Barberio has received calls regarding the Municipal Building sign. He has received three quotes to replace the sign. Prices range from \$8,500 and \$13,200. Mr. Barberio will send the specifications he used to obtain the quotes to the Committee for their review.

Mr. Barberio said that he applied for Statewide Insurance Fund Risk Control Grant in December for the ionizers that were installed. The grant was approved for \$2,019 which is half the cost of the ionizers.

Mr. Barberio informed the Committee that Intrep Solutions was in the Municipal Offices last week to conduct an assessment of the computers. Mr. Barberio expects to receive a report by next week.

Mr. Barberio has been working with the OEM Coordinator on the Hazardous Mitigation Plan as required by the County.

NEW BUSINESS

Retroactive Pay – Fire Official

Mayor Schmidt stated that the Fire Official has not had a change in his wage rate since 2014. He had retired and rejoined the Township in 2017. Mayor Schmidt suggested increasing the Fire Official's wage rate at the same rate provided for in the CWA Contract. In compounding the rate, his current hourly rate would go from \$25.19 - \$28.57. Mayor Schmidt also asked the Committee to consider providing retroactive pay for the Fire Official, from his date of his rehire, in 2017.

Motion by Mr. McKee, seconded by Ms. Koehler and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Township Committee increased the Fire Official's rate of pay to \$28.57 and provided retro active pay from date of rehire.

Appointment of Fire Inspector

Mayor Schmidt said that the Fire Official is occasionally out of town and real estate transaction inspections may be time sensitive. The Fire Official has suggested hiring a Fire Inspector to conduct CCO inspections in his absence. The Inspector will report to the Fire Official. The position has been posted as required for 10 days. One application was received from David Sulpy who is also the Township's Fire Chief. The Fire Official sent an email with a strong endorsement for the appointment of David Sulpy to the position. The Committee will also need to decide if the hourly rate for the Fire Inspector will be the same as the Fire Official at \$28.57 per hour. Discussion held.

Motion by Mr. Laul, seconded by Mr. Abuchowski and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Township Committee appointed David Sulpy as Fire Inspector at a rate of \$28.57 per hour.

Weather forecast

Mayor Schmidt stated that snow is anticipated tomorrow. The morning commute may be passable; however, the weather is expected to deteriorate through the day. Mayor Schmidt asked if the Municipal buildings should be closed tomorrow.

Motion by Mr. Abuchowski, seconded by Mr. Laul and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Township Committee closed the Municipal buildings tomorrow due to the impending snow storm.

1st and 2nd Amendment Rights

Mayor Schmidt stated that Mr. Abuchowski asked if the Committee would consider taking a position on the 2nd Amendment of the US Constitution, which is outside the Committee's jurisdiction.

Mayor Schmidt provided his thoughts on the request as he feels that it would break the Committee's practices for the past five years. He feels that the subject is political in nature and does not reflect the sentiments of all residents.

Mr. Abuchowski said that he understands the Mayor's position but the world has changed and he feels that people are concerned about their safety. Mr. Abuchowski provided comments on why he brought this to the Committee for consideration. Mr. Abuchowski would like for the Committee to reaffirm their support for the 1st and 2nd Amendments.

The Committee held an extensive conversation on the topic.

Discussion will be held at the March 3, 2021 meeting on which matters will be considered by the Committee in the future.

PRESENTATION OF VOUCHERS

Committee Members provided a description of vouchers exceeding \$1000.00.

Motion by Mr. Abuchowski, seconded by Mr. Laul and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Township Committee approved the February 17, 2021 bill list in the amount of \$2,265,679.76.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Police Report
- b. Fire Department

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Motion by Ms. Koehler, seconded by Mr. McKee and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Township Committee opened the Public Comment portion of the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

Mr. Brian Wunder commented on the Mr. Abuchowski's request relative to the Constitution and stated his support for the Committee to take action.

Mr. Frank McCloskey stated his support also for Mr. Abuchowski's request and his representations of the 2nd amendment.

Motion by Mr. Abuchowski, seconded by Mr. Laul and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Township Committee closed the public comment portion of the meeting at 8:32 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to come before the Committee a motion was made by Mr. McKee seconded by Mr. Laul and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen J. Sandorse, RMC/CMC
Municipal Clerk

Approved: March 3, 2021

Mike Schmidt, Mayor