

**MINUTES****January 29, 1997**

The Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren held a Freeholder/Mayor meeting in its office in the Administration Building, Belvidere, NJ on Wednesday, January 29, 1997 at 7:44 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Director Ann Stone and upon roll call the following members were present: Freeholder Stone, Freeholder Susan A. Dickey and Freeholder Stephen Lance.

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

Director Stone 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".

Under open discussion, Mrs. Stone polled the mayors present as to their preference with regard to the mayor meetings and/or travelling meetings. A large percentage of those present, and of those who had sent written comments, indicated a preference for a return to the mayor meeting format. However, an additional number stated a preference for a continuation of the travelling meetings, but on a regional basis. Rather than go to one municipality, try to schedule a rotation basis where all the municipalities in a region would attend, and set the host township on a rotating basis. There was also a suggestion that the mayors meetings could be scheduled quarterly to occur prior to the regular freeholder meetings.

Mrs. Stone said it would be difficult to have a mayors meeting before a freeholder meeting. It would be more beneficial to schedule the fifth Wednesday of the month for the mayors. This year, December 31 is a fifth Wednesday, but there will be no meeting then. There are several other dates, and they can be scheduled. On other months, there could be a travelling meeting on the first Wednesday of the month. Mr. Lance agreed that the mayors meetings on the fifth Wednesday and the travelling meeting on the first Wednesday was reasonable. Mrs. Dickey also agreed to that schedule.

County Planner Dech reminded the board that since 1995, the county has been collecting a dedicated tax for open space. In June, 1996, the freeholders adopted rules and procedures for how the money would be spent. The committee set six groupings of municipalities by region. Each municipality was asked to designate a representative for the committee, but only about half have so far complied. The appointments are for two years, although half the committee appointments to start will be for one year.

James Hausamann asked a question about farmland preservation efforts, lifetime versus an eight year program.

Mrs. Dickey said the eight year idea is a conservation program. There was a discussion on the possible use of municipal money to buy down farm rights.

**MINUTES****January 29, 1997**

Greg Sipple of Planning said that two-thirds of the people who voted for the dedicated tax wanted some recreation space as well as farmland.

Mansfield has a 2 cent open space tax now, and it is estimated that it will bring in about \$70,000 the first year.

Some of the mayors indicated they will pick a representative by next month. There are sites in the county for open space, but that does not bind the municipality to those areas if they want to buy some land.

County Engineer Hicks handed out a summary of intended road and bridge projects of the county for 1997. There is to be 10-12 miles of road resurfacing. Each category accounts for about \$1 million in expense. If anything is occurring in these municipalities, Mr. Hicks asked to be notified so that the county could try to schedule around the activities.

Mr. Poole asked how these projects are advertised. Mr. Hicks said that they try to put signs up in advance, and notify the municipality, local schools, fire companies, squads and the communications center. When possible, during resurfacing, they try to maintain the traffic flow.

When asked about the railroad bridge on Route 521 in Blairstown, Mr. Hicks stated that this is the responsibility of NJDOT. It has been under discussion for many years, and it is his guess that there will be no action or changes in the near future. DOT has many other priorities which affect thousands of vehicles each day, compared to the number affected in Blairstown. Warren County has no staff to handle a federal aid project.

Mayor Fey from Alpha asked what does the county have to do before it can justify a traffic light. Mr. Hicks said they have to study things like traffic flow, turns, etc. Lights do not solve all problems. The highest accident rate is at signal controlled intersections, generally where state and county roads meet.

Mr. Fey said the situation in Alpha is getting worse at Route 519 and High Street. He asked Mr. Hicks to look at this issue again. He believes they need a light. Mr. Hicks said he will do a delay study there this year. He does not want to install a light if it causes other problems.

Mrs. Stone asked if there were other issues.

Mayor DiMaio asked if the county plans to replace Mr. DeGraff at Public Safety. He said he believes we need a strong leader as without one, there could be problems.

Mrs. Stone said that tonight the freeholders are appointing Mr. Dinger on a temporary basis to preserve funding. Mr. Lance said the issue was discussed at the last meeting. The discussion will continue for the next several weeks.

There was a statement that the fire departments require proper training. The courts are finding against municipalities for lack of training. The academy may be inadequate,

**MINUTES****January 29, 1997**

also the tower may needed to be upgraded. Mrs. Stone said Pat Rivoli is in charge for now, as the county works on getting a fire academy director. There is a meeting tomorrow night with the committee.

Mrs. Dickey indicated that Mr. Luckey sent a letter asking for a county representative for a state inspection for 2/7/97.

Mr. DiMaio was concerned with a problem at the communication center. He felt the same title and role as Mr. DeGraff had was necessary.

An issue with medical helicopters was raised. When a copter is needed, North Star is called. It takes some time for the copter to get ready, and then to get clearance to leave from University Hospital in Newark. Sometimes after a wait, the copter is told it cannot leave. Only then is Lehigh Valley Medivac called. It was asked if anything could be done to get Medivac to return to being the first responder if necessary. However, it was noted that the protocol was established by the state.

There was a question on Merrill Creek. Mrs. Stone said we have lost DeGraff and Sgt. O'Neil from the State Police. Lt. Quinn is working with Mr. Burd and they will be having a meeting with the affected mayors. Mr. Fey said he spoke Lt. Quinn today, and a tentative February 12, 1997 meeting date was discussed. Five municipal mayors and their OEM coordinators will be included.

Again the issue of the medical helicopter was raised. North Star charges \$600 for a run as it is supported with state funds. Medivac charges \$3,500. If North Star can't fly, they can only call Medivac.

Mr. Lance said he believed the mayors meeting was a good way to exchange ideas. Mrs. Dickey said they were a captive audience. She noted a Star Ledger article about border wars where development in one municipality affects the neighboring municipality. They need regional planning.

Also, there is a bill out of committee which allows an application that's complete to be grandfathered for five years, and it is retroactive. It limits state requirements to those in effect at the time of application.

Mrs. Stone handed out the Warren County Magazine and Economic Development report. The Warren County Directory is in progress, and there should be a letter going out on Monday requesting that any changes be noted and then returned. We are trying to get the directory finished quickly.

Mr. VanHorn said there is a new directive from the state on group homes. There is no limit on size now, and it supersedes local jurisdiction. Mr. Lance said this is not a new law. It is the result of a federal appeals court ruling. Mr. Fey said the regional meeting for the freeholders could start with Alpha as host, and go in alphabetical order from there. There is a dedication on Sunday for the new municipal building in Alpha, and all are invited.

**MINUTES****January 29, 1997****RESOLUTION 81-97**

On motion by Mr. Lance, seconded by Mrs. Dickey, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren at a meeting held January 29, 1997.

**RESOLUTION APPOINTING HENRY D. DINGER AS  
ACTING WARREN COUNTY OEM COORDINATOR**

**WHEREAS**, the County of Warren is required by state statute to appoint a county resident as Office of Emergency Management Coordinator for a term of three years; and

**WHEREAS**, the Public Safety Director who also held the title of Office of Emergency Management Coordinator left the county effective January 15, 1997;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Henry D. Dinger is appointed as acting Warren County Office of Emergency Management Coordinator effective immediately upon adoption of this resolution.

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. Lance: yes Mrs. Dickey: yes Mrs. Stone: yes

**RESOLUTION APPOINTING FRANK VAN HORN TO THE POLLUTION CONTROL  
FINANCING AUTHORITY OF WARREN COUNTY.**

There was no motion made on this resolution.

Mrs. Stone said she wished the other freeholders would come up with some names as the term expires on February 1, 1997. We need to name someone ASAP.

Mr. Lance said he feels it should be someone who has technical background in engineering or finance. He had a name to consider.

Mrs. Dickey said she would like the board to talk to people for the position. We haven't had cooperation between the PCFA and the Board of Chosen Freeholders. She wanted to call the applicant and talk to him on an individual basis. Mrs. Dickey also said it is possible for the freeholders to appoint a county employee.

Mrs. Stone said when three freeholders were on, they were active. It takes a great deal of time, and she is not in favor of anyone from the Board of Chosen Freeholders as a member of PCFA. She will be a liaison to PCFA and will work on recycling.

On motion by Mr. Lance, seconded by Mrs. Dickey, and there being no further official business to come before the board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

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

**ATTESTED TO:**

Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk