

The Reorganization Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold was held on Sunday, January 4, 2015, at 1:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building.

Mayor Higgins stated that 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).

Mayor Higgins invited three members from our veteran's organizations up to help with the salute to the flag; John Maziekien, Bernard Weinstein, Mike Burt and Neil Begley who graduated from West Point Academy.

Mayor Higgins asked everyone to remain standing for a moment of silence.

Mayor Higgins introduced several members of the public, Former Mayor Roger Kane; Former Mayor Michael Wilson; former councilperson and current member of the Housing Authority, Sue Sweetman; Henry Stryker, Monmouth County Fire Marshal, OEM Director and Code Official; Freehold Township Mayor Tom Cook; Freehold Township Committeeman Lester Preston, Jr.; Fire Chief Robert W. Taylor; Second Assistant Fire Chief Robbie Bailey; Ex-Fire Chiefs, Mike Burt, Henry Stryker, Robert Taylor; Freehold First Aid Squad President Jim McAllister; Borough Administrator Joseph Bellina; Borough Attorney Kerry Higgins; Borough Clerk Traci DiBenedetto; Borough Magistrate Scott Basen; Public Defender Jonathan Lomurro; Borough Auditors from Suplee, Clooney, John Swisher; Borough Engineers from Abbington Engineering, Bill Wentzien, Vince Creevey, Steve Kislick; Planning Board chairperson Danielle Sims; Memorial Day Parade Committee members Alice McCobb, John Maziekien, Michelle Merwin, Ruth Wall, Bernard Weinstein, John Bosco and Pat McCobb; Human Relations chairperson Carol Lida; Shade Tree Commission and Human Relations Committee member Christine Gregory; Recreation Spooktacular events Sue Greitz and Lynn Reich, who was also a Former Chairperson, Freehold Board of Education members Annette Jordan, Sue Greitz and Bill Hakim, Historic Preservation Commission members Muriel Smith and Gil Burgess; Housing Authority member Reggie Sims, Borough photographer Alan Goldberg, Freehold Open Door Sandy Taylor, Conley Lodge past Exulted Ruler Sidney Blacknall; American Legion Post #54 member Ken Pulchlopek; Downtown Freehold CEO Rich Gatto and Planning Board Attorney Ronald Cucchiaro.

Mayor Higgins asked for a round of applause for all current military and veterans.

The Oaths of Office were administered to Councilman Michael DiBenedetto by the Municipal Clerk Traci DiBenedetto and Councilman George Schnurr by Jersey City Mayor Stephen Fulop.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT	MAYOR J. NOLAN HIGGINS
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DI BENEDETTO
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN RONALD GRIFFITHS
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN KEVIN KANE
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN GEORGE SCHNURR
PRESENT	COUNCILWOMAN SHARON SHUTZER
PRESENT	COUNCILMAN JAYE SIMS

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

“Resolution Authorizing 2015 Professional Services Contract with William T. Wentzien, PE, LS of Abbington Engineering for Borough Engineering Services.”

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 2015 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT WITH WILLIAM T. WENTZIEN, PE, LS OF ABBINGTON ENGINEERING FOR BOROUGH ENGINEERING SERVICES.

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

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

“Resolution Authorizing 2015 Professional Services Contract with Kerry E. Higgins, Esq. for Borough Legal Services.”

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 2015 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT WITH KERRY E. HIGGINS, ESQ. FOR BOROUGH LEGAL SERVICES.

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

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

“Resolution Authorizing 2015 Professional Services Contract with Dilworth Paxson LLP for Borough Bond Counsel Services.”

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 2015 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT WITH DILWORTH PAXSON LLP FOR BOROUGH BOND COUNSEL SERVICES.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 8 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Authorizing 2015 Professional Services Contract with Suplee, Clooney & Company for Borough Auditor Services.”

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 2015 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT WITH SUPLEE, CLOONEY & COMPANY FOR BOROUGH AUDITOR SERVICES.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, 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 Accepting the Mayor’s Nomination and Appointing Municipal Prosecutor for the Year 2015: Brian T. Wilton, Esq.”

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

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE MAYOR’S NOMINATION AND APPOINTING MUNICIPAL PROSECUTOR FOR THE YEAR 2015: BRIAN T. WILTON, ESQ.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, Newman, Schnurr 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 Accepting the Mayor’s Nomination and Appointing Borough Substitute/Alternate Prosecutor for the Year 2015: Kerry E. Higgins, Esq.”

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

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE MAYOR’S NOMINATION AND APPOINTING BOROUGH SUBSTITUTE/ALTERNATE PROSECUTOR FOR THE YEAR 2015: KERRY E. HIGGINS, ESQ.

On roll call Council Members DiBenedetto, Griffiths, Kane, 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 Accepting the Mayor’s Nomination and Appointing Public Defender for the Year 2015: Jonathan Lomurro.”

Councilwoman Shutzer offered the following Resolutions and moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman DiBenedetto:

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE MAYOR'S NOMINATION AND APPOINTING PUBLIC DEFENDER FOR THE YEAR 2015: JONATHAN LOMURRO.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 12 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Accepting the Mayor’s Nomination and Appointing Municipal Judge for a Three Year Term: Scott J. Basen, Esq.”

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

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE MAYOR'S NOMINATION AND APPOINTING MUNICIPAL JUDGE FOR A THREE YEAR TERM: SCOTT J. BASEN, ESQ.”.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 13 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Accepting the Mayor’s Nominations and Appointments for the Year 2015:

a.	Deputy Clerk	Joseph B. Bellina	1 year
b.	Treasurer and Collector Water & Sewer Rents	Richard J. Gartz	1 year
c.	Deputy Treasurer	Kathleen Caruso	1 year
d.	Tax Collector	Patricia Berg	
e.	Borough Historian	Kevin Coyne	1 year
f.	Board of Health	Phillip DeAngelis	4 years
g.	Emergency Management:		
	Daniel Megill	Dep. Coordinator	1 year
	Chief Glenn Roberts	Public Safety	1 year
	Chief Robert Taylor	Fire and Rescue	1 year
	Joseph B. Bellina	Damage Assessment	1 year
	Traci L. DiBenedetto	Shelter and Welfare	1 year
	Garry Jackson	Fire Prevention Rep.	1 year
	J. Nolan Higgins	(Ex-Officio)	1 year
	Jeremy Hoffman, Captain or Duly Authorized	First Aid Squad	1 year

	Margaret Jahn	Health Department	1 year
	Sal DeJesus	Streets & Roads	1 year
	Harry Burt	Water Department	1 year
	Mike Baker	Water Plant	1 year
h.	Fire Prevention Bureau: Garry Jackson	(State License Required) Fire Official	1 year
i.	Human Relations Committee	Annette Jordan, School Board Liaison	1 year
j.	Historic Preservation Committee	David Loring	3 years
		Muriel Smith	3 years
		Nelson Kuperberg	1 year
k.	Housing Authority	Lazaro Cardenas	5 years
		Sigridur Thordarson	5 years
i.	Lake Topanemus Commission	Robert Higley	3 years
		Dr. C. Gregory Jewell	2 years
m.	Library Commission	Barbara Jenette	5 years
		Mary Carey (Mayor's Appt)	1 year
n.	Memorial Day Parade Committee	Alice McCobb	1 year
		Amanda McCobb	1 year
		Bernard Weinstein	1 year
		John Bosco	1 year
		John Mazekien	1 year
		Ken Pulchlopek	1 year
		Sidney Blacknall	1 year
		Walter Kowalski	1 year
		Nick Gardner	1 year
		Tim Rohan	1 year
		Ruth Wall	1 year
		Michelle Merwin	1 year
		Doug Merwin	1 year
		Steve Gardner	1 year
		Al Kloor	1 year
o.	Municipal Alliance	Annette Jordan	2 years
		Dori Chippendale	2 years
		Det. John Reiff	1 year
		Rocco G. Tomazic, Superintendent	
		Freehold Borough Schools	1 year
p.	Planning Board	Garry Jackson	1 year
		Annette Jordan (Alt. 1)	2 years
		Jamie Bennett (Alt. 2)	1 year

q.	Shade Tree Commission	Roman Janocha	5 years
		Cheryl Greenfield	5 years
		Andrew Jacobson	5 years”

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

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE MAYOR’S NOMINATION AND APPOINTMENTS FOR THE YEAR 2015.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 14 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Accepting the Mayor’s Nomination and Appointing the Affirmative Action Officer for the Year 2015: Joseph B. Bellina.”

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

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE MAYOR’S NOMINATION AND APPOINTING THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICER FOR THE YEAR 2015: JOSEPH B. BELLINA.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 15 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Accepting the Mayor’s Nomination and Appointing the Community Development Representative and Alternate for the Year 2015: Joseph B. Bellina, Richard J. Gartz and Daniel Megill.”

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

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE MAYOR’S NOMINATION AND APPOINTING THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTATIVE AND ALTERNATE FOR THE YEAR 2015: JOSEPH B. BELLINA, RICHARD J. GARTZ AND DANIEL MEGILL.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 16 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Appointing Freehold Borough Special Police Officers for the Year 2015.”

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

RESOLUTION APPOINTING FREEHOLD BOROUGH SPECIAL POLICE OFFICERS FOR THE YEAR 2015.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 17 on the Agenda as follows:

“Election by Council of President for Year 2015: Councilwoman Sharon Shutzer.”

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

ELECTION BY COUNCIL OF PRESIDENT FOR YEAR 2015: COUNCILWOMAN SHARON SHUTZER.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 18 on the Agenda as follows:

“Mayor’s Appointments of Council Committees for 2015:

<u>COMMITTEE</u>	<u>CHAIR</u>			
Finance	Kane	Griffiths	Schnurr	
Personnel	Shutzer	Sims	DiBenedetto	
Public Works	DiBenedetto			
Health and Welfare	Kane			
Recreation	DiBenedetto			
Code Enforcement	Griffiths			
Municipal Court	Sims			
Public Safety	DiBenedetto	Kane	Sims	
Land Use	Schnurr	DiBenedetto	Griffiths	Alt., Sims”

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 19 on the Agenda as follows:

“Appointment of Council Representatives for the Year 2015:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Representative</u>
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**Advisory Council on Aging
Board of Education
Freehold Center Partnership
Historic Preservation
Human Relations
Lake Topanemus
Library
Memorial Day Parade
Planning Board
Shade Tree Commission
Alliance Against Drugs
Emergency Management
Youth Government**

**Sharon Shutzer
Sharon Shutzer
Michael DiBenedetto
Michael DiBenedetto
Ronald Griffiths
Kevin Kane
George Schnurr
George Schnurr
George Schnurr
Ronald Griffiths
Sharon Shutzer
Sharon Shutzer
Jaye Sims”**

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 20 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Providing Notice of 2015 Meetings of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold.”

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

RESOLUTION PROVIDING NOTICE OF 2015 MEETINGS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 21 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Authorizing the Renewal and Continuance of Bonds for Officials Required to Have Bonds for the Year 2015.”

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RENEWAL AND CONTINUANCE OF BONDS FOR OFFICIALS REQUIRED TO HAVE BONDS FOR THE YEAR 2015:

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 22 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold Designating the Depositories Wherein all Public Monies and Other Funds of the Municipality Shall Be Kept.”

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

RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD DESIGNATING THE DEPOSITORIES WHEREIN ALL PUBLIC MONIES AND OTHER FUNDS OF THE MUNICIPALITY SHALL BE KEPT.

Councilwoman Shutzer read the Resolution.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 23 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Designating Official Newspapers for Year 2015: Asbury Park Press, News Transcript and Star Ledger.”

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

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS FOR YEAR 2015:
ASBURY PARK PRESS, NEWS TRANSCRIPT AND STAR LEDGER.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 24 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Freehold Fixing the Rate of Interest to be Charged on Delinquent Taxes, Assessments and Water/Sewer Accounts for 2015.”

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

RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD FIXING THE RATE OF INTEREST TO BE CHARGED ON DELINQUENT TAXES, ASSESSMENTS AND WATER/SEWER ACCOUNTS FOR 2015.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 25 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Authorizing and Directing the Distribution of Meeting Agendas and Minutes.”

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

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE DISTRIBUTION OF MEETING AGENDAS AND MINUTES.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 26 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Designating Official Holidays for the Employees of the Borough of Freehold, County of Monmouth, for the Year 2015.”

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

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING OFFICIAL HOLIDAYS FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, FOR THE YEAR 2015.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 27 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Adopting a Cash Management Plan for the Borough of Freehold.”

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

RESOLUTION ADOPTING A CASH MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 28 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Awarding a Contract for the Purchase of Water & Sewer Chemicals.”

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

RESOLUTION AWARDING A CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF WATER & SEWER CHEMICALS.

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

Mayor Higgins read Item No. 29 on the Agenda as follows:

“Resolution Providing for 2015 Temporary Budget Appropriations.”

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

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR 2015 TEMPORARY BUDGET
APPROPRIATIONS.**

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

Mayor Higgins acknowledged Freehold Township Deputy Mayor Anthony Ammiano.

Mayor Higgins stated the following:

“Members of the governing body, our professionals, staff, Borough volunteers and friends, as we begin a new year I congratulate and welcome back to the governing body Councilman DiBenedetto and Councilman Schnurr. Whether at the Federal, State or County level or with Municipal government, the orderly election of office holders and the beginning of new terms for executives and legislators is a hallmark of our American system of government. Today it is appropriate for me to recognize and to thank all of you our staff, committee and commission members, volunteers and all of our Borough employees who serve on a daily basis to provide the services you expect from our municipality.

This governing body is here to listen to your suggestions and ideas. When I visit schools I am often asked by our students why we choose to become involved in government. I tell our students local government is the government closest to the people. They may never meet a president or senator or governor but they can see their local governing body members whenever the need arises or just to talk. When you see our neighbors and friends at the supermarket, at our restaurants, when we attend the Memorial Day Parade, a school event, a downtown Freehold concert together you can raise a concern or ask a question directly to your elected officials.

During the past year, 49 open office hours were held for citizens to come to Borough Hall for help with various issues. Although we were not successful in resolving all problems, we personally addressed each matter. It is that personal level of involvement with our citizens which motivates us here to serve you.

This past Labor Day was the dedication of the World War II Memorial at Elks Point. This is a magnificent tribute to those from Freehold who served in World War II. It is already a place where residents and visitors can stop to reflect on the sacrifices for many, the ultimate sacrifice made by our parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles and our neighbors and friends.

Our committees and commissions are ready to serve and provide events and programming for another year. Emergency services are provided to Freehold Borough by a dedicated police department, by our volunteer services who are second to none fire department

and first aid squad and our Office of Emergency Management. I take this time to acknowledge and recognize those services provided to our residents and visitors.

It is a difficult time to be a law enforcement professional. Our police department has my appreciation and my ultimate respect for the job they do in serving our community. Council President Shutzer always reminds us our families are part of this team. A word of personal thanks to my wife, Chris who always allows me to be part of this special group. Also a word of thanks to Administrator Bellina who takes my calls all hours of the night and day, seven days a week, weekends, holidays and provides help and assistance to all of us and whose dedication to this Borough should be recognized.

Friends on behalf of the Borough family you have our best wishes for a safe and healthy New Year.”

Councilman George Schnurr stated the following:

“I would like to congratulate Councilman Mike DiBenedetto and his family on his re-election to the council. I’ve worked closely with Councilman DiBenedetto on a variety of issues and on a couple of committees over the years and he is a leader by definition and a role model by the fine example he sets for others.

On a personal level, I am humbled by the voter’s confidence in Councilman DiBenedetto and I with so many candidates now a days at all levels of government facing both primary, as well as, general election challenges for Mike and I to have neither says a lot about how you folks feel about both of us. Thank you.

Public service in Freehold is really a great way to help others to contribute your knowledge, experience and skills for the betterment of your community and it is a great way to carry out your vision for Freehold. It is a privilege and an honor for me to serve in this capacity for the next three years. I believe in Freehold and pledge to devote my time and energy in keeping Freehold a great place to live, work and visit.

In the new year I look forward to getting down to work and collaborating with people of good will to help deliver on the issues of importance to Freehold Borough. Freehold Borough will continue to build upon the Best Practices that have been successful over the last several years and will seek to correct the ones that fell short. At the top of that list is our garbage and recycling collections vendor performance. There is not a week that goes by that Freehold Borough does not get inundated with complaints and this will be addressed.

Whether the issue is crime prevention and policing, downtown development, fiscal responsibility, providing the various infrastructure improvements or improving the quality of life for our residents, I look forward to working with the governing body, our professionals and the residents of Freehold Borough during the upcoming year.

I would also like to thank the volunteers who serve on the many boards, committees and volunteer organizations in Freehold Borough. Many of these boards and committees folks are here today. They know what I know that serving your community is not only the best gift you can give to Freehold Borough it’s the best gift you can give to yourself as well. The people who serve on these boards, committees and volunteer organizations make a difference everyday. Thank you for all you do we could not do this without you.

Since the swearing in of the fire chiefs for the Freehold Fire Department was on January 1st, I wanted to thank outgoing Fire Chief Dan Megill, incoming Fire Chief Robert Taylor, First Assistant Fire Chief Steven Pullen and Second Assistant Chief Robbie Bailey for their service to our community. Freehold Borough is not only run by the mayor and council and the various committees we have excellent professionals and personnel to perform the day to day business here in town. I would like to take the time to thank publicly, Freehold Borough Administrator Joe Bellina and all of the employees who work for him for their service to Freehold Borough,

especially Traci DiBenedetto our Borough Clerk who is the friendly face that the public sees when they come to Borough Hall. Her professional demeanor sets the tone for the entire office. I would also like to thank our attorney, Kerry Higgins for all of her work during the year, she reviews all of our ideas on the council and codifies them via ordinance or resolution and she settles all of our legal matters.

Last but not least I would like to thank my family for their support and sacrifice. It is not just yours truly who serves Freehold but the rest of my family as well. The truth is if it wasn't for them I couldn't be up here. My wife, Diane has been very understanding and has unconditional veto power over my role as a member of the governing body. We have two children, Michael and Nicole, who we are very proud of. Michael and I wanted to thank you for all of your help with the campaign this year. I would also like to thank my mother and my two brothers and their families for their support today. Again, I would like to thank the voters of Freehold Borough for giving me this opportunity."

Councilman Michael DiBenedetto stated the following:

"Thank you all for coming out, distinguished guests, delegates, family members and friends. George, I would like to congratulate you personally you are a hard worker. When you put your mind to something, things get done. The good thing about George is you don't have to ask him a second time to do something. I would also like to thank George's family for being there for us through the campaign and for the nights that he has to stay out and the days he has to come to meetings.

First of all, I would like to thank my mother and father, my brother, Barney and my sister-in-law Gini. To my brother, Joe who is a successful businessman downtown I thank you for all of your support. My wife, Cindy asked me if I finished my speech and I said "no" so I took my grand dog out for a walk and we came upon the Municipal Building that you are sitting in today and I thought about all of the people who have gone through the doors and all of the decisions that have been made in this building both past and present. So I will start from the top and the main guy who deals with the daily operations of the town, Joe Bellina, I thank you for all of the tremendous work that you do in this town. As Nolan says, sometimes I think there is a telephone booth down there and you put your "Superman" outfit on. Joe sometimes never goes home. I would also like to thank Kerry Higgins for all of the hard work that you do, Kerry keeps us legal. Traci Lynn, you are the smiling face of the Borough and thank you for all of the hard work you do and I am proud that the people who sit on this staff call you a great worker and the face of the people. Ricky Gartz, CFO and Hank Stryker, Code Enforcement, Garry Jackson, Fire Official, the Swisher brothers who our auditors from Suplee, Clooney and all of our professionals. I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for making us look good up here. I would like to thank the public works departments, Sal DeJesus and Harry Burt who lead our men sometimes on Christmas Day and Christmas Eve, they go out and yes they are making overtime and their getting comp. time but there are many times they are away from their families. I would like to thank Police Chief Roberts and our police officers. This year we had four people who were saved by our police department. I am very proud of the ladies and gentlemen who serve this town. The volunteers are the "glue" of Freehold. The people who serve on our many boards, I would also like to thank you for coming out on your evenings, as well. The first aid squad, I always see Jim McAllister up here and Bill Madden, we thank you for your time effort and dedication. To the fire department we swore in three chiefs who all have deep family roots in the Borough. We in the fire department don't build tradition, we just simply continue it.

This is the second time I've served under Mayor Nolan Higgins. I serve you now as I've done in the past. Your hard work and dedication to the Borough in the last three years is greatly admired.

As I walk downtown, I would like to thank Rich Gatto and everyone from Downtown Freehold for making our downtown a vibrant place to be. I also like the banners that are hung across Main Street. One of the banners in particular that I like to see is the one for Olde Freehold Day. This is a resurrected affair that was brought back to life by Councilman Kane. I would also like to thank Councilman Griffiths for all of his work on the Shade Tree Commission. On my walk I've passed many parks and last year our Youth Government Program received a grant to refurbish Veterans Park, this program was made under the direction of Councilman Sims. I also walked passed Hudson Manor and the Rug Mill and no one compares to Councilwoman Shutzer and all of the work she has done for our seniors. Finally at the close of my walk I end up at Elks Point and I would like to thank Abbington Engineering, who volunteered their time, our veterans groups, Carl Steinberg, Kevin Coyne and Councilman Schnurr. This is just a glimpse of what these people do. It is an honor working with these people. Thank you all.

Now to my family, Chris and Mark, thank you gentlemen for coming out I've seen you two grow from boys to men and you've truly filled a void that was in my life. I only have one daughter-in-law here today, the other one is hard at work, I have two additions to my family Melissa and Cara. You have gave Cindy and I the greatest gift a parent can have which is happiness, joy and companionship to our sons, thank you. To "Cinderella" from her trials and tribulations last year we noticed how blessed we were and with all of the friends that have showered her with letters, cards and flowers, we thank you all. Yesterday was my 18th anniversary of being sworn in as a councilman. In my early days Cindy would say what are you doing home so early. I thought I did something wrong and my meeting wasn't productive enough when I heard those words. I thank Tyler for coming out and my cousins and relatives who are here today. Happy New Year!"

Councilman Jaye Sims stated the following:

"I would like to first congratulate Councilman DiBenedetto and Councilman Schnurr on their victories. You both are tireless workers and great at your craft. It has been great working with you on council and I look forward to the upcoming year. I would also like to wish Council President Shutzer good luck this year with being assigned Council President. To Mayor Higgins, Councilman Kane, Councilman Griffiths, I also look forward to getting back to work with the three of you as well.

As Mike and George mentioned our Borough staff is top to none and I would like to publicly thank our Administrator Joe Bellina and all of our employees here in town for the work well done. Thank you to our attorney, Kerry Higgins. To my friend, Traci, I would like to thank you. I don't think the word "no" ever comes out of Traci's mouth; she does whatever is asked of her.

To our volunteers on our committees and commissions I would also like to say thank you for your service to this town, without all of you we would not be able to have all of the activities that you see around town. Our fire department, as Councilman DiBenedetto mentioned, on Thursday, January 1st was the changing of the guards. I would like to thank outgoing Fire Chief Dan Megill for his 6 years of service as chief and I would like to congratulate Fire Chief Robert Taylor, First Assistant Chief Steve Pullen and Second Assistant Chief Robbie Bailey, as well as President Mike Burtt. I wish you all good luck this year. To the first aid squad, I just heard prior to this meeting that Jeremy Hoffman is the Captain and Jeremy is second generation, his grandfather was a past chief in the fire department. I wish the first aid luck, it seems from year

to year the calls increase but somehow they find a way to get the job done. To our police department, Police Chief Glenn Roberts isn't here today but I would like to say thank you. Unfortunately, you've seen all the negativity in the press lately with all of the cops coming under fire, some are even losing their lives to unfortunate incidents. I would like to publicly say, and I think I speak for the entire council, that we stand behind our police department and we would like to support them, as well as our citizens in this town.

On Friday night, most of us on council had a chance to witness the swearing in of our neighbors, across town in Freehold Township and I would like to publicly congratulate Mayor Cook, Deputy Mayor Ammiano, and our Borough "son" Lester Preston, Jr.

To my favorite group, the Freehold Borough Youth Government, I took over this task several years ago as an idea that I pitched to the council to start a youth government group. One of the first projects that they wanted to do was revamp Veterans Park. We've acquired grant money which is in the process and hopefully we will be able to start it this year. More important, within the past year the group has been fundraising for funds to attend a trip to Washington D.C. I'm proud to announce today, that after a fundraising breakfast that we had last Sunday, the group achieved its goals and we will be going to Washington D.C. in April. Two of the members are here now, my nieces Cydney and Cierra Sims. Finally, I would like to say congratulations to my family who is sitting up front. My daughter's woke up this morning and they were really excited knowing that they were coming today; they asked if today was the day we go to Mr. Mike's party? To my wife, Danielle and my daughters, Mackenzie and Madison I would like to say thank you for your support and to my mother, Eva Sims thank you for your support. I wish everyone a safe and prosperous New Year and thank you for coming out."

Councilman Kevin Kane stated the following:

"I would like to thank everyone for coming out today, I was talking to Lester Preston on the way in and Reorganization meetings are like friends and family day at the ball park. We live in a great town and it is because of the people in this town.

I would like to congratulate Mike and George, you are both excellent councilmen and you serve the town well. I would also like to congratulate Sharon Shutzer as being named Council President. These guys mentioned before that Sharon does more for our senior citizens every year. She has a holiday party for them and if wasn't for this party a lot of these seniors would not have any holiday. It is because of Sharon, she makes their holiday time special.

He congratulated newly elected mayors, Brian Wilton from Lake Como Borough who is also our prosecutor, our friend and Mayor of Freehold Township, Tom Cook. Tom and I served on the Freehold Soccer board for years prior to getting involved in local municipal government. I would also like to congratulate my good friend, Lester Preston, who was elected as Committeeman in Freehold Township. Lester and I coached our daughter's travel soccer team for ten years and we went up and down the east coast with that team and we had a lot of fun.

Again, I mention we live in a great town and a great surrounding community with our neighbors in Freehold Township. It is because of the people that make it run. First I would like to thank our Borough employees and it starts at the top with our Borough Administrator Joe Bellina. I would also like to thank Ricky Gartz, Traci DiBenedetto, Kerry Higgins, Harry Burt, Sal DeJesus and all of our employees. They go above and beyond the call of duty. A few weeks ago there was a major sewer system situation down on Manalapan Avenue and those guys worked for a day and half, straight through trying to resolve the situation. We had to call in another company and thanks to our shared services agreement with Freehold Township we were able to use a company that they use. The public works department employees are tireless workers and they do a tremendous job and they are our front line people to our residents. I would like to thank all of our professionals, Freehold Borough has a great working environment

because of them. Our committee and commission members who are all on a volunteer basis, you've heard a lot of their names mentioned before along with our police department, fire department, first aid squad, all do a tremendous job.

Our world is becoming more and more complicated on a daily basis and there are some crazy things happening. You have to really cherish every moment that you have and if you see something suspicious you have to tell someone. We need to protect our police, fire and first aid squads and we have to be diligent with that. I would also like to thank our military who ensure that we have the freedoms to live in this country. If you look at some of the countries around the world, it is crazy.

My goal that I've set for this year is to try and make someone smile everyday. I would like wish everyone a safe, happy, healthy and prosperous 2015."

Councilman Ronald Griffiths stated the following:

"I would like to congratulate Mike and George on their re-election and our new Council President Sharon Shutzer. The fact that Mike and George ran unopposed speaks volumes about the work being done by this governing body. We've weathered the storms of the past few years, Irene, a Super Cell, Sandy and a Halloween snowstorm. Although these natural disasters cost us money, the debris removal, public works and police overtime and costs, incidental to the damages we've continued to invest in capital equipment and our aging infrastructure. The easy road would have been to "kick the cans down the road". However, with low interest rates and contractors submitting reasonable bids we've taken a more prudent approach.

We are maintaining our long range plans, while keeping a reasonable municipal budget. Much of the credit of this could be credited to the advice and council of our professionals. We have a professional staff, legal, fiscal and administrative that is worthy of the praises you heard this evening. We are also blessed with employees who are dedicated and capable. Both our police department and our public works department have served us well during recent difficult times. I don't know if we can actually say thank you loud enough or long enough to our first responders, our first aid and fire department are both volunteer organizations. Our first responders save lives and we are extremely grateful for the sacrifices they and their families make to protect our community.

We cannot relax and rest on past achievements, I believe 2015 will be a turning point for our town. We will hopefully be able to stop reacting to calamities and begin a proactive approach to governing. We will see improvements to our website to help citizens interact with their government. The new site will make local government more transparent. We will be hosting a Volunteer's Day to encourage citizen engagement with their town. We want to institutionalize the concept of the Innovation team. This program challenges volunteer citizens to analyze town problems and make recommendations for improving our town. While addressing citizen involvement with our governance we owe a large debt of gratitude to all of our volunteers. Without them we could not be effective. We couldn't have an effective Recreation Commission, Human Relations Committee, Shade Tree Commission, Board of Health, Historic Preservation Committee, Housing Authority, Library Commission, Municipal Alliance, Planning Board, Lake Topanemus Commission and a Memorial Day Parade which is the best in Monmouth County, as well as so many other programs and events.

We do and we will face challenges. There is a mandated property tax revaluation in process and although we don't exercise any power over the school system, the schools are clearly overcrowded and underfunded.

We look forward to 2015 and the challenges it brings and I want to thank you all for coming out this afternoon and with you all a healthy and Happy New Year."

Council President Sharon Shutzer stated the following:

“There is a old Native American saying that goes like this: Looking behind, I am filled with gratitude. Looking forward, I am filled with vision. Looking upwards, I am filled with strength. Looking within, I am filled with peace.

These words best express my feelings.

I am filled with gratitude when I consider all of the people who make this town what it is. George and Mike, thank you for your willingness to serve. I know that you will go forward keeping our residents’ best interests as your goal. Congratulations! My Mayor and my fellow council members deserve a tremendous thank you. Thank you for having faith in me and for electing me as president. Don’t forget that I, too, am a resident and I know how hard this governing body works to make life better for me and for every other resident. Our professionals, our employees, our volunteers and our residents are absolutely second to none and I am grateful for each of you. You all make us look good. Every committee and commission member is a volunteer without whom we could not function. Our volunteer fire department and our first aid deserve a special thank you as they selflessly and bravely face danger every time that call comes in. Theirs is the truest form of caring and giving. Thank you.

A special word of gratitude this year goes to Carl Steinberg, Kevin Coyne, the Marine Corps League and all others who brought the dream of a WW II Veterans’ Memorial to fruition. Countless hours of hard work, love for our country and respect for those who served have created a beautiful and lasting tribute to our veterans and their families. Thank you.

I would be remiss if I did not say something about our police force. In today’s world, the men and women of our department face a devastating and brutal atmosphere unlike anything I have seen during all of the years I have held this position. We are all heartsick about and frightened by the stories that we hear, and yet, somehow Freehold’s finest show up every day to protect all of us. How does one thank them for that? I can only say that as a councilperson, as a mother and grandmother, and as a human being, I support and appreciate you. I hold you in my heart and my prayers every day. Thank you.

As I look to the future, I am excited about the challenges to come. I love Freehold Borough and its residents, and I continue to find strength in the only campaign promise I have ever made, which is to do what is best for the residents of our beautiful Freehold. I am able to look myself in the mirror every day and find peace in knowing that I have been true to you.

In closing, I say the Apache prayer with which I always end. This is my heartfelt wish for all of you, “May the sun bring you new energy by day, may the moon softly restore you by night, may the rain wash away your worries, may the breeze blow new strength into your being, may you walk gently through the world and know its beauty all the days of your life.”

Mayor Higgins introduced Jeff Friedman and he was acknowledged as Co-chairperson of the Municipal Alliance.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

TRACI L. DIBENEDETTO, RMC
BOROUGH CLERK

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