

FREEHOLD TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MINUTES

**REGULAR MEETING**

**March 28, 2023**

At 7:15 p.m., the Township Committee met in Mayor's caucus of the municipal building. Mayor Walker read the following statement:

"In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, this meeting was announced on January 9, 2023 by: 1.) posting a notice on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building reserved for that purpose, 2.) by mailing such notice to the offices of the official newspapers of the Township and 3.) by filing such notice with the Township Clerk".

**In Attendance:** Committeeman Ammiano, Committeeman Cook,  
Committeeman Preston, Committeewoman Fasano  
Mayor Walker

**Absent:** None

**Also in attendance:** Mr. Valesi, Township Administrator; Mr. Ball  
Esq. Township Attorney; Mrs. Abouzeina, Municipal  
Clerk, Mrs. Bartolomeo, Deputy Clerk

Mr. Ball read the following resolution:

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 10:4-13 of the Open Public Meetings Act permits the exclusion of the public from meetings of public bodies in certain circumstances which are set forth in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (b); and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Freehold is of the opinion that such circumstances currently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Freehold as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from the discussion of any action upon the hereinafter specified matters
2. The nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:

**1. ATTORNEY -CLIENT PRIVILEGE**

1A. State Licensed Facilities

**2. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

2A. Various Tracts

3. It is anticipated at this time the above-stated subject matter will be made public approximately thirty (30) days or at such time as any litigation discussed is resolved

The foregoing resolution was moved by Mr. Cook and seconded by Mr. Preston

VOTE:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, and Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

At 7:16 pm, the Township Committee adjourned to Executive Session.

Executive Session adjourned at 7:58 pm.

At 8:00pm, the Regular Meeting was called to order.

Mayor Walker re-read the following statement:

“In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, this Meeting was announced on January 9, 2023 by: 1.) posting a notice on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building reserved for that purpose, 2.) by mailing such notice to the offices of the official newspapers of the Township and 3.) by filing such notice with the Township Clerk”

Mayor Walker asked for a moment of silent for Fredrick Searby who died on 3/7/2023 former Charter member of Fire Company. Former Fire Chief and former Fire Commissioner. Also, for Evelyn Dieckhaus, Mike Hill, Katherine Koonce, Cynthia Peak, Hallie Scuggs and William Kinney who died in the Nashville School shooting.

Salute to the Flag and Pledge of Allegiance

**In Attendance:** Committeeman Ammiano, Committeeman Cook, Committeewoman Fasano, Committeeman Preston and Mayor Walker

**Absent:** None

**Also in attendance:** Mr. Valesi, Township Administrator; Mr. Ball Esq., Township Attorney; Mrs. Abouzeina, Municipal Clerk and Mrs. Bartolomeo, Deputy Clerk

**Absent:** None

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

None

## **REPORTS**

Mrs. Abouzeina read the report of the Tax Collector for the Month of February 2023:

Net Receipt:	General Fund	\$13,044,878.87
	Water Account	\$ 207,976.38
	Sewer Account	\$ 412,400.01

## **PRESENTATIONS**

Proclamation – “National Volunteer Week” April 16-22, 2023 Honoring Kevin Sweetnam

Mayor Walker presented the Proclamation to Kevin Sweetnam

Proclamation – Alcohol Awareness Month- April 2023

Mayor Walker presented the Proclamation to Kelsey Grenus the new Municipal Alliance Coordinator

Proclamation– Autism Awareness Month- April 2023

Mayor Walker presented the Proclamation to Chris Cleffi- Director of Educational Services in Freehold Township

Oaths of Office – Jonathan Arocho  
Michael Mannuzza  
Kevin McClain  
Thomas Ray  
William Moody  
Antonino Matera  
Shawn Poole

Mayor Walker read the Biography/ Background for the police officer.  
Township Clerk administrated the Oath of the office.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

R-23-61 – Resolution Acknowledging Receipt and Review of Planning Board  
Report Re: Ordinance No. O-23-3

Mr. Preston read Resolution R-23-61 and moved it for adoption, seconded by Mr. Cook

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

O-23-3 – Ordinance Amending Chapter 190 (Land Use), Article I (General Provisions), Section 190-3 (Definitions) of the Revised General Ordinances of the Township of Freehold, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey

Mayor Walker opened Ordinance O-23-3 for public hearing and asked for any comments or questions.

There being no comments from the public.

Mr. Cook moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Preston

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

Mr. Cook made motion to adopt Ordinance O-23-3, seconded by Mr. Preston

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

#### NEW BUSINESS

R-23-62 – Resolution Authorizing Reduction Change Order No. 1, Declaring Acceptance and Final Payment of Contract 22-9; 2022 Pavement Overlay Program

Mrs. Fasano read Resolution R-23-62 and moved it for adoption, seconded by Mr. Ammiano

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

R-23-63 - Resolution Approving Consolidated Bills List

Mr. Ammiano read Resolution R-23-63, the Consolidated Bills List in the amount of \$2,556,168.30 and moved it for adoption, seconded by Mr. Preston

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

Public Hearing – Concerning Freehold Township Fire District No. 2 2023 Budget

Mr. Preston read at the February 18, 2023 Fire District Elections, the Freehold Township Fire District No. 2 2023 Budget was defeated by the voters. As provided under law, the local government, subject to a public hearing, prepares and submits a budget to the New Jersey State Division of Local Government Services (NJSD/LGS). At the direction of the members of the Governing Body, I was appointed to review the defeated budget and make recommendations as to a revised budget that will be submitted to (NJSD/LGS).

As part of the recommendation process, I reviewed several documents including the details of the 2023 defeated budget, prior years defeated budgets and subsequent reductions to those budgets and the Report of Financial Statements Compilation Report for December 31, 2022 (Unaudited). In addition, I had conversations with the District Chairperson, Treasurer and Independent Auditor to better understand the current financial position of the District.

The following are the components of the defeated budget defeated budget:

**Revenues**

Fund Balance Utilized	\$294,557
Operating Grant Revenue	\$4,157
Amount to be Raised by Taxation	<u>\$1,143,756</u>
Total Anticipated Revenues	<u>\$1,441,756</u>

**Appropriations**

Total Administration	\$155,000
Total Cost of Operations	\$783,599
Appropriations offset with Revenue	\$4,157
Length of Service Contributions	\$159,000
Capital Appropriations	<u>\$340,000</u>
Total Appropriations	<u>\$1,441,756</u>

In reviewing the budget, the following factors were considered when determining what adjustments should be made to the 2023 budget:

- The margin of the defeated budget and the total number of votes cast (margin of defeat – 1 and approximately 250 votes cast)
- Prior year cuts to previously defeated budgets totaling \$566,846
- Anticipated Unrestricted Fund Balance (\$1,619)
- When expressed as a percentage, the Increase in amount to be raised by taxation (1.3%) versus amount permitted by regulation (2%) and the current Cost of Living Index (approx. 6.5%)

After careful thought and deliberation, it is our recommendation that there be no further reduction to the 2023 budget that was defeated on February 18, 2023.

R-23-64 – Resolution Concerning the Freehold Township Fire District No. 2 2023 Budget

Mr. Preston read Resolution R-23-64 and moved it for adoption, seconded by Mr. Cook

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

O-23-4 – An Ordinance Adopting Amendments to Chapter 190, Land Use, Articles I – General Provisions, Article XII – General Zoning Provisions, and Article XIX – Conditional Use Permits, of the Revised General Ordinances of the Township of Freehold, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey

Mr. Preston moved ordinance O-23-4 for public hearing to the Township Committee meeting of April 25, 2023 seconded by Mr. Cook

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

O-23-5 – Ordinance Accepting Road Widening Dedication for Block 97, Part of Lot 14

Mr. Preston moved ordinance O-23-5 for public hearing to the Township Committee meeting of April 25, 2023 seconded by Mr. Cook

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

O-23-6 - Calendar Year 2023 An Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and Establish a Cap Bank (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)

Mr. Ammiano moved ordinance O-23-6 for public hearing to the Township Committee meeting of April 25, 2023 seconded by Mr. Cook

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

R-23-65 – Resolution Introduction of 2023 Municipal Budget

Mr. Ammiano read Resolution R-23-65 and moved it for adoption, seconded by Mr. Cook

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

R-23-66 – Resolution - Governing Body Certification of Compliance with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s “Enforcement Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964”

Mrs. Fasano read Resolution R-23-66 and moved it for adoption, seconded by Mr. Cook

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

### **FORMAL ACTION – CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS**

Matters listed under the items of “Consent Agenda” are required to conduct the day-to-day operations of the Township, and will be enacted by one (1) motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion of any item is desired, that item will be considered separately

R-23-67 – Resolution Amending Resolution R-23-43 Authorizing the Appointment of Matthew Barbieri as Freehold Township Tax Assessor

R-23-68 - Resolution Providing for Temporary Appropriations Pending State Approval for 2023 Municipal Budget

R-23-69 – Resolution Authorizing Application and Approving Participation with the State of New Jersey Fiscal Year 2023 Safe and Secure Communities Grant Program Administered by the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General

R-23-70 – Resolution Cancelling Taxes

R-23-71 – Resolution Cancelling Taxes and Disbursing Overpayment of Taxes – Disabled Veteran

R-23-72 - Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Professional Consulting Engineering Services for General Services, Planning Board, Environmental, Licensed Land Surveying and Engineering Consultant to the Utilities Department

R-23-73 – Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Automotive Lubricants for the Department of Public Works

R-23-74 - Resolution Authorizing Execution of Rights-of-Way Use Agreement between the Township of Freehold and Comcast Business Communications, LLC

Mr. Cook read the Consent Agenda resolutions and moved them for adoption, seconded by Mr. Preston

Vote:

**AYES:** Mr. Ammiano, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Fasano, Mr. Preston, Mayor Walker

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

There being no further business, Mayor Walker asked for any comments or questions from the public.

There were no comments from the public, Mayor Walker asked for any comments from the dais.

Mr. Cook congratulated the new police officers and wished them good luck.

Mr. Preston congratulated the new police officers and wanted to recognize Mr. Kevin Sweetnam for his great volunteer work with the boy scouts. Mr. Sweetnam's troop 155 has the highest rate of success for the boy scouts to become eagles in the history of his troop.

Mrs. Fasano was proud that most of the new police officers were Freehold Township high school graduates.

Mr. Ammiano and Mayor Walker echoed Mr. Preston's comments.

Mayor Walker Adjourned the Meeting at 8:52pm

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Sanabel Abouzeina, Township Clerk