

MINUTES

August 7, 1996

The Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren met in regular session on Wednesday, August 7, 1996, at the Liberty Township Municipal Building, 349 Mountain Lake Road, Great Meadows, New Jersey.

The meeting was called to order by Director Dickey at 7:18 PM. Upon roll call the following members were present: Freeholder Susan Dickey, Freeholder Ann Stone and Freeholder Kenneth Miller.

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."

Mrs. Dickey expressed the appreciation of the freeholders to Liberty for hosting the traveling meeting. Mayor Walsh expressed the township's appreciation to the Board and for the county's assumption of responsibility for Mountain Lake Road.

Michael Hession, Warren County Transportation Coordinator, presented an update on the countywide transportation program. General information and available services were explained. The department is attempting to set a schedule whereby a vehicle will be going on routine trips, such as to the Morristown area, at regularly set hours. This will enable clients to schedule medical visits around the set schedule.

Mayor Walsh stated that now that the county has taken over the one end of Mountain Lake Road, the township would be willing to share some of the winter snow clearing and salting operations with the county. He offered a deal where the township would plow and salt the road, and in return, the county could provide the salt and grits. The township would also pick up the insurance for the four month period.

Mrs. Stone, who is liaison to public works, said she would discuss the offer with Road Supervisor Ulmer at the public works meeting set for Friday.

A question was asked as to why the township has almost no county roads within its boundaries, and whether this situation was going to change in the future.

Mrs. Dickey said the Planning Department will be looking at transportation issues as part of a master plan. This will probably include matter such as traffic patterns.

Mr. Dinger indicated that county roads are collectors, to move traffic from local roadways to state highways. Much of what appears to be a patchwork system has developed over many years with various county and local officials, and tradeoffs made during those times.

This was discussed previously. However, Mayor Walsh asked if perhaps Pequest Road should be taken over by the county also. Mr. Miller asked if there were any other roads the township wanted evaluated, and Mayor Walsh responded the Free Union Road could be included.

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Director Dickey opened the meeting to the floor.

Mr. Michael Pierone from White Township asked about the status of his request for 1995 purchase order records to be made available on computer format.

Mr. Dinger responded that it appeared the process could be done, and might take one or two days worth of a programmer's time. It would not be possible to give the project a priority, and might encompass several weeks of periodic effort.

Mr. Pierone said he would be willing to wait for a period of up to eight weeks, if necessary.

Mr. Miller asked what is the advantage to the Freeholders of putting this information into this format.

Mr. Pierone responded that he would make the information available on a WEB site. This would make it available to all citizens. He said he might be willing to pay for the information depending on the cost. He maintained that the average member of the public is not going to go to the county offices and review the information in paper format.

Mr. Miller said he didn't think the average person was going to be interested in using the computer based information either.

Mrs. Stone asked of Mr. Pierone if he was intending to charge people to use this information. Mr. Pierone responded that he would charge for materials such as disks or CD-ROMS, but not for his time.

A citizen present, Mrs. Blemmer, asked if anyone has asked to see the information.

Mrs. Dickey said she did not think this was a problem except for the time involved.

Mr. Pierone said he wants to keep track of what government is doing.

Mr. Dinger suggested that we could try to honor this request on a trial basis. However, we must be cautious in addressing these types of issues, as it could lead to numerous requests for all types of information in different formats, which would be time consuming and costly to complete.

A citizen asked why the county does not consider establishing a WEB site.

Mr. Dinger was asked to discuss this possibility with Information Systems Director Clegg.

A citizen, Mr. Van Horn, stated that if this is for one person, and if there are costs associated with the request, they should be identified and once the costs are paid, make the information available to everyone.

It was stated that there has to be a need for this type of information, maybe a petition by a certain number of people, and costs need to be determined.

Mr. Pierone next mentioned the audit report for the Welfare Board. He had read the state audit report, and had talked with a Bernice Smith at the state. He also referred to Circular 128 that requires an annual audit. The latest written audit report is for 1991, and the state is not completing the audits regularly. He also made a statement that the state is not auditing eligibility requirements. There were also references to PAAD and General Assistance audits, and that no audit could be done in 1989 in Essex County due to lack of records.

Mr. Dinger responded that the state is behind in completing the audits, which had previously been noted. Over the years, there have been a number of referrals by the Welfare Board to the Freeholders asking if the county wished to include the agency in the county audit. No Freeholder Board had desired to do so, opting to accept the state audit.

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As for PAAD and GA, they are not programs operated by the WCWB. Eligibility determinations are the subject of quality control reviews that are conducted separately from the fiscal audit. It was agreed that Mr. Dinger would contact the C.F.O. and determine if the agency could be included in the county audit, and how much the inclusion would cost. It was unknown if the state would accept the county audit as a replacement for the one conducted by the state.

Lisa Thomas from Mt. Lake, asked about the status of the incinerator. Mrs. Dickey responded that the freeholders are planning a meeting with the PCFA on the amount of trash being brought in and other matters. She is attempting to see what the PCFA attitude is to the permit request to increase the amount of garbage to be burned. The freeholders would ask for a hearing, but the DEP doesn't have to grant a hearing on the issue.

A citizen referred to the incident with a sewer line break and its effects on the Popinko farm, and why the freeholders are not closing the incinerator. The public was told these types of incidents could not happen.

Mr. Miller said he hasn't seen the report, but the media reports greatly exaggerated the harm done.

Mrs. Dickey stated the freeholders can't close the incinerator, as they don't own it. WERC owns the burner. Maybe DEP could shut it down for violations. The county does not have much to say as to how the incinerator is run. There is very little control over the facility by the county.

A citizen said when the retrofit is completed, that will cost more money.

Mr. Miller said the facility meets standards set for after the year 2000.

A citizen, Mr. McNulty, said that it looks like Mr. Miller doesn't want citizens to have too much information. He was responsible for the incinerator, money for the bonds, permit expansion, and the spill on the farm. He asked Mr. Miller if he attended a seminar in Florida on how to deal with the public image on incinerators. He objected to Frank Leary saying there were zero mercury emissions. He asked how Mr. Miller could say that opponents are environmental terrorists. The group is gaining history on the incinerator, the lies about it, etc. It doesn't matter that Warren County is number one in breast cancer, it's just the money. Even Mr. Broscious states in the court papers that when the garbage supply is low, the incinerator gets dirtier.

Another citizen said that when he makes a bad business decision, he cuts his losses, but doesn't kill people.

Mrs. Stone asked where the group obtained the cancer information. The response was that a county employee had made the statement at a freeholder meeting.

Mrs. Dickey said she has asked John Hawk of the County Health Department to gather statistics and try to get accurate information.

Mrs. Stone said the county is looking for information. The state cancer registry is not up to date. One must also be careful in reading the information correctly. We are waiting for a report from the State Department of Health.

A citizen asked if Mr. Leary lied or was unaware of Dioxin. Are the freeholders going to grill him as they do the protesters? He does not believe the freeholders cannot

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shut down the incinerator.

Mr. Miller stated that he never said the incident at the farm never happened. He said the leak may not have gotten to the farm property.

A citizen said the PCFA is not getting enough garbage, but now wants to expand the permit.

Mrs. Dickey indicated the PCFA could be dissolved by the freeholders when the debts are paid. The freeholders can't close the plant as they don't own it.

A citizen responded that we have heard this before, but you haven't done anything but talk, no action. We're doing the county's work.

Mrs. Dickey stated the Board is trying to resolve this and reduce the level of anxiety. We also want the state to help out with costs and other areas.

Mrs. Stone stated she has contacted the state about these concerns. The state has to put the facts together. The literature distributed said the federal information reflected cancer rates, but that information actually comes from the state. The state reports are about five years behind.

A citizen asked if the cancer rates were established as high, and could be tied to the incinerator, what would the freeholders do.

Mrs. Dickey responded that if that were the case, they would try to close the plant, through a petition of the DEP.

Mr. Miller said the reason to expand the tonnage is tied to profit, and when the plant is running at peak, it is as efficient as it gets. More garbage being burned above the peak volume might reduce efficiency.

A citizen, Mr. Ghetti, asked what happens when the Hunterdon contract expires.

Mr. Miller responded that Somerset is to pick up the amount that was coming from Hunterdon.

A citizen said that if the debt is \$96 million, and about \$46 million for the incinerator, if this is broken down over 8-10 years over the population, it comes to about \$5 per person per year.

Mrs. Dickey restated that even when the bonds are paid off, Warren County still does not own the facility.

Mr. Miller indicated he felt we had some control over the process by the use of employees at the PCFA to see that the garbage met fuel quality standards. He never went to Florida for a seminar on how to handle public opposition to incinerators. He was not specifically schooled at the seminar on this issue. He pointed out that a speaker used the term "spewing death" and other catch phrases, with no backup of facts.

A citizen said that Mr. Miller's campaign brochure was misleading on blocking the ash paving project. The comment was made that "whole streets are dying of cancer".

Mr. Miller asked where whole streets were dying of cancer. The response was Alphano Road.

Mrs. Stone said there are many causes and sources of cancer. There are no statistics on a link to the incinerator. Many factors need to be looked at, such as heredity, automobile pollution, etc. The Warren County Health Department needs to get information from the state.

Mr. McNulty said there are 50 sources, and we can get rid of our garbage in other

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ways, and make money, why not close down one source we have access to.

There are serious alternatives. Progress is in coming up with new technology to get rid of garbage.

Mrs. Stone asked why don't you help us improve recycling in the county. The incinerator is here, and we need to see it run as efficiently as possible.

Mr. McNulty said Warren County is last in the state in recycling, according to the Star Ledger. We will work hard to recycle but not to feed the incinerator.

Mr. Ghetti referred back to 1990 and he asked what happened when he asked about a Prosecutor's car being used for private purposes. He then said he had written to Mr. Dinger to request information on salaries in the prosecutor's office, then he got a call from the Prosecutor, and was told the prosecutor didn't have to comply with the county rules. He then made several complaints about actions in Liberty Township.

RESOLUTION 453-96

On motion by Mrs. Stone, seconded by Mr. Miller, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren at a meeting held August 7, 1996.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN
FREEHOLDERS TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT WITH SPRINT UNITED
TELEPHONE CO. OF NEW JERSEY CONCERNING THEIR INSURANCE
COVERAGE WHILE PERFORMING WORK IN THE WARREN COUNTY COURTHOUSE
UNDER THEIR CONTRACT WITH THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY**

WHEREAS, Sprint United Telephone Company of New Jersey will be performing work in the Warren County Courthouse under their contract with the Superior Court of New Jersey for installation of a local area network cabling system; and

WHEREAS, verification of adequate insurance coverage to be maintained by Sprint United Telephone Company of New Jersey during the performance of this work has been forwarded by them with a request that it be executed by the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren in the State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The agreement between the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren and Sprint United Telephone Company of New Jersey confirming insurance coverages during the performance of work in the Warren County Courthouse be made part of this resolution by reference and entered into by the Board on behalf of the County of Warren.
2. The Director is hereby authorized to execute said letter of agreement by signing same.

I hereby certify the above to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren on the date above mentioned.

s/Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk

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

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 9:00 P.M.

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

ATTESTED TO:

Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk