

Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold was held on Monday, June 4, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building.

Mayor Higgins stated that the notice of the time, date and location of the meeting had been provided pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 231 of the Laws of 1975 (Open Public Meetings Act).

Councilman Sims opened the meeting with the Salute to the Flag, followed by a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT	MAYOR J. NOLAN HIGGINS
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DIBENEDETTO
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN KEVIN KANE
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN JOHN NEWMAN
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN GEORGE SCHNURR
PRESENT	COUNCILWOMAN SHARON SHUTZER
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN JAYE SIMS

Mayor Higgins welcomed Freehold Township Mayor Anthony Ammiano.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 4 on the Agenda as follows:

“Presentation of the Memorial Day Parade Awards (Alice McCobb).”

Councilman Schnurr thanked Alice McCobb and her entire family on their hard work on the Memorial Day Parade.

Alice McCobb and Councilman Schnurr presented the 2012 recipients with trophies. A list of the winners is on file in the Resolution Book in the Borough Clerk’s office.

Freehold Township Mayor Ammiano stated it was with great honor and privilege as a member of the VCA to present Stockton Jones, Jr., a resident of Freehold Township, medals that he received from the “Battle of the Bulge” at Elk’s Point on Memorial Day.

Mayor Ammiano read the following statement:

“There is one man with us today that has given so much to us and has done so much. The VCA has unanimously voted to present this award to him. He has given a part of his life to the Vietnam War and has lost his brother, Rocky, to this war. We would like to present this award to Joel Holman in honor of his service to our Country and in memory of his brother, Rocky.”

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 5 on the Agenda as follows:

“Racers Club Presentation (Al Michenfelder).”

Al Michenfelder thanked the United States Army for their donation and presented the Racer’s Club Award to Brandon Shore for his work on the yellow AMC Gremlin.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 6 on the Agenda as follows:

“Remarks by JCP&L Officials.”

Gerry Ricciardi, Area Manager JCP&L, thanked the governing body for allowing him to speak at the meeting. He handed out his business card along with a pamphlet and stated he is available to everyone 24 hours a day. His job is to be there for us, he is his company’s problem solver. If anyone has a question about power outages, street lights, billing, etc., he is the man to call. He introduced Harvey Lockley, Engineer at JCP&L. He explained the most important thing if there is a power outage is to call JCP&L and report the outage.

Mr. Ricciardi stated that JCP&L is part of the FirstEnergy Company whose area crosses seven States. This allows them to access resources from many different utility companies in the event of large power outages and they can send crews from all of these areas to assist us, if necessary.

Mr. Ricciardi stated as a result of Hurricane Irene, they heard very clearly from your public officials that they were not satisfied with our communications. He explained the short term improvements which were made by JCP&L such as updating their website. There is a spot on the website that you can view the specific number and location of outages in your Municipality. Prior to this it was done by zip codes. What we found from our Municipal Officials after Hurricane Irene was that zip codes can go through multiple municipalities. JCP&L is also on Twitter and can notify officials by email.

Mr. Ricciardi explained some long term improvements consist of putting videos on YouTube and to use Face book more. He also stated the most important thing that JCP&L does is safety and they do not want anybody getting hurt. He explained the dangers of using a gas generator in your home. These generators produce poisonous fumes that could potentially kill you if not used properly. If they don’t have it isolated from the JCP&L system the generator will back feed back into the power system.

Harvey Lockley, Assessment and Reliability Improvement Engineer for JCP&L, stated that Freehold Borough has 10 circuits that are served from 3 sub-stations. Based on past history the number one cause of outages in the Borough is due to trees. As part of the tree trimming program 7 of the 10 circuits are being trimmed this year, 3 from the Freehold sub-station, 4 from the Jerseyville Avenue sub-station and the remaining 3 circuits are scheduled to be trimmed in 2013. In this calendar year JCP&L is also conducting reliability and inspections on circuits from the Freehold and Jerseyville sub-stations. Infractions found on these circuits will be addressed and repaired. He stated that yesterday there was a power outage in Freehold Borough. Part of a tree fell down on Center Street which caused an outage at 3:00 PM which affected 333 customers. The first thing JCP&L did was come out and assess the damage and make it safe. The next thing they did was do temporary repairs and at 5:43 PM they were able to restore 253 of the customers and at 9:45 PM they were able to restore 17 more customers. By midnight they were able to restore the remaining 63 customers.

Mayor Higgins stated last evening he visited the site where we lost power and there was a JCP&L supervisor on scene and it was reassuring to the neighbors to know that JCP&L was there.

Councilwoman Shutzer stated that there are huge trees all over town and yet our power outages occur way too often in that one section of town. She feels there is something going on near Center Street that needs to be addressed and it can't be blamed on the trees because the entire town has large trees.

Councilman Schnurr stated down Center Street, from Otterson Street all the way to Liberty Street is losing power approximately 10 times per year. He asked JCP&L to do an assessment on the equipment in that part of town.

Mr. Lockley explained that they looked at the causes of the outages and they were all due to trees except once when someone hit a pole with their car. After Hurricane Irene, JCP&L looked at the circuits in that area and they were fine.

Councilman Schnurr stated there comes a point where you have equipment that has been outside in the weather and elements for decades. The wiring must have some type of shelf life and all he is asking is for JCP&L to give it a look.

Councilwoman Shutzer stated these outages are not just due to trees. She also asked JCP&L to give it another look.

Councilman Schnurr stated he went to the NJ Board of Utilities hearings in Manalapan and the overwhelming theme of the hearings was lack of information flow from JCP&L and he is glad that they are updating their websites and using a lot of social media.

Mayor Higgins asked Mr. Ricciardi to speak to the residents of Hudson Manor.

Mr. Ricciardi stated Hudson Manor is located on Center Street, Hudson Street and Jackson Street and the Rug Mill is fed with a different circuit than Hudson Manor. Hudson Manor asked if they could be served from the same circuit that the Rug Mill uses. He stated JCP&L cannot always do that. It depends on what the loading is on a particular circuit. We investigated this and found they could be switched over. So right now there is a project to put them on a different circuit.

Mayor Higgins stated earlier this year the police department did a street light check for us and that has been accomplished.

Mr. Ricciardi stated if there is a bulb or PE cell on a street light that should be fixed within 3 days, if it is the head which is the entire globe of the street light that should be repaired in 5 days. If it is an underground fault that could take longer because it takes 1 week to get a mark-out before they can dig.

Mayor Higgins stated if a resident notices a street light that is out they can report it to JCP&L through the website or by calling customer service.

Councilman Sims stated if JCP&L could have a public meeting with the residents of Freehold Borough. A lot of residents probably did not know that JCP&L would be here this evening to explain in detail some of the things that are going on. He also asked if after the next major storm event could he have a critique meeting with our emergency officials.

Mr. Ricciardi stated that would be fine.

Ms. Higgins asked Mr. Ricciardi to explain how to register your cell phone on your account.

Mr. Ricciardi explained to register your cell phone all you need to do is call 1-800-662-3115, which is our customer contact center. He suggested not calling on Mondays because they are the busiest days.

Councilman Newman asked if it is the tree or branches from trees that are doing the most damage.

Mr. Ricciardi stated that they don't assess it that way. They just assess whether it was caused by a tree, car pole accident, animal, lightening, mechanical failure or equipment failure.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 7 on the Agenda as follows:

Councilwoman Shutzer offered a motion to accept the minutes from the Regular Meeting June 4, 2012 and was seconded by Councilman DiBenedetto.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 9 on the Agenda as follows:

“Proclamation of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold Declaring the Month of June Freehold First Aid Fund Drive Month.”

Councilwoman Shutzer read and presented the Proclamation to Mr. Madden and Mr. McAllister of the Freehold First Aid and Emergency Squad.

Bill Madden, Freehold First Aid Trustee, stated that the fund drive is so important for the first aid squad. Right now they are in desperate need of members. They need to almost double the number of members that they have now to answer the 4,000 yearly calls.

James McAllister, Freehold First Aid President, stated a lot of people wonder where the first aid is during an accident. Unlike the fire department, they are in and out of the scene very quickly. He urged the residents to donate and volunteer.

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 9 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Authorizing 2012 Professional Services Projects With Cranmer Engineering for Borough Engineering Services.

Councilman Schnurr offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Kane:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 2012 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES PROJECTS WITH CRANMER ENGINEERING FOR BOROUGH ENGINEERING SERVICES.

Councilman Schnurr stated due to a ruling from the NJ Department of Community Affairs that says starting this year any road projects that we are doing the municipality must specify who the engineer is. So even though Cranmer Engineering is our Borough engineer we must specify them in a resolution. This resolution applies to Stillwell Place, Douglas Road, Court and Broad parking lots and various drainage improvements, including Jackson, McElwaine and Throckmorton Street.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 10 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution To Join New Jersey Sustainable Energy Joint Meeting.”

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

RESOLUTION TO JOIN NEW JERSEY SUSTAINABLE ENERGY JOINT MEETING.

Councilman Kane stated this is approximately a \$150.00 investment which will allow the Borough to purchase electricity from alternate sources which should be a substantial savings.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 11 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution of the Borough of Freehold, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey, Providing for the Insertion of Special Items of Revenue in the 2012 Budget of the Borough of Freehold Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 (Chapter 159).”

Councilman Newman offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Kane:

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, PROVIDING FOR THE INSERTION OF SPECIAL ITEMS OF REVENUE IN THE 2012 BUDGET OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 (CHAPTER 159).

Councilman Newman stated this \$444.25 that has been given to the Borough to purchase bike racks to be installed by the New Beginnings Church on Throckmorton Street.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 9 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Confirming Personnel Actions:

- a. Promotion of Adam Keaney from Equipment Operator to Assistant Supervisor of Streets & Roads, effective January 1, 2012.**
- b. Promotion of Angel Colon from Laborer to Truck Driver, Streets & Roads Dept., effective January 1, 2012.**
- c. Promotion of Justin Barkalow from Laborer to Truck Driver, Streets & Roads Dept., effective upon completion of CDL requirements.**
- d. Promotion of Russell Scott King from Laborer to Water & Sewer Repairer, effective January 1, 2012.**
- e. Promotion of Thomas LaSalle from Water & Sewer Repairer to Senior Water & Sewer Repairer, effective January 1, 2012.”**

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

RESOLUTION CONFIRMING PERSONNEL ACTIONS NO. 9A THROUGH 9E.

Councilman Schnurr explained the reason he is voting no on this resolution. He stated he is not saying that these 5 employees are not deserving, all of our employees are deserving. The issue for him is that during these recessionary times he feels this is not the time to give people bonuses and raises. He thinks this sets a bad example and it sends a bad message to the public who has to pay for it. Our employees are not mistreated; they get the “Cadillac” of health benefits, sick pay, 14 paid holidays, vacation time, pension, step increases and longevity pay. He also stated that in our last budget that we just passed the assessed evaluation for our entire community went down over a billion dollars so that means the costs have to be spread out over the other people. While he thinks it is important to value our employees he feels we need to take a step back and wait until the assessed evaluations start to kick back up. Maybe when the economy starts to pick up it would be a better time to acknowledge these employees.

Councilwoman Shutzer stated as Chairperson of the Personnel Committee, she will speak for the committee and they have gone over and over this and we were unanimous in our recommendation that this happen. Our workforce has been reduced by approximately 26% and

especially hard hit were the Water and Sewer and Streets and Roads Departments and yet our productivity has not decreased at all, in fact it has gone up and these changes in positions represent an investment in our employees. We have asked them to do more and more and more and they have done it. The entire thing represents about \$26,000.00 which is about a ¼ of a percent of a penny on a \$100.00 of valued property and it was our feeling that this is an investment in our employees and keeping employees who are experienced and trained.

Councilman Newman stated he has been conflicted on this as well. There are good arguments on both sides and we did talk about this. This came out on Friday and he would have liked to have talked about it one more time before the vote because maybe some concessions could have been made on some of our professionals that are paid in his opinion a little bit higher than what the going rate is. He understands that these are merit based raises but he is also conflicted about it and every little bit adds up.

Councilman DiBenedetto stated he is the Commissioner of Streets and Roads and he has ridden with these gentlemen during snowstorms, hurricanes throughout his years on council. He has seen these men work hard for you and hard for me. We are down 26% of our employees and we have not lost one bit of effort from this department. There are other things that are required of these employees such as obtaining certifications and he will be voting yes on this resolution.

Councilman Kane agrees with Councilwoman Shutzer that this is a \$26,000.00 investment to maintain the quality of services that we provide to our residents. We are down a quarter of our workforce and most of it came from Streets and Roads and Water and Sewer Departments and the average resident has not noticed any difference in service and he will be voting yes on this resolution also.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 13 on the Agenda:

“Approval of Bills.”

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold that the bills on the attached list in the amount of \$1,446,256.43 be paid as presented.

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

Mayor Higgins opened the meeting to the public.

Barbara Oliver, Center Street, stated she would like a microphone so the people giving presentations at the meeting could be heard. She also doesn't appreciate what Daniel Xavier said at the debate. She feels he is a Republican posing as a Democrat.

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; abstain none; absent none. Mayor Higgins declared the motion adopted.

Mayor Higgins called upon the members of the council for their comments.

Councilman DiBenedetto congratulated the Freehold High School Baseball Team. He also thanked Alice McCobb, her family and volunteers for all of their hard work on the Memorial Day Parade. Councilman DiBenedetto thanked Mr. Madden and Mr. McAllister and urged everyone to donate to the first aid squad. He asked everyone to keep Jack Schellenger in their prayers because he is having an operation tomorrow. Councilman DiBenedetto reminded the residents that tomorrow is Election Day and asked everyone to vote. He wished Councilwoman Shutzer and Councilman Newman good luck.

Councilman Kane thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He thanked Alice, Amanda and Pat McCobb for their dedication every year and making the Memorial Day Parade a success. He congratulated the winners of the parade, a lot of pride an effort goes into everything they do.

Councilman Kane thanked Mr. Madden and Mr. McAllister for everything they do and urged everyone to volunteer and donate. Without more donations and manpower it will be very tough for us to maintain this free service.

Councilman Kane congratulated the Freehold High School Baseball Team and the Freehold High School Computer Science Team who went to an International Competition and did fantastic. At the next meeting we will be recognizing the Band, Baseball Team and Computer Science Team.

Councilman Schnurr thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He thanked Alice McCobb for all of her help on the Memorial Day Parade. Now that this parade is over we will be starting fundraising and planning for the next year's parade.

Councilman Schnurr stated that after listening to the remarks of the JCP&L officials, he thinks that they realized where they fell short and part of that was communications. He is glad to see they are moving in the right direction. But he also feels they need to fix some of the infrastructure to.

Councilman Schnurr stated you don't know all the commitment and training that these folks go through at the first aid. He urged everyone to volunteer and donate. He also requested a Freehold First Aid and Emergency Squad sign for his front lawn.

Councilwoman Shutzer stated the Memorial Day Parade Committee is the hardest working committee. This committee works year round. She recognized and thanked Alice McCobb's father, Bill Hakim who served for many years on the local school board.

Councilwoman Shutzer also urged everyone to volunteer and donate and she also requested a sign for her front lawn. She wished Jack Schellenger the best of luck on his surgery tomorrow.

Councilman Newman thanked everyone for coming out this evening. He congratulated the McCobb family on another terrific Memorial Day Parade. He also requested a sign for his front lawn.

Councilman Newman stated that Freehold Idol starts next week and the Center Players has a new play, Tuesdays with Maury and the Historic Preservation Committee has their annual House Tour on June 16, 2012 and you can go through Borough Hall for information on that.

Councilman Sims thanked everyone for coming out this year. He pointed out all of the years of experience that was sitting up at the council table. There is probably over 100 years worth of experience as volunteers sitting up at this table. In recent weeks he has been perturbed by a lot of the comments that have been passed around whether it was through the internet or the news papers. We all have made sacrifices sitting up here at this table, we have families and Freehold Borough is our second family. A lot of times we put our family second so we can serve this town. He would like people to think about that the next time they hit a key stroke and hit "Enter" and criticize the decisions that are made by any of the seven individuals sitting up here at this table and think about what we do. It really upsets him that people criticize what we do here and yes it is expected of an elected officials but it is still very upsetting. He reminded the residents that there is an election every November if they want to change things. He also wished Councilwoman Shutzer good luck in tomorrow's election.

Mayor Higgins congratulated the entire Memorial Day Committee and stated that the Memorial Day Parade is one of the proudest events held here in Freehold Borough.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

TRACI L. DIBENEDETTO, RMC
BOROUGH CLERK

TLD:aj