

OXFORD TOWNSHIP MEETING
September 15, 2021

The meeting of the Township Committee of Oxford Township was held on September 15, 2021 in the Oxford Township Municipal Building, 11 Green Street, Oxford, NJ.

Notice of time, date, location and agenda of this meeting, to the extent then known was provided at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the commencement of this meeting in the following manner pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 231 of the law of 1975 “the Open Public Meetings Act”:

- Emailing to the Express Times / Warren County NJ Zoned Edition
- Posting on the Township web-site and Facebook page

In attendance was Gerald Norton, Georgette Miller and Linda Koufodontes, Township Committee, Matthew Hall, Township Administrator, Richard Wenner, Township Attorney, Michael Finelli, Township Engineer, and Susan Turner, Deputy Municipal Clerk.

Mayor Norton opened the meeting at 7:02 PM

Mayor Norton asked all in attendance to observe a moment of silence for all who died on 9/11 and the 13 military members killed in Afghanistan.

Meeting Minutes:

Georgette Miller moved to accept the September 1, 2021 regular meeting minutes. Seconded by Linda Koufodontes and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.

Public Comment on Agenda items: - No comments

Resolutions:

- Resolution 2021-58 Trick or Treat – Halloween Curfew – Mayor Norton amended the resolution to read Trick-or-Treat Night shall be observed on Sunday, October 31, 2021 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

**RESOLUTION IMPOSING A HALLOWEEN CURFEW
AND ESTABLISHING OBSERVANCE OF TRICK-OR-TREAT
WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF OXFORD**

WHEREAS, Halloween Night and several nights before and after have historically been nights when acts of criminal mischief and vandalism have increased throughout the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Oxford desires to take some action to help reduce the likelihood of such incidents by establishing a **suggested curfew** to assist parents and lawful guardians of minor children; and

WHEREAS, said curfew is viewed as an important part of maintaining the peace and order of the community and all persons are strongly urged to cooperate with the Washington Township Police Department by abiding by the curfew; and

WHEREAS, the door to door solicitation of treats is a tradition enjoyed by many as well as an annoyance and inconvenience to others and, therefore, needs to be regulated to provide for the safety, health, and welfare of all persons within the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Oxford, in the County of Warren, State of New Jersey that there is hereby established a suggested curfew for all persons seventeen (17) years of age or younger of 9:00 pm from Friday, October

29, 2021 up to and including Monday, November 1, 2021. Curfew shall be extended for school sponsored events to one (1) hour after the conclusion of the event.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Trick-or-Treat Night shall be observed within the Township of Oxford on Sunday, October 31, 2021 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that due to the uncertainty related to the coronavirus pandemic, any and all guidance provided by the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the Warren County Prosecutor's Office, and/or the Township of Washington's Chief of Police shall be adhered to.

Georgette Miller moved to accept Resolution 2021-58 as amended. Seconded by Linda Koufodontes and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.

~~**Resolution 2021-59**~~ – Refund Bruce Doyle – Mayor Norton stated that Bruce Doyle had paid the Township to purchase a property and the sale could not be completed.

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF OXFORD,
COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING A REFUND IN THE
AMOUNT OF \$3,000.00 TO BRUCE DOYLE**

WHEREAS, Bruce Doyle paid the Township \$3,000.00 for the purchase of real property known as Block 32, Lot 41; and

WHEREAS, the closing cannot occur and the Township desires to refund Bruce Doyle his money in the amount of \$3,000.00; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by Township Committee of the Township of Oxford, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, refund in the amount of \$3,000.00 is hereby authorized and directed to be paid to Bruce Doyle for the reasons set forth above.

Georgette Miller moved to accept Resolution 2021-59. Seconded by Linda Koufodontes and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.

New Business:

- Fall Clean Up – PCFA offered the dates October 25 – October 30 for the Oxford Clean Up. Georgette Miller moved to hold the Oxford Fall Clean Up from October 25 through October 30, 2021. Seconded by Linda Koufodontes and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.
- Rescue Squad 50th year celebration at the Lake – Peggy Hissim contacted Mayor Norton requesting use of the lake on October 30, 2021 to celebrate the Rescue Squad's 50th year in service. Mayor Norton will request a Certificate of Liability Insurance for the event. Mayor Norton moved to approve the Rescue Squad's 50th year event at Oxford Lake on October 30, 2021. Seconded by Georgette Miller and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.
- The Oxford Central PTA contacted Mayor Norton and requested use of the lake on October 23, 2021 from 2 to 6 pm for a Trunk or Treat event. Mayor Norton moved to approve the PTA request for a Trunk or Treat event at Oxford Lake from 2 to 6 pm on October 23, 2021. Seconded by Linda Koufodontes and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.
- Phone System – Mayor Norton stated there have been ongoing issues with leaving voicemail messages at the Municipal Building. Susan Turner stated that new phones were received and were scheduled to be installed next week. Matt Hall stated the new phone system uses the existing phone lines but the voicemail system is internet based.

- Mayor Norton received a resident's request to issue a proclamation or resolution recognizing September 17 as Constitution and Citizenship Day and the week of September 17-24 as Constitution week. The request was received too close to the meeting time to issue either one but Mayor Norton moved to memorialize and support September 17 as Constitution and Citizenship Day and the week of September 17-24 as Constitution week. Seconded by Linda Koufodontes and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.

Old Business:

- Habitability Hearing 84 Mine Hill Road – Block 1.01 Lot 46 – Rich Wenner swore in Michael Finelli and property owner James Hunter. Mr. Finelli stated he inspected the exterior but, due to weeds and obstacles, could not see inside. The roof on the southern side is almost gone. The elements getting in could have caused mold and water damage to walls, floors and carpeting. Mr. Finelli presented pictures of the roof and front of the structure. In his opinion the condition of the roof makes the building uninhabitable. Mr. Hunter stated he agreed the building is currently uninhabitable. He spoke to Mr. Finelli about this property in late July 2021 and intends to demolish the building. When he appealed the property taxes, he indicated it was uninhabitable. He has not applied for a demolition permit yet. He presented a survey showing a proposed dwelling on a different area of the property. The contractor plans to demolish the existing building when he is ready to erect the new one, which could be in March or April. The Committee has granted extensions of 45 days in other cases. Mayor Norton stated Mr. Hunter will have 45 days to pull the required permits and present them to the Committee at the November 3, 2021 meeting. Mayor Norton moved to grant a 45 days extension for the habitability hearing of 84 Mine Hill Road. Seconded by Georgette Miller and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.
- Habitability Hearing – 6 Hill Street Block 34, Lot 37 – The property owner, Mohan Bista, was present. Rich Wenner reminded him he was still considered under oath from the previous hearing. Mr. Bista presented a copy of an electrical permit application, not stamped, and 10 pictures of the interior of the building. Mr. Hall stated the pictures show great progress but the unstamped permit application is a concern. Mr. Bista is looking for a plumber to inspect and repair or replace the heating system. This is a priority for it to be habitable. Mayor Norton moved to grant an extension of 3 weeks for Mr. Bista to present all necessary permits (electrical, plumbing, fire) by October 6, 2021 or a demolition order will be issued. Seconded by Georgette Miller and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.
- 3 Shippen Ridge – Because of the lack of property maintenance this year, Mayor Norton would like the property management company notified of the Township's regulations for grass and snow removal from the sidewalk. The property is also behind on tax and sewer payments. Mayor Norton requested the tax office send a notification of the delinquencies and the possibility of a tax sale to the mortgage company.
- Township Attorney – Zoning violations – Mayor Norton moved to authorize Rich Wenner and the Township Attorney's firm, Lavery, Selvaggi, Abromitis & Cohen, to prosecute zoning violations. Seconded by Georgette Miller and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.
 Matt Hall stated software for a code and zoning violations program to be used by the Police Department has not yet been purchased. A part time SRO can do code violations until the program is implemented. Matt will get the hourly rate and availability to determine what fits into the budget. Mayor Norton moved to authorize Matt Hall to continue discussions with the Washington Township Police Department for code enforcement shared services. Seconded by Linda Koufodontes and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.
- Committee laptops – Georgette Miller asked Matt Hall if the laptops purchased last year could be used by the Committee members. Matt Hall will contact the IT personnel to get passwords set up.
- Mayor Norton stated Ordinance 2021-13 Trailer Parking at Oxford Lake should have a second reading at the next meeting.
- Mayor Norton stated the Goose Hunt at Oxford Lake began today.
- Georgette Miller stated the Clean Communities funds for roadside cleanup have not been received by the wrestling group. Matthew Hall will follow up.

- Georgette Miller has concerns about the tunnel. Signs have been posted and one end fenced off, but people climb over the fence. Matt Hall stated the Township has done its due diligence by posting the signs and closing it off.
- Tree Lighting – An all day event is scheduled for November 27, 2021. Georgette Miller moved to authorize closing Wall Street and Washington Avenue to Belvidere Avenue on November 27, 2021 for the Tree Lighting events. Seconded by Linda Koufodontes and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 0.

Township Committee Reports and Correspondence

- Cigars and Bourbon Night – Georgette Miller stated the event has been cancelled. Refunds will be issued to ticketholders.
- Tree Lighting – Georgette Miller stated there will be 12 vendors and an ice sculptor at the event. She is looking into a horse drawn carriage and a banner for the triangle. She will draft a letter to downtown businesses with information about the street closure and joining the event.
- Linda Koufodontes will attend the next Board of Education meeting on September 23rd.
- Mayor Norton attended the Board of Education meeting. Back to school night was discussed as well as Covid precautions. 90% of the staff has received covid vaccinations. Mold remediation is completed.
- Georgette Miller emailed Michael Finelli regarding the overgrown grass and shrubbery at 321 Route 31. He will have it inspected.

Township Administrator: Matt Hall stated the ownership of the sewer line crossing Route 31 needs to be confirmed. Mike Finelli has a map of the sewer lines and can help confirm ownership.

Township Engineer Report: Michael Finelli stated the Mine Hill project is in the queue and is expected to start in mid-October. Buckley Avenue and Snyder Lane will be done at the same time. He has not heard about the 2022 DOT grant yet. Construction has started on the Spring Meadows project. A hearing for 119 Belvidere was held in Hackettstown last week. The court did not have a record of all the violations. Another hearing was scheduled for October 6. Mike noted that cleanup has been done on the property.

Township Attorney's Report: Rich Wenner stated Jim Kyle has the numbers for Cambridge West. The developer is happy with the numbers and an agreement is being drafted.

Motion To Pay Bills:

Georgette Miller moved to pay all bills presented to and approved by the Committee. Seconded by Linda Koufodontes. and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0.

Reports: The Washington Township Police Department August calls were stated. Georgette Miller will contact the Police Chief with the Tree Lighting information. Mayor Norton stated that the overnight parking ban for commercial vehicles in the municipal lot has gone into effect and asked that the any commercial vehicles there overnight be ticketed.

Public Comment: Peggy Niece, 19 Scranton Parkway, asked that someone watch the paving work as it is done on Mine Hill Road to ensure the quality of the job. She said the curbing and sidewalks along Belvidere Avenue are in poor shape. Mayor Norton stated that is a county owned road and the curbing and sidewalks are to be repaired/replaced this fall. He spoke with Mr. Lorzac who did not have dates yet. Dana McGuire asked when tax bills were sent out. Susan Turner stated they were mailed Monday. Susan Toronto asked for confirmation of the Clean Up Voucher pick up dates and the Tree Lighting event. She also asked if trees/bamboo along Pequest Road can be cut down and/or trimmed back. Mayor Norton stated the bamboo has been cut and any trees along there cannot be cut.

Meeting Recap:

Executive Session- No Executive Session

Mayor Norton moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 PM. Seconded by Georgette Miller. Ayes: 3, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0. Motion passed.

Susan Turner, Deputy Clerk