

**MINUTES FOR THE MAY 21, 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, Chief Glenn Roberts 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. YOUTH GOVERNMENT PRESENTATION.**

Councilman Sims stated the youth government has been hard at work preparing a project for Freehold Borough. Councilman Sims introduced the Youth Mayor Brayden Donnelly.

Youth Mayor Donnelly thanked Councilman Sims, Mayor Higgins and the rest of the Borough Council. Youth Mayor Donnelly stated the youth government is presenting the idea of a cleanup and rebuilding of Veterans Park. Youth Mayor Donnelly presented mayor and council with a diagram which included an exercise trail, addition of two crosswalks, a natural trail and a new sporting and picnic areas. This idea came from Allyssa Gonzalez, Youth Councilwoman, who specifically stated that she was afraid of her younger sister being at the park.

Youth Mayor Donnelly stated some of the concerns that would have to be taken into consideration. It is a very low lying area so the rainfall and flooding tend to be an issue. We have also considered the neighbors around the park. Youth Mayor Donnelly introduced Daniel Gross, Youth Council President.

Mr. Gross discussed better lighting, trails and restoring the cannon and picnic area. They would also like to design an exercise and nature trail.

Kayla Ciok, Youth Borough Clerk, discussed the cost and funding for the project. Ms. Ciok stated Councilman Sims applied for a grant from Lowes to be used to lower cost and we also plan on fundraising.

TJ Ray, Youth Government, stated installing a pond at Veterans Park would help with the drainage issue of the stream. This park would be a great place for children from the Freehold Borough schools to learn about science and nature. Additional signs could be installed to tell about the various trees, plants and wildlife that are in the park.

Matt Parke, Youth Police Chief, discussed the issue of security at the park. The park is very accessible from all three entrances. Youth Chief Parke suggested fencing that would lock at a certain time, having the park patrolled more often by the police department and installing more lighting so the park may be used at night.

Cameron Costanzo, Youth Councilman, stated he believes sports and athletics are very important to the community. Mr. Costanzo suggested installing a basketball court, raised above ground so that flooding would not be an issue. Mr. Costanzo also suggested installing new swing sets.

Mackenzie Parke, Youth Administrator, stated "being green" is a global movement taking place recently. Another way to add to the park's improvement is to make it more earth friendly. Ms. Parke suggested adding a recycling system that would keep the park cleaner and more sanitary. Recycling saves natural resources, energy, time and money. Statistics show that in 2003, 54 billion cans were recycled saving the energy equivalent of 15 million barrels of crude oil, America's entire gas consumption for one day. Another way to improve the park would be the addition of solar trash compactors. They would reduce the overall carbon footprint for the community while conserving energy usage. While regular municipal trash barrels overflow, trash compactors would hold five times as much waste and signals when it is ready for pick up. Solar compactors vastly reduce waste collection expenses. They would reduce the number of collection trips by 80%. Since solar compactors are powered by the sun, they use natural resources to benefit the community but still work even without direct sunlight. They are also the same size as a standard 35 gallon barrel yet holds five times as much weight. Lastly, to make the park more eco friendly we could add more trash receptacles and this would keep the park cleaner by about 65%. Overall going eco friendly would help the park tremendously.

Youth Mayor Donnelly stated another member of the youth government, Chris, who could not make the meeting this evening, came up with a few ideas. He touched upon taking the graffiti and building a wall for the graffiti. He also thought of repairing the steps that are at the back entrance of park and adding more tables under the pavilion to create more of a picnic area.

Emily Higgins, Youth Borough Attorney, discussed health, fitness and education that could be implemented in the park. Ms. Higgins stated the children who visit the park should not only have fun but learn something while they are there. We would like to

install various stretching pull up bars. The exercise trail would be 1/3 to a half mile so we were thinking of putting a different exercise machine in every 500 feet. The trail will be made in a sand dust which is the most cost effective, long lasting and durable. One idea that we had was to put a map of the States on the basketball court. Ms. Higgins stated she has spoken to Brock Farms and they would help out with materials for landscaping at the entrances of the park. We also like to plant evergreens around the exercise trail as a buffer for the neighbors. Ms. Higgins stated that she believes education and getting healthy are fun and if we can get these children to believe the same then the goal for changing the community has been accomplished.

Steve Kiselick, Borough Engineer, stated he was going to assist the youth council with the applications and permits that they would need. He will also guide the youth council with the budgeting. He is working with them at their monthly meetings to help give them ideas and help bring this through construction. We attempt to do it in phases over time. We will need many State permits through Freehold soil and NJDEP with the body of water that is there. Mr. Kiselick stated he did not want to restrain them from presenting any idea to the council.

Youth Mayor Donnelly thanked everyone for their ideas and the time they put into this project.

Councilman Sims stated this youth government could be doing many other things out in the community but they have taken the initiative and take a lot of pride in their community to restore something. Councilman Sims stated he is really proud of this youth government and he thanked the mayor and council for allowing the youth government to come to fruition. Councilman Sims also thanked Councilwoman Shutzer, Mr. Bellina and Mr. Kiselick. Mr. Kiselick has donated his time every month at every meeting to provide technical advise to the youth government.

#### **4. COMMUNITY CARS PROGRAM.**

Wendy Arias, Meadowlink Regional Manager introduced Avnish Gupta, Assistant Executive Director.

Mr. Gupta stated that Meadowlink has developed a Senior Transportation Program and hopefully the Borough would be interested in launching this program. Meadowlink is a non-profit incorporated in 1983 and provides transportation solutions to make a difference in the lives of people. Transportation is the second largest expense of American households and this creates a barrier to employment. Some transportation solutions that Meadowlink works on are Shuttles, Flex-T and EZ link for people with lower income. Another solution for corporate commuters are shuttles, carpools and vanpools. Safe Routes To School and Bike Share promotes healthy living through biking and walking and Community Cars for senior citizens. Mr. Gupta explained that community cars is a concept which is based in the community. Meadowlink provides the cars and gets volunteers from the community to drive them. It is a customized “curb to curb” car service and is a flexible program in terms of time and trip purposes. It is

affordable because of having volunteer drivers. If we do not have volunteer drivers there is no program. In 2011 we provided 3,550 rides for clients and there are currently about 300 riders riding on a daily basis. Right now this program is working in northern New Jersey with a fleet of 16 vehicles. Meadowlink will provide EZ Ride marked cars that contain DriveCam and GPS. The dispatchers are aware at all times where the vehicles are. Meadowlink will also provide a gas card, auto insurance, maintenance and roadside assistance, administration and training for the volunteer drivers. Municipalities that participate in the Community Cars program are asked to provide safe parking for the vehicles, marketing to the seniors, finding and certifying the volunteers and provide forms and brochures on the town's web site. There is no cost to the municipality for this program. The riders will pay \$2.50 per ride plus \$0.55 per mile (up to 10 miles), or \$1.10 per mile (trips over 10 miles). Mr. Gupta stated the following programs available within Monmouth County are Flex –T (Disabled Clients), Shore EZ Ride Jitney (Visitors), CMAQ Applications (Commuters) and EZ –Link (Welfare Clients).

Councilman Sims asked who would incur the cost of the fingerprinting, CDL licensing and driving abstract for the volunteer drivers.

Mr. Gupta stated the person is not required to have a CDL and we do not need fingerprinting. We just require a background check.

Councilman Sims stated in order to do the background check we need to fingerprint. Councilman Sims stated he thinks the program is great but we shouldn't have to ask the volunteer to incur any cost.

Mr. Gupta again stated they do not require the fingerprinting and a typical background check could range between \$15.00 and \$25.00.

Councilman Newman asked what kind of background check is required.

Mr. Gupta stated it would be checking against the national criminal data web sites.

Chief Roberts explained that anyone who applies in Freehold Borough for a taxi cab drivers license has to have a criminal history check. The cost is \$35.00 for the fingerprinting.

Councilwoman Shutzer questioned the insurance.

Mr. Gupta replied that they provide all insurances including adding the Borough as additional insured on the policy.

Councilman Schnurr asked if this idea was introduced to communities with already existing cab companies.

Mr. Gupta stated there is a certain amount of discontent but it is hard for the seniors to afford the cost of a cab ride.

Councilman Newman asked how many cars would be needed in Freehold Borough.

Mr. Gupta stated they would launch the program with a 6 month pilot and start with one car. One car would require about 9-10 drivers, each driver putting in three to four hours a day, twice a week. We would need about 125 members to use this program.

Councilman Newman asked the age range for a typical volunteer driver.

Mr. Gupta replied they have volunteers as young as 21 up to 85. We do not need a full physical on the volunteer. We just need a note from their physician stating that he/she is fit to drive.

Mr. Gupta stated they are also working with Freehold Township. They are in the process of revising their agreement to come to a mutual understanding.

Councilman Newman stated he does see that people are spending about 40% or more of their income on transportation. This does sound like a good program.

Councilman DiBenedetto asked what if the driver has points on their license.

Mr. Gupta stated the driver has to be approved by their insurance carrier but if Freehold Borough wants to set a different standard that would be fine.

Councilman DiBenedetto stated he was worried that Freehold Borough would be one of the first ones in court being that we are finding and certifying the drivers.

Mr. Gupta stated there is a liability in which the town is exposed.

Councilman Newman asked Mr. Gupta to provide a list of towns that are enrolled in the program.

Mayor Higgins thanked Mr. Gupta for his time and presentation.

## **5. FIRE DEPARTMENT PLAN PRESENTATION. (SEE ATTACHMENT II.)**

Chief Bailey stated he was happy to report that the department has formed a Capital Needs Committee to maintain a consistent plan and an open line of communication with the governing body. Chief Bailey stated they recently met with the public safety committee and it was suggested that he present a condensed version of the capital needs review plan. The governing body has received a power point presentation of the plan within their packets. Chief Bailey stated the Hook & Ladder truck is on order and the delivery is scheduled for the end of the year. The air compressor system is in service and running 100% compliant with our air quality which is checked four times a

year. All meters are in compliance. The firefighter gear is being replaced as required out of the operating budget. We have also replaced two thermal imaging cameras in 2011. One thing that was not completed was the mobile radios. The fire department put a hold on that because the FCC was making some changes to their guidelines. Now that we know what the FCC is requiring we can move forward with that. The capital needs plan for 2012 include the thermal imaging camera, the air pack replacement program, mobile radios and we are in the process of renovating the kitchen. Some of the items that are not included is a security camera system to the rear fire house, rear building floor refinishing and a special service truck to replace the fire/police car. Chief Bailey stated that as of last year the firefighters are receiving yearly physicals. A doctor performs these physicals in house to the firefighters who are notified in writing of any limitations. If any issues are found, the member is told to follow up with their personal doctor. This is a very important program. Chief Bailey thanked the council for their time.

Councilman Schnurr asked if it was possible for next year to have this presentation prior to the Borough dealing with their budgetary items.

Mr. Bellina replied yes.

Councilman Kane asked how many members the department had.

Chief Bailey replied there are 88 members.

Mayor Higgins thanked Chief Bailey for his work on this project. Chief Bailey has served through the transition of the dispatchers and a change in the organizational structure of the fire department. The Borough can be assured that we are served by an excellent fire service. Mayor Higgins congratulated Chief Bailey.

Chief Bailey also introduced John Gierlowski, Second Assistant Chief, Daniel Megill, First Assistant Chief, Hank Stryker, Department President, Reggie Sims, Houseman and Ex-Chief Bob Taylor.

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

Councilwoman Shutzer offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption and was seconded by Councilman DiBenedetto:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS, LITIGATION AND CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS.**

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

**7. ADJOURNMENT.**

There being no further business to discuss, Councilman DiBenedetto moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM, seconded by Councilman Kane, with All in Favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Traci L. DiBenedetto, RMC  
BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD