



**TOWNSHIP OF ROCHELLE PARK
151 WEST PASSAIC STREET
ROCHELLE PARK, N.J. 07662
MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING
October 5, 20156 – 8:00 PM**

Call to order 8:00 PM

According to the Open Public Meetings Act, this meeting of October 5, 2016 was sent to the Our Town newspaper, posted on the municipal web-site and posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building and has remained continuously posted as the required notice under the Statute and is being taped. In addition, a copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

Roll Call:

Comm. W. Hauser
Comm. J. Kovalcik
Comm. J. Scarpa
Comm. F. Valenzuela
Mayor M. Kazimir

Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Township Committee.

Mayor Kazimir asked that everyone remain standing for a moment of silence remembering those in the military stationed overseas.

A motion was offered by Comm. Valenzuela and seconded by Comm. Hauser to approve the agenda. Motion carried on a voice vote - all voting "Aye"

Discussion

Fire Department - Equipment

Fire Chief Mike Stearns, Assistant Chief Peter Donatello and Keith Danis addressed the Township Committee regarding the purchase of a new engine. Comm. Scarpa as liaison to the fire department explained that they are on a five year time line. He felt that the fire department utilizing a fire truck that is 26 years old is irresponsible. Scarpa then questioned necessity of holding a Special Meeting to discuss this piece of equipment. He stated that it was previously discussed at a meeting held in February, the bond was introduced in March and adopted in April. Mayor Kazimir explained reason for the special meeting was the time frame of advertising to award. He was advised by members of the fire department that pricing would change in November and a truck would cost significantly more. Scarpa does not feel the need to justify the purchase. He once again stated that this piece of equipment was previously discussed. He stated his displeasure with the indecisiveness with this Committee. He also wanted an explanation as to what happened to the Hardship Policy regarding summer camp.

Chief Stearns gave a brief overview of the fire department. He stated that there are 42 members and answer approximately 250-270 calls. Regarding this new piece of equipment, he explained there was a committee of 10 who met with vendors regarding the bidding process.

Keith Danis explained in great detail the ages and capabilities of our current equipment. He also stated that \$80,000 was set aside for new Scott packs as our current ones are 30 years old.

Comm. Scarpa stated that he was tired of bending to social media comments.

Mayor Kazimir advised that he had experienced a home fire first hand and commended the fire department, stating that without them, lives could have been lost.

The following Resolution was offered by Comm. Scarpa and seconded by Comm. Kovalcik and reads:

Resolution #2016-183

A Resolution - Authorizing Preparation of Bid Specifications

Whereas, the Township of Rochelle Park Fire Department has requested that the Township Committee consider the purchase of a new fire truck; and

Whereas, this vehicle acquisition has become necessary, in the opinion of the Fire Department, as a result of age and condition of one of the existing trucks; and

Whereas, the Township Committee has conducted a detailed analysis of repair costs, condition and other aspects of the current fire truck and has determined that, in fact, it is in the best interest of the Municipality to purchase a new truck rather than continuing to repair the existing vehicle; and

Whereas, as a result of having made the foregoing determination, the Township Committee shall hereby authorize the preparation of bid specifications for a new fire truck.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, by the Township Committee of the Township of Rochelle Park, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The Township Attorney in consultation with the Chief of the Fire Department, the Township Administrator and the Fire Department liaison are hereby authorized to prepare bid specifications for the purchase of a new fire truck.
2. Upon completion of the final bid specifications, the Township Committee shall receive and review the proposed specifications.
3. Upon receipt and final review of the bid specifications, the Township Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to arrange for public advertisement, in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law for this acquisition.
4. No contract for the purchase of this vehicle shall be awarded until such time as the Chief Financial Officer of the Township of Rochelle Park certifies that sufficient funds exist for this purpose.

Now therefore be it further resolved that the Township Clerk be and she is hereby authorized and directed to forward certified copies of the within resolution to the Township Attorney, the Township of Rochelle Park Fire Department, the Chief Financial Officer of the Township of Rochelle Park.

Attest: Elizabeth Kroll

A motion was offered by Comm. Scarpa and seconded by Comm. Hauser to open the meeting to the public. Motion carried on a voice vote - all voting "Aye".

Linda Boniface - 33 Parkway - Asked what would happen to the replaced fire truck. Chief Stearns advised that they would keep it handy and training on the new computerized fire truck would take time. She asked if there was any ongoing litigation regarding the Fire Department. Attorney Rotolo advised that there was none that he knew about. Ms. Boniface asked how much the Township's debt was. The Clerk will advise Ms. Boniface the answer.

John Morrow - 65 Howard Avenue - Asked about shared services regarding the fire department. He feels that this is too large an expense for the Township and they should look to surrounding municipalities. Assistant Chief Donatello explained that by involving other small municipalities we would just be moving the burden from us to them. Most surrounding towns are staffed by volunteers as well. Donatello explained that we are already involved in shared services with surrounding municipalities. Comm. Scarpa explained to Mr. Morrow that the replaced fire truck will be sold at auction. Fire Department member Keith Danis explained that Rochelle Park's fire trucks last longer than any municipality in Bergen County due to their maintenance schedule. Comm. Scarpa advised that this new fire truck will cost approximately \$22,000 per year. Morrow referenced the fire fighters in Hudson County. Mr. Danis advised that he was a Hudson County fire fighter for many years and there is no comparison between Bergen County and Hudson County. Mayor Kazimir advised that we are currently in a mutual aid agreement with surrounding towns. Mr. Morrow agreed to disagree. He thanked the fire fighters for their volunteerism.

Lyn Houghton - 117 W. Oldis Street - Thanked the Fire Department for their volunteerism. She realizes that there are many hours of training for this job. Ms. Houghton then complained about the excessive debt she feels the Township is incurring. She advised that the monies used to purchase the Tyson House could have been used to purchase the fire department out right. Comm. Scarpa explained how the municipal budget works and that the purchase of the home did not add debt to the municipality. We have a good rating with Moody's and we are in good financial condition.

Jeanne Burson - 63 W. Oldis - Thanked the volunteers and wished them well.

A motion was offered by Comm. Scarpa and seconded by Comm. Hauser to open the meeting to the public. Motion carried on a voice vote - all voting "Aye".

Minutes of the Special Meeting held October 5, 2016 cont.

A motion was offered by Comm. Scarpa and seconded by Comm. Kovalcik to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried on a voice vote - all voting "Aye".

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Kroll
Municipal Clerk