

BOROUGH OF MOUNTAIN LAKES
BOROUGH HALL, 400 BOULEVARD, MOUNTAIN LAKES
973-334-3131
www.mtnlakes.org

DECEMBER 8, 2014
7:30 PM EXECUTIVE SESSION
8:00 PM PUBLIC SESSION

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER; OPENING STATEMENT

This meeting is being held in compliance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231, Sections 4 and 13, as notice of this meeting and the agenda thereof had been reported to The Citizen and the Morris County Daily Record and The Star Ledger on January 8, 2014 and posted in the municipal building.

Mayor Happer called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. in the municipal building.

2. ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

Ms. Reilly called the roll. All Council members were present. Also in attendance were Borough Manager Robert Tovo, Borough Attorney Martin Murphy, Borough Clerk Michele Reilly, Police Chief Shawn Bennett, Department of Public Works Director Mark Prusina, and Recreation Director Audrey Lane.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Happer led the salute to the flag.

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION

NONE

5. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Happer said that the Borough had recently held the annual rabies clinic and Ms. Reilly said approximately thirty (30) cats and dogs were vaccinated.

Mayor Happer mentioned that the annual Christmas tree lighting had been held last evening and that Deputy Mayor Holmberg had represented the Borough.

Mayor Happer congratulated the Mountain Lakes High School Herd football team on its State Championship win at Met Life Stadium yesterday.

Mayor Happer announced the upcoming Menorah Lighting, to be held on Sunday, December 21st. He also announced that Santa would be visiting the Borough, courtesy of the Mountain Lakes Fire Department, on Saturday, December 20th from 11 am to 1:30 pm and then would be receiving visitors at the firehouse from 2:00 pm until 3:00 pm.

Mayor Happer reminded those in attendance that the Police Department now has a Facebook page and can be followed on either Facebook or Twitter.

Mayor Happer mentioned that residents can report street light outages to JCP&L and that the Borough website contains a link to the JCP&L website.

Mayor Happer congratulated Councilwoman Blair Bravo on her sixteen (16) years of service to the Borough. Councilwoman Bravo offered thanks to Chief Bennett and to the Police Department for honoring her at the Police Department dinner as the Citizen of the Year.

Councilman Borin said the Library Board had recently held a wine and cheese reception at the library in honor of the centennial.

Councilman McWilliams mentioned that the Town Club recently held its annual House Tour.

Councilman Albergo commended Recreation Director Audrey Lane and the Recreation Commission, as well as the Department of Public Works, the Police Department, the Borough administration, and all involved in facilitating Borough events. He said these events are fantastic for children and families and make Mountain Lakes a special place to live.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Please state your name and address for the record. Each speaker is limited to one (1) comment of no more than five (5) minutes and no yielding of time to another person.

Mayor Happer opened the public comment portion of the meeting with the consent of the Council. Mayor Happer explained the Council's policy of limiting each speaker to five (5) minutes and no yielding of time to another person.

Ray Best – Intervale Road

Mr. Best agreed with Councilman Albergo and said Mountain Lakes had been a great place to live and thanked the Borough Council and the Borough Attorney for their service to the community.

With no one else wishing to be heard, Mayor Happer closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

7. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

PROCLAMATION

PR02-14 A Proclamation Honoring Joan Best

Mayor Happer offered congratulations to Joan Best on the occasion of her retirement after fifteen (15) years of service as a Borough employee and read the following proclamation:

Whereas, the members of the Borough Council of the Borough of Mountain Lakes, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, wish to recognize and honor the dedication of **Joan Best** on the occasion of her retirement; and

Whereas, Joan Best was hired as the Utilities Clerk by Borough Manager Gary Webb in January of 2000, and worked in the Borough Administrative offices for eight (8) years; and

Whereas, Joan Best has worked since October of 2008 as the Administrative Assistant for the Department of Public Works and as the right hand and right arm of Director Mark Prusina; and

Whereas, Joan Best works tirelessly to further the Borough's recycling program, assists in acquiring Clean Communities grant money, and offers a wealth of information to both employees and residents who have questions or concerns about recycling; and

Whereas, Joan Best not only works for the Borough of Mountain Lakes as an employee but has dedicated herself to volunteering for the community in which she lives as a member of the Shade Tree Commission; and

Whereas, during **Joan Best's** sixteen (16) year tenure as a Shade Tree Commissioner the Borough of Mountain Lakes maintained its designation for Tree City USA and received approval from the State of New Jersey for two (2) Five Year Community Forestry Management Plans, which provided crucial grant opportunities for the municipality; and

Whereas, Joan Best's contributions as a Shade Tree Commissioner, both as a member, a Co-Chair, and a Chair, led directly to the enhancement of the tree canopy in Mountain Lakes that is a cornerstone of the unique character that defines the town; and

Whereas, Joan Best is known to her co-workers and friends for her passion for recycling, her resourcefulness, her love of tennis; her forthrightness, and her amazing knitting and sewing creations; and

Whereas, Joan Best and her dedication to the Department of Public Works employees, the Borough, and the community, her vigilance at the recycling center, and her invaluable knowledge of trees, water meters and recycling that she graciously shared with all, will be missed.

Now Therefore Be It Proclaimed, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Mountain Lakes, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, that the Borough Council, on behalf of the Borough and all its residents, hereby honor and recognize **Joan Best** for her commitment to the community and extend their sincerest gratitude and appreciation to her for her service to the Borough of Mountain Lakes.

Mrs. Best thanked the Council and received congratulations and applause from those in attendance and the Borough Council members.

-Recreation Year End Report

Recreation Director Audrey Lane reviewed Recreation Department accomplishments in 2014. She noted several highlights including supporting the establishment of new working Boards for basketball and field hockey, helping the youth sports programs gain access to more gym space and turf time, and working with youth programs to provide baseline concussion evaluation and background testing for youth coaches. Ms. Lane outlined new programs offered in 2014, including summer camps such as horseback riding and digital moviemaking, non-sports programs such as knitting and robotics, an ultimate Frisbee club, and she announced a new middle school ski program beginning January 2015.

Ms. Lane also gave an update on recreation facilities. She said Island Beach received sand replenishment late in the spring, a new tennis fob system was installed and functional at the courts, a new playground was completed at Midvale Park, and the Wilson Basketball Courts were renovated, resulting in increased usage and positive feedback. Ms. Lane thanked the Department of Public Works for all their help with these projects. She said ongoing projects include the renovations to the Midvale Boat Dock and repairs and improvements to the Fanny Road Baseball fields. In addition, Ms. Lane said there are improvements and upgrades proposed for the beaches and she said an architectural firm has been selected as the first step in the process.

Ms. Lane reported that Recreation met its goals for 2014. She said goals for 2015 include improving communication to residents regarding recreation programs, relaunching the 55 Plus group, revitalizing participation in the HUB Lakes League, and finalizing a recreation code of conduct for coaches and parents and possibly a code for players. Ms. Lane said the Recreation Commission's recommendation is that the Borough Council considers facilities improvements and upgrades to Island and Birchwood Beaches as a capital project for 2015.

In response to Council questions, Mr. Tovo said Recreation is tracking \$15,000 below budget when revenue figures are taken into account. The Borough Council offered thanks to Ms. Lane for her presentation and for her hard work.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

-Volunteer Recognition Program Update

Councilwoman Bravo thanked Deputy Mayor Holmberg for his help in preparing the discussion item update. She said she and the Deputy Mayor had several recommendations for the Council which they hoped would help to formalize and expand the current volunteer recognition program. Councilwoman Bravo said the first recommendation would be to continue the practice of presenting the Janice Hunts and Citizen of the Year awards at the Memorial Day ceremonies. She said another recommendation would be to hold an annual volunteer reception or picnic during the month of August, and at this event recognize service milestones with pins, certificates and plaques. Councilwoman Bravo said the responsibility for the picnic or reception should be delegated to the Deputy Mayor.

Councilwoman Bravo recommended that the Borough Council include time on the agenda for committee and commission presentations and continue its practice of recognizing retiring chairs with a silver bowl at the Reorganization meeting. She stated that the Mayor should continue his practice of sending letters welcoming new volunteers and thanking retiring volunteers. Mayor Happer added that the Council should continue the practice of holding a biannual chair/ new volunteer meeting in March. Mayor Happer said he supported the idea of an annual volunteer reception or picnic in the summer but thought holding the event in July might be a better idea due to the number of people who plan vacations in August. Mayor Happer said he also supported recognizing years of service but that chairs would have to assist in keeping track of volunteer attendance and tenure.

Mayor Happer thanked Councilwoman Bravo and Deputy Mayor Holmberg for their efforts. Mr. Tovo said he would continue to work with the Council on the volunteer recognition program and would outline a policy for the recognition of service milestones.

9. ORDINANCE **NONE**

10. *RESOLUTIONS:
R137-14 Resolution Authorizing the Payment of Bills

11. *MINUTES:
November 24, 2014 (Executive)
November 24, 2014 (Regular)

12. *DEPARTMENT REPORTS **NONE**

13. *BOARD AND COMMITTEE AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS NONE

Council Member	By:	2nd:	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Albergo			X			
Borin			X**			
Bravo	X		X			
Lester			X			
McWilliams			X**			
Holmberg		X	X			
Happer			X			

**Councilman Borin abstained from voting on the November 24th minutes, both Executive and Regular, and Councilman McWilliams abstained from voting on the Bills List, purchase order #1182.

14. ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Murphy had nothing to report.

15. MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Tovo reported that the Borough had expended \$167,000 in clean-up costs as a result of the pre-Halloween snowstorm of 2011. He said the Borough is eligible for FEMA reimbursement of seventy-five percent (75%) of the expenditures and he expects to receive about \$125,000 from the agency. Mr. Tovo said he will prepare a spreadsheet for the Borough Council detailing the expenditures and reimbursements for the pre-Halloween snowstorm and for Hurricane Sandy. He reported that the Borough expended \$708,000 after the Hurricane and expects FEMA reimbursements totaling ninety percent (90%). Mr. Tovo said the Borough would also receive some funds for labor costs sustained by the Department of Public Works. Mr. Tovo thanked Mayor Happer for contacting Congressman Frelinghuysen in an effort to expedite the reimbursement process.

Mr. Tovo mentioned that Montville's Health Officer, John Wozniak, had retired in November and that the Shared Services Subcommittee had recommended exploring other options for the health services contract. Mr. Tovo said he had received two written proposals, one from the Borough of Lincoln Park for \$25,000 per year, and one from the Township of Bloomfield for \$23,780 to \$29,000, depending on the term of the contract. Mr. Tovo said that the current cost of the contract with the Township of Montville is \$38,000.

Mr. Tovo said that the subcommittee had reviewed the two proposals and was unanimously recommending the Borough pursue a contract with the Township of Bloomfield, due to several factors such as the substantial cost savings, the availability of the Bloomfield staff, which would facilitate services offered directly in the Borough, and the resume of Mr. Michael Fitzpatrick, the Health Officer and a Borough resident. Councilwoman Bravo confirmed that the subcommittee had endorsed the Township of Bloomfield's proposal. Mr. Tovo requested that the Council allow him to explore contract options with Bloomfield. Mayor Happer asked about the Health Commission's involvement in the process and Mr. Tovo said that he would call the chair and discuss the proposal. The Council consensus was that Mr. Tovo should move ahead with the contract.

Mr. Tovo thanked Councilwoman Bravo for her years of service and for her dedication and leadership. He said she had been a valuable asset to the Borough and to him.

16. COUNCIL REPORTS
-Council Goals Discussion

Mayor Happer led the discussion. He said he was pleased that the Council had accomplished many of its 2014 goals, such as monitoring the formation of the Civilian Emergency Response Team (CERT), revising the personnel policy and procedure manual and supporting the implementation of a new website. He pointed out that the Council had also accomplished its goal of supporting a town clean-up, which he hoped would become a yearly event, and that Councilwoman Bravo had just fulfilled the goals of evaluating ways to improve volunteerism and evaluating the timing of the presentation of the Janice Hunts and Citizen of the Year awards.

Mayor Happer said he was pleased that the Council had adopted a fiscally responsible budget. He said he was confident that the Council's other financial goals for the year had been satisfied. He stated that these should also be considered long term goals, such as evaluating opportunities for increasing tax rates, completing a long range capital plan, and developing a strategy for upgrading and maintaining recreational facilities, and he would expect them to continue to be Council goals in 2015,

Mayor Happer suggested that the operational efficiency goals should also continue to be Council goals for 2015. He mentioned that the chairs of the Planning and Zoning Boards had requested more time to evaluate the pros and cons of combining the boards into one entity and he expected a decision could be made by the middle to the end of next year. Mayor Happer asked Mr. Prusina for an update on the implementation of PubWorks, and Mr. Prusina said he would expect the Borough staff to begin to use the program in the first quarter of 2015 and that the public should be able to utilize the program by the end of the summer.

Lakes Management Advisory Committee – Councilman Albergo said the Committee has a prospective new member, Michael Russo, who should be appointed at the Reorganization meeting. He said the Committee has been discussing the beavers at Birchwood and Mr. Tovo said he is waiting to receive the trapper assignment.

Department of Public Works Subcommittee – Councilman Albergo said the subcommittee has been focusing on Recreation and the selection of the architect. Councilman McWilliams added that the subcommittee has also discussed some trail improvements made at Birchwood and the recycling of fluorescent bulbs and styrofoam blocks, as well as a new method for handling electronic waste.

Communication Advisory Committee – Councilman Lester said there have been some changes made to the on-line calendar and that a new filter for “arts” had been added.

Woodlands Advisory Committee – Councilwoman Bravo said the Committee has submitted goals for 2015, which included educating residents about what constitutes a healthy forest. The Committee had also identified some key projects to focus on next year. Councilwoman Bravo commended the Committee on its knowledge and passion and its emphasis on sustainability for the future.

Historic Preservation Committee – Councilman Borin said the Committee has expressed interest in the dynamite shed. Mr. Tovo said that he has discussed this with the Committee and they are interested in having the building refurbished and subsequently used to store building materials. Mr. Tovo said he would follow up with the Committee chair. Councilman Borin said the Committee is also interested in meeting at the old theater located on the Boulevard and possibly hosting an open house at this location. Councilman Albergo said he would help Councilman Borin facilitate a discussion between the Committee and the property owner.

Councilman Borin said he has heard many concerns from residents about the closing of the post office. He said many residents feel the post office represents the town center. Mr. Tovo said that he has been in touch with Congressman Frelinghuysen’s office as directed by the Borough Council and has been told the Congressman is looking into the situation.

17. PUBLIC COMMENT

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Fred Kanter – Hanover Road

Mr. Kanter thanked Councilwoman Bravo for her years of service. Mr. Kanter said he wants to know how the Borough Council intends to handle the selection process for the 2015 appointment of the Borough Attorney and Borough Engineer and stated that he was not happy with the selection process for 2013 and 2014.

With no one else wishing to be heard, Mayor Happer closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

18. ADJOURNMENT at 9:37 PM

Motion made by Councilwoman Bravo, second by Councilman McWilliams, to adjourn the meeting at 9:37p.m., with all members in favor signifying by “Aye”.

***Indicates Consent Agenda Item**

Matters listed as Consent Agenda Items are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion of the Council and one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member requests an item be removed for consideration.

ATTEST: DECEMBER 8, 2014

Michele Reilly, RMC, Borough Clerk

Daniel J. Happer, Mayor