

MINUTES**April 5, 1995**

The Board of Chosen Freeholders met in regular session at its office in the Hackettstown Municipal Building in Hackettstown, NJ on Wednesday, April 5, 1995 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Freeholder Director Susan Dickey at 7:10 p.m. and upon roll call the following members were present: Freeholder Dickey and Freeholder Stone. Freeholder Miller arrived at 7:15 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Director Dickey.

Director Dickey read the following statement: "ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT BY FORWARDING A SCHEDULE OF REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS TO THE WARREN COUNTY CLERK, THE STAR/GAZETTE, BLAIRSTOWN PRESS, THE NEWS, STAR-LEDGER AND THE EXPRESS-TIMES AND BY POSTING A COPY THEREOF ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS. FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS AT THIS MEETING. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED. IN ORDER TO ASSURE FULL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, THOSE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO WISH TO ATTEND THE MEETING SHOULD SUBMIT ANY REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE".

Freeholder Dickey recognized the presence of Girl Scout Troop 678 from Allamuchy, New Jersey and the troop leaders. The troop had written and asked what it was like to be a freeholder and a parent and had been invited to attend this meeting. Mrs. Dickey explained the her family is very understanding of the demands made on her as a freeholder.

Regarding the issue of 9-1-1, a resident of Hackettstown stated that the law which mandated 9-1-1 service specifically stated that the county could not take the municipal autonomy away. The opinion was expressed that by paying for the 9-1-1 center from the general treasury of the county, the county was forcing the municipalities to join the system. The resident wanted the municipality to retain control.

Mr. Dinger provided a brief review of the 9-1-1 system from the time it was first mandated, and the various options that the county had explored before deciding on a centralized 9-1-1 PSAP and dispatch system. Ultimately it will be more cost effective to have two or three dispatchers covering a shift than a minimum-required two per dispatch center which would have entailed a total of at least twelve employees under the present system. The communications center also housed emergency management and the fire school. The delay in taking over dispatch has been due to problems with the radio towers and getting the county listed as an approved user of the municipal radio frequencies.

Mrs. Stone stated that the Communications Committee, made up of volunteers from all the emergency services in the county; fire, police and ambulance, recommended that the county pursue a control system and the board followed that recommendation.

Mrs. Dickey said that the board offered to reimburse the municipalities after June if dispatch was not on line at that time and placed money in the budget for that purpose as a gesture of good faith. The interlocal agreements do not bind the county to make any payments.

MINUTES**April 5, 1995**

A question was raised as to how the Washington dispatch had been taken over by the county. Mr. Dinger responded that it was his understanding that the Washington service was converted so that new county dispatchers could gain experience with the system. It was technically possible because the borough is so close to the communications center and transmission is handled by land lines to the borough transmitter and using borough equipment.

Mrs. Dickey said that perhaps the service should have been delayed rather than to go on line when it did. Mr. Miller said that 9-1-1 was mandated for implementation by a certain date, dispatch could have been postponed.

The amount budgeted was determined by review of the 9-1-1 committee which made a recommendation. Mr. Dinger responded to a question about how much might a municipality expect to receive in that the rough numbers indicated about \$250,000 in six month expenses countywide and if Hackettstown expenses were \$80,000 for the same period, then about 32% of the money might be allocated to Hackettstown. That would amount to about \$32,000. However, if the service is available by June or July, the amount might be less, if later it might be more, depending upon the board's desire and ability to transfer funds after November 1st.

The police chief stated that he was a member of the committee and Hackettstown was not originally going to participate on a county level but the town council finally decided to go along with the county.

Mr. Smith, a resident, stated that he thought the county should pay for dispatching costs.

A resident, Mr. Sickles, addressed the board regarding attempts to get council to reduce the length of cycle and noise from the rescue squad siren.

Regarding the plowing of High Street and Grand Avenue, the question was raised about why the county plowed Rt.517 to the town border and then lifted the plow and drove down High St. to Grand Ave. and then dropped the plow upon leaving the town. There was a request to have the county just plow the streets as the truck moved through.

Mr. Miller discussed the liability issue in that if the county plows and someone has an accident, the county would be liable. He stated that perhaps it should be a county road. The mayor agreed and Dave Hicks, County Engineer, was asked to look at the possibility of making this area a county roadway.

Regarding freeholder support for a corridor study, Dave Dech, County Planner, provided information and a visual on possible corridors in the Route #46, #57 and #182 area to improve the traffic flow situation. The DOT Commissioner was in the area recently and this issue was discussed with him. This must also be coordinated with Morris County and Washington Township.

Mr. Dech presented several alternatives and said there may be more. He stated that a potential bypass in Independence Township had been reviewed but the grade was too steep.

MINUTES**April 5, 1995**

The police chief asked if the work the state is presently doing at the intersection at considerable expense will have any affect on this corridor study. It was agreed that this work would yield an improvement but would not solve all the problems. Mr. Dech indicated that the planning department will draft a study proposal and submit it to Hackettstown and the freeholders. The mayor said that they are working with Mansfield Township and Washington Township and the freeholders will need to work with Morris County.

Mrs. Dickey asked for other comments. A resident said that he doesn't agree with Mr. Miller and his increasing the funding for the college by \$80,000 as he doesn't think it is equitable to spend more money for the college as it is already costing substantial amounts in capital. Someone else asked if Centenary was ever approached to merge with WCCC and Mrs. Dickey said that she suggested it several years ago but WCCC did not want to explore that option. Mrs. Dickey had also suggested a merger with Morris County.

Mr. Miller said that he can't speak for the college but he knows that they have been planning for a building program for about ten years. Centenary and Morris County were suggested as options years ago but they were not considered. WCCC would have to answer these questions.

The police chief asked if someone could look at a fifteen foot drop to a catch basin on Willow Grove Street and Mrs. Stone said she would bring it to the engineer's attention at the next meeting.

The citizens thanked the freeholders for coming and the board thanked Hackettstown for hosting the meeting.

On motion by Mrs. Stone, seconded by Mr. Miller, and there being no further official business to come before the board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Miller: yes Mrs. Stone: yes Mrs. Dickey: yes

ATTESTED TO:

Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk