

# YOUR TOWN HALL

## PROCLAMATION SUPPORTING NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY FOR WOMEN ON FEB. 5<sup>TH</sup>

Middletown resident Linda Maresca was presented with a proclamation from the township supporting National Wear Red Day for Women.

Ms. Maresca explained her situation when she was younger and suffered a stroke. This is a program coordinated by the American Heart Association to bring awareness of heart disease in women.

## INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

The Committee introduced 5 ordinances that will each have a public hearing on February 16 before they are voted upon. No explanation was given at the time of introduction and each ordinance will be posted on the township website sometime after introduction. They are as follows, according to the agenda:

2010-2997 Ordinance Vacating a Portion of Magnolia Lane

2010-2998 Ordinance Amending Chapter 16, Planning and Development Regulations Application and Escrow Fees

2010-2999 Ordinance Amending Chapter 16, Planning and Development Regulations Relative to the Planned Development and Light Industrial Zone Districts

If the ordinances are numbered consecutively, these last 2 should be numbered 2010-3000 and 2010-3001, respectively.

2010-2300 Ordinance Repealing and Replacing Chapter 225 of the Code of the Township Regulating Smoking

2010-2301 Ordinance Amending §41-2.1 and §4-34 of the Township Code and Ordinance 2009-2996 Separating Positions Director of Finance and Chief Financial

Officer, Establishing Director of Finance as DCRP Eligible Positions and establishing Appropriate Salary Ranges for the Same.

## CONSENT AGENDA

The resolutions proposed and voted upon at each meeting are voted by consent. This means that they are all voted upon with one vote, instead of voting on each individual resolution. There are usually a couple of resolutions segregated for an individual vote.

During this meeting, there were 2 resolutions removed from the consent vote and voted on separately. The first one was for payment of bills for January. The list of bills was actually for the month of December, but the expenditures are approved in January.

This resolution, 10-54, was approved by a vote of 5-0. Before voting for this Committeeman Byrnes questioned the purchase of a chair, by the police department, for a cost of \$2,468.00. He was not sure if there could be a less expensive chair and did not know who the chair was intended for. He did not receive an answer from any of the officials present.

The other resolution, 10-72, was to authorize the transfer of reserves that were appropriated in 2009. This passed by a 5-0 vote, also.

Some of the other resolutions that were voted on at the meeting included the rejection of bids for fire trucks that the town was buying for the fire departments in town, renewal of agreements to remove deer carcasses and the housing of stray animals.

The Committee also agreed to award contracts for electrical and plumbing maintenance with local businesses, farmland leasing at Stevenson Park. Contracts were awarded for the purchase of police cars, playground equipment and various services and equipment with state vendors.

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Resolution 10-62 authorized the township to accept a payment instead of taxes for the Harmony Glenn Affordable Housing complex being constructed on Harmony Rd. A lease was renewed with the county to compost leaves in the Belford section of town and a lease of Croydon Hall facilities for a senior nutritional program to be conducted at that site was approved.

## COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Committeeman Sean Byrnes was selected to speak first at this meeting. He expressed the need for more consolidation of services and possibly having the county provide some of the services that the town now offers. Mr. Byrnes said that the towns, counties and state are still in a tough economical position. He feels that the township and the Board of Education should be working closer in providing the services offered.

Mr. Byrnes said that he has been looking over the 2008 audit that was conducted on the town. He mentioned a line that pointed to post employment benefits. This line stated that there was an excess of \$100M that will need to be paid out over the next 30 years. The town will also be faced with a \$3.4M pension payment this year.

It was also mentioned, by Committeeman Byrnes, that there were a number of residents from the Conifer Village apartments in Navesink that have had rent increases in the middle of their leases and would be heard from tonight.

Committeeman Massell stated that he was thrilled and honored to be on the Committee. He also stated that the winds of change are coming in the state government.

Committeewoman Brightbill spoke of the smoking ordinance that was introduced at that meeting. She said that it would affect the areas where people can smoke in relation to

the entrances of township buildings. Mrs. Brightbill mentioned that the Green Team, of which she is a member, had 3 meetings in December and they are looking for energy saving grants to be used in the township.

Deputy Mayor Fiore spoke to say that he agreed with a lot of what Mr. Byrnes had talked about. He said that times have changed regarding how benefits and planning for the future of the town will be done. He is optimistic with the changes that the new Governor is making. He said that the town budget process needs to be more creative and that no stone will be left unturned. He is looking forward to putting a plan together to form future budgets and he thanked all of the volunteers in town that sit on committees, boards and commissions.

Mayor Scharfenberger spoke about the MYAA fundraiser he attended and that there was twice the attendance as last year's event. He praised the new Governor in signing 8 Executive Orders on his first full day in office and that the town should support a Senate bill #1 that had to do with COAH.

The Mayor said that some budget ideas cost more than what they save and that some ideas are actually illegal. He said that he would go down fighting to get a budget this year.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

Robert Katz, of the Fairview section in town, stated to the Committee that his neighbor has been doing renovation on his property for quite some time and it was taking too long. He said that building codes were not being enforced and that variances were not obtained to do the amount of construction that was taking place. Mr. Katz said that he brought this to the Mayor's attention last November and that nothing is being done. Committeewoman Brightbill did remember him and that the building department went to

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the site and filed a report. She said that she would pull the report and follow up on this matter.

Joe Daly asked the Committee where the project in his area of Pt. Monmouth stood. He wanted to know if the Committee was still supporting the project to correct the flooding situation in his neighborhood.

The town engineer, Ted Maloney, stated that the plans for the project are about 75% complete. When they are finished they will be submitted to the DEP for approval and then work will be done. The Mayor mentioned that there may be a little bit of a hold up because of the new government in Trenton, but everyone is still committed in seeing the project complete.

A gentleman from Tindall Rd. asked about the deer management policy of the town and if hunting was allowed in township parks. The mayor responded by saying that the hunting in parks in town were being done in county owned parks where the deer population is a problem. Mrs. Brightbill stated that there is no hunting allowed in township owned parks.

The gentleman then asked where in the U.S. Constitution was it written that we must pay income taxes. The mayor replied that the deer question was much easier to answer.

John Triviano, from Conifer Village spoke to inform the Committee that the residents received a letter in October notifying them of a rent increase. This increase is based on a letter from NJ Housing & Mortgage Finance Authority that says as of Sept. 2008 the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 4.7% and Conifer Village was able to raise their rent 3%.

He was told that the rent would be stable for 2 years and that the CPI this year was in the negative. Mr. Triviano went on to say that 15-20 families had moved out because they can not afford the increase. He submitted a petition with about 130 residents' signatures

opposing the increase and submitted it to Mr. Byrnes.

The Township Attorney requested that he submit any correspondence with the HMFA so the town can review it to be brought up to speed on the situation. He also said that he was not familiar with the complex because it was before his time as township attorney.

Township Administrator Tony Mercantante stated that the town does own the property, but leases it to Conifer and the town has no control over what the rent can be. He did say that they will review the residential lease to see if there is wording to allow an increase.

Ulysses Smith of Conifer Village wanted to know if his lease agreement was legal. After presenting it to the attorney and administrator, it was determined that it was an addendum to the lease. He stated that he did pay the increase, but under protest.

Another resident from Conifer Village spoke to say that he was handicapped and a retired policeman. He stated that something must be done to help them. The Mayor responded to say that they will do all that they can to help.

Paul Aurelio of Conifer Village stated that his Social Security did not go up last year, but his rent did.

John Thompson of Conifer Village said that this rent increase was like a slap in the face to the residents that lived there.

A woman from Conifer Village spoke to say that she was 78 years old and had to get a job to afford to live in her apartment. Phil Nicolas of Belford wanted to know how much money was doled out in resolution 10-66. The Administrator said that it was \$50K and covered 4 properties. Mr. Nicolas wanted to know why the property at Harmony Glenn (resolution 10-62) was not assessed like the properties in the rest of the town. The attorney said that it was affordable housing and that they could not afford to build it without the

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special tax consideration. The Mayor said that the new Governor was ending these types of mandates.

Paul Jansen of Navesink announced that the Lions were holding a Super Bowl Pancake Breakfast at the VFW in Pt. Monmouth. He also said that change is coming but our taxes will still go up. He had a few recommendations like consolidating the Arts Center with the Library, offer early retirement to senior township staff and consolidate the maintenance staff of DPW and Parks and Recreation.

Don Watson, from New Monmouth, asked if anyone knew about the chair that Mr. Byrnes commented about earlier. The Mayor said that it might have a console attached to it, but they did not know so they can't comment on it. The Administrator said that it was for the police department and that they don't spend any more than they have to spend and that he believes that it is for the dispatch area.

Mr. Watson asked why an ordinance was introduced to separate the positions of CFO and Director of Finance. He said that this would add a salary to the payroll and all of the benefits and pension to go along. It was explained, by the attorney, that this was being done to enable the town to locate a CFO quicker and would still qualify for the position. The way the current position is defined, the town can't hire someone that is collecting a pension. The person hired will perform both positions, but has to be split out for various legal reasons.

Mr. Watson mentioned that when the current contract went out to bid, the current contractor suggested that they could collect all garbage in one pickup. They offered to collect garbage and recyclables at the same time and that they would sort it themselves. Mr. Maloney explained that the town receives revenue from the contractor for the recyclables it collects and that the return would not be

there if it was all collected at once. Plus, the bid was not structured that way.

The administrator said that the garbage contractor approached him and is willing to present a proposal that specifies one day a week collection and other options.

Committeeman Fiore did not understand how one day a week collection would reduce everyone's taxes, since he is paying the taxes to have curbside collection twice a week. He feels that if his service is reduced to once a week it will subsidize those that have private collection. He did not realize that the residents with private collection paid a separate fee. It was suggested that the whole town would be in the garbage district and eliminate private collection.

Bob Superti, of Leonardo, said that one day a week garbage collection is just reducing his services. He wants to keep the services that he has. He wants higher concentration on the leaf pickup on his street.