

**MINUTES FOR THE NOVEMBER 19, 2012 WORKSHOP MEETING  
HELD AT 7:30 PM  
51 WEST MAIN STREET  
FREEHOLD, NJ 07728**

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**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Mayor J. Nolan Higgins, Councilman Michael DiBenedetto, Councilman Kevin Kane, Councilman John Newman, Councilman George Schnurr, Councilwoman Sharon Shutzer and Councilman Jaye Sims.

**Absent:** None

Also present were Borough Attorney Kerry Higgins, Borough Administrator Joseph B. Bellina, Lt. Mark Wodell and Borough Clerk Traci L. DiBenedetto

**2. ROUTINE TRANSACTIONS-SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA (See Attachment I).**

See the permanent minute book for the minutes and the resolution book for the attachments.

**3. PRESENTATION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE AWARDS.**

Historic Preservation Committee members, Dave Loring and Jeff Friedman presented the awards. Mr. Loring presented the awards as follows:

1. Gill Burgess, 45 Hudson Street, for Preservation
2. Manning, Caliendo and Thompson, 8 Broad Street, for Restoration

Mr. Loring stated they have a new award this year called the Carl N. Steinberg Award.

Mr. Friedman stated this award is given to a property owner who has had a sustained dedication toward the preservation of historic properties in the Downtown Freehold Borough Historic District. Mr. Friedman stated that it was honor to be able to give this to Carl. He has been a real mentor to Mr. Friedman and he is proud of all of the work that Carl has done.

Mr. Steinberg stated the following:

“Mayor Higgins and Council, Borough Attorney Higgins, Borough Administrator Joe Bellina, Chairman Dave Loring, Members of the HPC and Borough Clerk: I would like to thank first of all my parents, Jack and Eleanor who inspired me to always give back to the community. I would like to thank my wife for her patience and commitment and my brothers, Glen, Harris and my sister Joyce. I would like to thank my uncle who was a former secretary of the Zoning Board, the business people of Freehold and my friends both here and no longer with us. It is an honor and pleasure to keep the history and charm alive in Freehold Borough. I have had the pleasure of restoring movies, signs, preserving buildings, renovating a building, retail structures, erecting fire monuments, preserving statues, serving on council, the fire department and various committees in town. We have been on the same side at times and opposites at others; however, I have always had the Borough’s best interest as my hometown. I really thank the committee for this honor and I appreciate everything you have done and it is an honor to do this with historic preservation in mind. I would also like to spruce up Borough Hall. On behalf of myself and my family, I would like to donate these historic maps to the Borough and this CD, Romance of Freehold and 1947 My Hometown. Thank you very much for the honor.”

Mayor Higgins congratulated Gil Burgess, Mr. Manning and Carl Steinberg. He stated there isn’t anyone more committed to Freehold than Carl and he deserved everything that was said tonight.

**4. HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE – AWARD OF GRANT.**

Mayor Higgins stated Item No. 4 will be carried.

**5. SHADE TREE ASSESSMENT UPDATE.**

Mayor Higgins stated he will address this under council comments.

**6. PRESERVATION OF SLATE SIDEWALKS.**

Councilman DiBenedetto stated this is an effort to preserve our slate sidewalks. When people replace the slate sidewalks, many are disappearing either to the people removing them or to the homeowner. There are people who enjoy the slate sidewalks that are in need of replacement. This is an effort to build some inventory. Councilman DiBenedetto would like to see the HPC get involved. He stated when someone fills out an application to replace their sidewalk, it should be noted that the slate sidewalk be deemed Freehold Borough property. Councilman DiBenedetto stated the first thing we need to do is gather inventory.

Councilman Newman agreed with trying to preserve the slate sidewalk. One of the reasons people move to Freehold Borough is the historic charm and character of the town. The Borough has mentioned in the past that they want to preserve this but we are not always there to stop people from taking it. Councilman Newman stated he is 100% behind this.

## **7. CONSTRUCTION WORK ON WEEKENDS.**

Councilman Sims stated we are looking to modify our current ordinance for construction work on weekends which is 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. We are looking to change that time on weekends to 9:00 AM.

Councilman DiBenedetto asked if this would apply to residential and business districts.

Kerry Higgins stated the council would decide that.

Councilman DiBenedetto stated it should be for everybody but for exterior work only.

Mayor Higgins asked Kerry Higgins to make the changes to the ordinance.

## **8. PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS.**

Gil Burgess, 45 Hudson Street thanked everyone for the award. He bought the home when he was 29 years old because he always wanted an older home. We really need to keep preserving what we have here in Freehold Borough.

Jeff Friedman, 3 Broad Street, commented on the police presence during Super Storm Sandy. It really made a secure feeling that he hasn't felt as much during past storms. He also thanked the road department for working so hard since this storm hit. Mr. Friedman asked if the construction ordinance would apply to blowing leaves. He also asked how that would be enforced and how all property owners would be notified. Mr. Friedman stated this past Saturday night St. Peters Church hosted Bridget Kibbey, a solo harpist. There was a wonderful turn out and it was a spectacular evening.

Mayor Higgins stated this concert series is full of New York quality performances here in Freehold Borough. Mayor Higgins noted Mr. Friedman is heavily involved with this and wanted to recognize him for this.

Mr. Friedman announced that the HPC will host the Holiday House Tour on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Tickets can be purchased in the Borough Clerk's office.

Mayor Higgins stated Mr. Friedman's concerns will be taken under advisement.

Charlie Butkus, 34 Douglas Road stated he walks everyday and he gets to the high school and cars are coming into town going 60 mph and it is even worse on weekends.

Lt. Wodell asked to meet with Mr. Butkus after the meeting.

Tom Baldwin, Vought Avenue, thanked mayor and council for their response after the storm. A couple days after the storm, the police came to his house to check on him because a tree had fallen on his home. He also received a visit from Mr. Bellina and a tree company who stated they would be removing the tree and within a couple of hours everything was removed. Later that afternoon, Mayor Higgins, Reggie Sims and a couple of firemen showed up. Mr. Baldwin thanked everyone involved.

Senala Radonicic, 90 Jackson Street, stated she is a newer resident to Freehold Borough and any problems or concerns she has had, the police are always there. A couple of concerns she brought up was the speeding on Jackson Street and a dangerous tree in front of 92 Jackson Street. Ms. Radonicic stated she thinks mayor and council are wonderful and she looks forward to living here for many years to come.

Tanya Schultz, 100 East Main Street, stated the NJ Transit bus stop is right in front of her home in a residential area. She stated that she picks up garbage in front of her home everyday. Ms. Schultz asked if this stop could be moved down a block toward Freehold Township where the shoulder is wide enough for the bus to actually pull over.

Councilman Schnurr stated we could reach out to NJ Transit. He did agree with Ms. Schultz. Most of the people using this location come from Briarwood.

Ms. Higgins stated we have written NJ Transit in the past requesting a change in location for a bus stop.

Barbara Oliver, Center Street commented on the re-election of President Obama.

Councilman Sims offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman DiBenedetto:

#### RESOLUTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC PORTION.

On roll call, Council Members DiBenedetto, Kane, Newman, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption, opposed none, absent none, abstain none. Mayor Higgins declared this item adopted.

Mayor Higgins read the following speech:

“Since our last meeting, our municipality along with our neighbors along the Jersey Shore, New York and Connecticut were impacted by Super Storm Sandy and a November Nor’easter. Freehold has had its share of weather events this year from our July storm, which effected parts of town to the super cell to these most recent storms. Some of our residents have made it through the loss of their homes, others through long days without power and heat. Our tree inventory which brings beauty, a magnificent street scape drawing residents to our Borough and ecological benefits to our community is at the same time a source of fear and danger to our residents. Our shade tree commission has evaluated the trees which need to be removed or trimmed and a contract

to perform that work is out to bid. As soon as the bids are awarded next month and the companies are available to do the work, tree removal and trimming will begin. However, it is neither practical nor feasible to remove every tree which residents believe should be cut down. Several of our streets will have a new appearance with the removal of these trees.

Our office of emergency management group began working for Sandy's arrival a week before the event. We held two planning meetings during the week prior, attended a meeting at JCP&L's operation center in Lincroft and met throughout the duration of the storm and its clean up. Our administrator, council members, police and fire departments, street and water departments, water plant, fire bureau, health department, office of emergency management and Freehold First Aid were prepared and did an outstanding job and I extend our thanks for their dedication and service to our community. Our residents and businesses for the most part were restored to power five days after the storm. There were residents and businesses without power for several days longer during a period of very cold evenings. As prepared as municipal government can be for a storm by providing for the public good we can not reconnect power service and must wait for the utilities to do their job. Crews from Virginia and Michigan, among others assisted JCP&L with restoration to our Borough and we are most appreciative of the work done by these crews.

I want to recognize Freehold Township Mayor Ammiano. Freehold Borough and Freehold Township are fortunate to have an excellent working relationship which helps both municipalities during these events. Also, I wish to recognize Assemblywoman Cassagrande who was in communication with me during the storm to help with needed resources such as diesel fuel for our generators and trucks which was in very short supply. After our town was restored and back to a somewhat normal way of life, some of our fire, police and EMS personnel responded to Sea Bright and Highlands to assist with their public safety efforts. Their benevolence and professionalism were acknowledged by those whom they helped. As our national day of Thanksgiving approaches, we should be mindful by the many ways we are fortunate. We have gone through these events without injury or worse. Our residents have lost homes and many have experienced sleepless nights concerned about their family and home but we have endured. The electricity eventually was restored, our homes can be replaced or repaired but we can never replace our loved ones, our neighbors, our friends or our community. During these events we have seen the best of Freehold. Neighbors helping neighbors, strangers helping strangers. Churches, fraternal groups, service organizations reaching out to lend a hand and our Borough professionals and volunteers again committing themselves to our recovery. Your governing body is committed to picking up after these storms and addressing our tree stock. We need your help in moving brush and limbs to the street so our street department does not need to make multiple trips to each street. We will work until the job is done, however, we must ask for your patience and understanding as this project moves forward. This is not a project that can be completed in a short period of time. The financial impact of these storms will again force this governing body to make tough choices to balance the need for responsiveness in public safety in an error of diminished resources.

This Thanksgiving be grateful for your family, friends, our police, fire, EMS, public works personnel, our military and all of those who serve us in so many ways. Our

thoughts are with those not far from here who are completely devastated without a home, their livelihoods, belongings, their mementos which frame life's memories and in many cases now without their town. On behalf of us all, I wish each and all of our residents a happy, healthy and peaceful Thanksgiving.”

Councilman Sims thanked Mayor Higgins for his leadership during Super Storm Sandy. Councilman Sims stated no lives were perished, as horrific as this storm was. Councilman Sims mentioned the devastation and damage he witnessed while driving down Ocean Avenue in Sea Bright. Upon Thanksgiving, Councilman Sims asked everyone to think of those who are less fortunate this year and keep everyone in your thoughts and prayers. Councilman Sims stated the youth government was able to take a tour of the State House with himself and Mayor Higgins. The youth government was able to meet Senator Beck at the end of the tour and she acknowledged the group during the meeting to the rest of the Senate committee. Councilman Sims thanked Ron Griffiths for the use of the senior bus for the trip. Councilman Sims stated a couple of months ago, Councilman Schnurr and himself brought up the best practices survey and they do have some recommendations for the upcoming best practices committee meeting. A few of the recommendations included adopting an ordinance regarding longevity and have a policy approved by resolution and to have elected officials attend some type of annual training throughout the course of the year. Councilman Sims congratulated Carl Steinberg and thanked Mr. Baldwin for his kind words. Councilman Sims wished everyone a happy holiday season.

Councilman Newman recognized the police department, fire department, first aid, public works and Mayor Higgins for their response to the storm. Councilman Newman stated he did hear some complaints regarding the communication. We did have problem with communications that were beyond our control. It is hard to get the word out when everyone is without power or internet. Councilman Newman stated in the future we may want to look at doing more things off site and possibly using facebook or twitter. Given the circumstances everyone did a fantastic job from the Borough Administrator to the road department. Councilman Newman congratulated Councilwoman Shutzer and Ron Griffiths on their election to office. Councilman Newman congratulated the winners of the Historic Preservation Awards. Councilman Newman thanked Mr. Steinberg for all he has provided to Freehold Borough. Mr. Steinberg is a historian of Freehold. He has so much information and history in his museum located at 2 Monmouth Avenue. Councilman Newman stated there is a lot to be thankful for this Thanksgiving and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Councilman Schnurr stated that although the outcome of Hurricane Sandy was uncertain, the one thing that amazes him is the certainty in how predictable our emergency response was going to be from our police, fire department, emergency management, streets & roads, first aid, water & sewer department, the Borough Administrator and Mayor Higgins. The primary goal of government is the safety and well-being of the residents and Freehold Borough gets an A for their response. Councilman Schnurr thanked Mr. Bellina, police department and fire department. One of the things that the State can improve on is requiring certain gas stations to have generators. Councilman Schnurr contacted Senator Beck and Assemblywomen

Casagrande and Angelini regarding this. Councilman Schnurr stated one thing he has found out by dealing with insurance companies is that the National Weather Service actually determined that this was not a hurricane when it made land fall. A lot of homeowners policies, you actually have to have a hurricane rider. Some of these hurricane riders are written in such a way that if it is declared a hurricane, the first 15% of the value of your house, you have to pay. Councilman Schnurr stated that the company he works for, FedEx has donated 1.2 million dollars to the recovery efforts. They have also donated a lot of money to food banks and shelters here in Monmouth and Ocean County and Staten Island. Councilman Schnurr stated there has been a rash of pedestrian accidents on Route 9 and Route 33. Pedestrians and motorists need to be careful here in Freehold Borough, being a walking community. Councilman Schnurr announced that Small Business Saturday is on November 24<sup>th</sup>. It is a day to support the small businesses that Freehold Borough thrives on. Councilman Schnurr stated that we celebrated Veterans Day on November 11<sup>th</sup> and asked residents to thank Veterans for their service to the country. Councilman Schnurr congratulated Councilwoman Sharon Shutzer and Council-elect Ronald Griffiths. Councilman Schnurr wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mayor Higgins acknowledged Mr. Butkus, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Loring and all other Veterans in the audience.

Councilman Kane offered his condolences to the family of Leroy Labarrie. He congratulated the Historic Preservation winners and acknowledged and thanked Carl Steinberg for everything he does. Councilman Kane stated Mayor Higgins leads by example every single day. Councilman Kane stated Mayor Higgins, Mr. Bellina, the police department, fire department and first aid did a tremendous job. He thanked everyone involved with the recovery effort. Councilman Kane stated this Thursday, we celebrate Thanksgiving and we really need to be thankful for everything that we have. The residents of Freehold Borough were inconvenienced by power outages but 20 minutes to the east of us there was life changing devastation.

Councilman DiBenedetto congratulated the Historic Preservation Award winners. He also congratulated Councilwoman Shutzer and Council-elect Ron Griffiths. He thanked Councilman Newman for his time, devotion and efforts to make Freehold Borough a better place in the last three years. Councilman DiBenedetto thanked Mayor Higgins, the police department, fire department and Mr. Bellina. He can't measure the gratitude that he has for our professionals, volunteers and the community of Freehold. Councilman DiBenedetto announced that this Saturday, November 24<sup>th</sup>, Mission Dance will be performing at the American Hotel. There is a \$15.00 entry fee that will be donated to Union Beach. Lee Deedmeyer of Mission Dance will be conducting a clean up crew on Sunday, November 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM in the Market Yard Parking Lot. They will be going down to Union Beach to help with clean up efforts. Councilman DiBenedetto announced the upcoming holiday events sponsored by Downtown Freehold. Councilman DiBenedetto wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Councilwoman Shutzer stated she has been up here for twenty years and in all those years we have not faced anything like this year. Under Mayor Higgins leadership, we have moved forward. Councilwoman Shutzer thanked Mayor Higgins, Mr. Bellina, fire department, first aid, police department, streets & roads, the staff in Borough Hall. Councilwoman Shutzer asked Mr. Bellina to pass on the council's thanks to all of the employees for the wonderful job they did during this storm. Councilwoman Shutzer thanked the people of Freehold for their confidence and Councilman John Newman for the work that he has done during the last three years. Councilman Newman is a gentleman and has served the town with distinction. Councilwoman Shutzer announced the Senior Citizen Holiday Party will be held on Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup> at 1:00 PM at the Elks. Reservations can be made by calling 732-462-1259. Councilwoman Shutzer congratulated the Historic Preservation winners and the committee itself. She also congratulated Carl Steinberg. Councilwoman Shutzer recognized the veterans. Councilwoman Shutzer stated that Leroy Labarrie will be missed. He was a gentleman who leaves a legacy of a loving family who took care of him and loved him dearly. Councilwoman Shutzer wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mayor Higgins announced that the Latino Coalition and the Graeme Preston Foundation in conjunction with the First Presbyterian Church will be holding a fundraiser for families in our community. It will be held sometime in December.

- 9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**
  - a. Personnel Matters**
  - b. Litigation**
  - c. Contract Negotiations**

There was no executive session.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT.**

There being no further business to discuss, Councilman DiBenedetto moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM, seconded by Councilwoman Shutzer, with All in Favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Traci L. DiBenedetto, RMC  
BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD

