

March 29, 2011

A Neighborhood Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Roxbury was held on March 29, 2011 at 7:00p.m., in the Roxbury Performing Arts Center located at 72 Eyland Avenue in Succasunna. This meeting was held for the purpose of general discussion with Township residents.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

Adequate notice of this Neighborhood Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Roxbury was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice was published in the Daily Record on December 23, 2010; Notice was faxed to the Daily Record, the Newark Star Ledger, The Roxbury Register, and was posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building, on December 20, 2010.

ROLL CALL (Present): Councilman Gary Behrens
Councilwoman Kathy DeFillippo
Deputy Mayor Fred Hall
Councilman Martin Schmidt
Councilman Richard Zoschak
Mayor Jim Rilee

Absent: Councilman Timothy Smith

Also Present: Christopher Raths, Township Manager
Amy Rhead, Acting Township Clerk
Richard Blood, Director of Public Works

OPENING REMARKS – Mayor Jim Rilee

Mayor Rilee spoke about the success of the Neighborhood Meetings, now in its seventh year. Residents have expressed their approval of the casual format.

Introduction of Council Members

Mayor Rilee introduced members of the Council.

Introduction of Staff

Mayor Rilee introduced the Township Manager, Township Clerk and Director of Public Works.

Mayor Rilee introduced Senator Anthony Bucco.

Mayor Rilee also introduced Assemblyman Anthony Bucco.

Mayor Rilee amended the order of the agenda to allow for the following:

Recognition of 2009 and 2010 Readers Choice Awards

Mayor Rilee and Councilwoman DeFillippo presented representatives from each of the following businesses with a Certificate of Appreciation and thanked them for their many contributions to the Township:

- BMW of Roxbury
- Dr. Cindy Adelstein (West Morris Dental Assoc.)
- Floor Solutions
- Flowers by Mary Ann
- Giancarlo's Bakery
- Holiday Inn Express
- Home Depot
- Howard Cleaners
- Knight's Automotive Repair

- Roxbury Diner
- Santana's Styling Salon
- Weecycled Bundles of Joi

Certificates will be mailed to the following recipients:

- Ashley Furniture
- Bottle King Liquors
- Casella's Pizzeria/Fine Italian Deli
- Century 21 – Joe Tekula Realtors
- Clearview Cinema
- Cole's Carpet
- Dering's Garden Supply
- Diann's Gifts and Collectibles
- Dr. Fox
- Dr. Pinke
- Famous Footwear
- Fuddruckers
- Great Clips for Hair
- Heartbeat Dance Center
- Java Joe's
- Kohl's Department Store
- Merry Heart Nursing Home
- Mister Sparky
- Morris County Educare and Enrichment Center, LLC
- Pet Goods
- Planet Fitness
- Roxbury Cleaners
- Roxbury High School, Ellen Burd
- Sports Authority
- Stein Mart
- Suburban Furniture
- T. Daniel Specialty Heating, Inc.
- Valley Pharmacy
- W. Kodak Jewelers
- Walgreen'
- Wingman

Mayor Rilee reviewed the proposed street improvement plans at the following intersections:

- Route 10 and Commerce Boulevard
- Route 10 and Hillside Avenue

Mayor Rilee stated that the Council had input in the design which substantially reduced the cost of the project and will have a positive impact on the traffic flow. He stated that they continue to work diligently to ensure that the funding remains in place for the improvements.

Residents' expressed concerns about potential energy interruptions and/or power outages during construction. Discussion took place regarding the probability that timing issues of traffic lights may need to be evaluated. Mr. Rath requested that residents be patient during the construction phase.

Councilman Behrens asked for an update on the County's railroad project at Horseshoe Lake. Deputy Mayor Hall asked for clarification of the location of the walkway. Mr. Blood responded that the project is approximately ninety percent complete, but that the relocation of the bikeway will have to wait until the weather is warmer and the ground is not wet.

Councilwoman DeFillippo reminded residents that the County owns the property where the tracks are being reactivated. She stated that the Council tries to balance concerns for the quality of life for the residents with the interests of the local business.

Deputy Mayor Hall added that the Township is working with the County on extending Patriot's Path into Randolph.

RECOGNITION OF 2009 AND 2010 READERS CHOICE AWARDS – *previously presented*

QUESTIONS

Discussion took place regarding the speed of cars and their failure to yield when crossing on the crosswalk at Eyland Avenue to Imagination Station. Several possible options were considered. Mr. Rath stated that the Township would continue to look into the situation.

Residents expressed concerns regarding the Dog Park at Horseshoe Lake and those who do not clean-up after their pets. Mayor Rilee stated that it was an enforcement issue. Mr. Rath stated that he would look into what else could be done to try to alleviate the problem.

A resident announced that he was pleased when he received the flyer regarding the privatization of the Township's sanitation services and found out that the new service would be providing "bulky waste" (large items) pick up at no extra charge.

Assemblyman Bucco answered a question about the recent tax bill credit and the criteria used to arrive at the amount. Assemblyman Bucco also explained how the state is saving money by providing the credit, as opposed to mailing "Homestead Rebate" checks, as was done in the past.

Deputy Mayor Hall spoke about the procedure for discarding metal items. He stated that the County would be sponsoring a program in May to allow people to discard electronic equipment. Residents were informed that it would still be their responsibility to remove any Freon from items prior to being picked up.

Further discussion took place regarding the changes that would be occurring when Blue Diamond assumes the sanitation services for the Township on April 1st. Mr. Blood provided clarification regarding the number garbage cans per week that each property could put out to the curb and explained the rules for picking up large (bulky) items in lieu of two of the five garbage cans per week. Only one bulky item would be allowed per property each week.

Mayor Rilee spoke about the difficult decision to privatize the sanitation service, but that the Council had to make decisions that would benefit the taxpayers. Mr. Rath stated that the Union was given several opportunities to match the Blue Diamond proposal, but that negotiations broke down when negotiation of "legacy costs" (paid health insurance upon retirement) was suggested. Mayor Rilee explained that each municipality is required, by law, to pay the school and county portion of the taxes whether people pay their property taxes or not. Assemblyman Bucco stated that there was pending legislation that may equalize the prior equation when a municipality reduces its budget.

Mr. Rath expressed his appreciation to the workers and stated that the Township was fortunate to have such dedicated staff. He added Blue Diamond hired five of the individuals who were laid off and that they would all be on a "call back" list for six months in the event of any opens (due to retirements, etc.).

Mayor Rilee applauded the sanitation staff for doing an outstanding job during such a difficult time and commended them for their professionalism and work ethics.

A resident stated that St. Therese Church offers free financial assistance twice a month.

Discussion took place regarding opportunities to generate revenue; specifically, the suggestion of purchasing a dome so that recreational events, such as soccer or football, could be played indoors. Deputy Mayor Hall said that he would bring up the idea when the Recreation Committee reviews their Master Plan.

Deputy Mayor Hall outlined previous and ongoing shared services accomplishments between the Township and the School District.

A question was asked regarding the status of the Landing Recreational Park and the funding source. Mr. Raths and Deputy Mayor Hall responded.

A resident cautioned that there could be repercussions on the “senior Freeze” program due to the implementation of the property tax credit in lieu of receiving a Homestead Rebate check.

Questions were asked and answered regarding ownership of properties alongside certain areas of the train tracks.

The flooding of the Eyland Avenue parking lot, as well as the outflow and inflow of Horseshoe Lake were discussed. Mr. Blood said that the current high water table is a contributing factor. Mr. Raths stated that he would have the engineer look at the design and number of operational pipes into and out of the lake. A resident claimed that one corner of the lake does not freeze and that the filtration system is allowing undesirable material into the lake.

In response to an inquiry, Mr. Blood discussed the procedure and determining factors when determining the entity responsible for tree branch maintenance.

2011 “To Do” List

Mr. Raths reviewed the 2011 “To Do” List and announced that it is also available on the Township website.

Mayor Rilee thanked everyone for attending and announced dates and locations of future scheduled Neighborhood Meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:00 PM, Councilman Schmidt made a motion to close the Neighborhood Meeting. Councilman Behrens seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All in Favor – Yes

Motion carried 6 to 0.

Submitted By:

Amy E. Rhead
Acting Township Clerk

MINUTES APPROVED BY COUNCIL

DATE: April 12, 2011

ROLL CALL: Councilman Behrens – Yes
Councilwoman DeFillippo – Yes
Deputy Mayor Hall – Yes
Councilman Schmidt – Yes
Councilman Zoschak – Yes
Mayor Rilee – Yes