

MINUTES**March 19, 1997**

The Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren met in regular session in its offices in the Administration Building, Belvidere, NJ on Wednesday, March 19, 1997 at 7:12 p.m.

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

David Dech, County Planner, gave the board a brief update on the Open Space Plan. Mr. Dech said that he spoke to the board in January about starting up this committee and supplied them with membership requirements. The referendum passed in 1993 that established a .02 tax to be collected for the purposes of open space for farmland preservation. This also speaks to the allocation of funds; 25% for the municipalities, 25% for the Board of Recreation Commissioners, 25% for farmland preservation, 20% discretionary funds and 5% for administrative costs.

In January, three regions were still outstanding to make their recommendations but as of yesterday, we have appointments from all the regions as follows:

- Region 1 - Thomas Fey
- Region 2 - William Baker, Sr.
- Region 3 - Renee Mathez
- Region 4 - Urban Morrow
- Region 5 - Robert Candler
- Region 6 - Frank DeWork

The Ag Development Board will need to submit a recommendation to fill the vacancy due to the death of Elliott Fox. The Board of Recreation Commissioners representative is Henry Skirbst and the Planning Board representative is Loren Picking. The Board of Freeholders need to appoint two members on a rotation basis.

Mr. Dech recommends that the board establish the committee as soon as possible. The at-large members must be selected. He can have the resolution prepared for the March 26th or April 9th meeting, whatever the board wants. The freeholders have five names to pick from. We also need the recommendation from the Ag Board.

Mr. Lance liked Harry Brown for the two year term and Erik Sodtalbers for the one year term. Mrs. Dickey and Mrs. Stone agreed with Mr. Lance's selection.

On motion by Mrs. Dickey, seconded by Mr. Lance, Mr. Dech is authorized and instructed to prepare a resolution for the March 26th meeting appointing members to the

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Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund Committee.

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

Mrs. Stone asked for a discussion regarding use of leave time by a county employee to attend a Security Committee meeting held during working hours.

Mrs. Stone said that the Sheriff called for a meeting to be held at 10:00 a.m. instead of the original time of 4:00 p.m. which would allow full representation. Neither Mr. Lance nor Mrs. Dickey had any problem with allowing the employee to attend the early meeting. However, we should ask the Sheriff to schedule the meetings for 4:00 p.m. to allow for full representation.

Steve Marvin mentioned that the contract awarded in November to Securite for the security system is a leased system with a flat fee for installation. This system is not fully operational. He recommends that we pay him starting this month even though we can't get the system up and running. This matter has to be discussed with special counsel. The cost to install is \$17,500 and we have billed out all but \$3,000 of that. There is a \$870 per month service fee to maintain the system. Mr. Shoremont has been ready since the end of December.

Mr. Dinger asked Dave Wallace and the board agreed, to review the contract and make a recommendation next week.

Mr. Marvin also advised the board that a 35 foot, 60 year old pine tree was cut down in the Garret D. Wall Park sometime during the night a few nights ago. A police report was filed at 7:30 a.m. on March 19th.

RESOLUTION 192-97

On motion by Mrs. Dickey, seconded by Mr. Lance, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren at a meeting held March 19, 1997.

RESOLUTION TO PAY BILLS

BE AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Master Voucher Certificate for Certification for Payment No. 97-7 dated March 19, 1997 in the amount of \$1,147,326.70 including bills and investments, is approved subject to the review of the vouchers by the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

PAYROLL WEEKENDING 3/13/97	953,026.08
VOUCHERS	<u>194,300.62</u>
TOTAL	1,147,326.70

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 193-97

On motion by Mrs. Dickey, seconded by Mr. Lance, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren at a meeting held March 19, 1997.

**RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL
TO BORROW FUNDS FOR THE NEW JERSEY PENSION SYSTEM**

WHEREAS, the Governor and Treasurer of the State of New Jersey have proposed the sale of approximately \$3 billion in bonds with a stated purpose to correct for unfunded

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liabilities of the pension system; and

WHEREAS, the administration has previously manipulated the pension funds, including the revaluation of the assets and the substantial reduction in employer contributions in the system over that past several years; and

WHEREAS, when the previous changes were made, it was stated that these actions would not jeopardize the solidity of the pension system in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the administration plans to sell appropriation bonds which will carry a higher rate of interest than general obligation bonds, and without submitting the plan to the voters for their approval or rejection on the theory that a rapid sale is required to obtain the lowest interest rate; and

WHEREAS, the repayment on these bonds would total many times the amount borrowed, and the use of appropriation bonds would add millions of extra dollars to the repayment requirements over the life of the bonds; and

WHEREAS, the administration's plans include use of the proceeds from the bond sale to invest at a higher interest rate that would allow the state to forego millions of dollars of payments into the system in one year rather than to reinvest the proceeds into stabilization of the pension system; and

WHEREAS, this proposal would increase the indebtedness of the State of New Jersey by approximately one-third of the already existing debt liability, without creating any long-term infrastructure such as roads, buildings, transit or wastewater facilities benefitting the citizens of the state; and

WHEREAS, it appears the proposal is a means to balance a state budget in the short term while saddling the taxpayers of the state with unnecessary debt for decades; and

WHEREAS, a large amount of the funds in the pension system are contributed by employees, who have experienced a substantial increase in the amount of contributions being placed into the system at the same time the employer share of contributions has been substantially reduced; and

WHEREAS, this proposal does not appear to be in the best interest of the public employees, public employers or the citizens of the State of New Jersey, merely increasing long-term debt for short-term manipulation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren strenuously opposes the administration's plan to issue appropriation pension bonds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State needs to pursue a system of budgeting that uses current revenue for current expenses and discontinues a process whereby present budgets are balanced through mechanisms of one-shot financial arrangements or through the use of borrowed funds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any plan which would involve the sale of bonds of any type should be presented to the voters of the state for approval or rejection, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Governor, the Assemblypersons and Senator representing Warren County, the Chairpersons of the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees, and all other Boards of Chosen Freeholders in New Jersey.

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

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The Board of Recreation Commissioners is recommending Jane Bullis of Belvidere be appointed to their board to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of Albert Krouse.

On motion by Mrs. Dickey, seconded by Mr. Lance, a resolution is to be prepared for the next meeting appointing Jane Bullis to the Board of Recreation Commissioners.

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

County Counsel David Wallace had items for executive session only.

CFO Pete Houck spoke briefly to the board regarding a packet given to the board regarding waste flow control. Susan asked that copies of testimony given before the Assembly Agriculture and Waste Management Committee by Mrs. Dickey and Mr. Houck be forwarded to the President, the Governor of the State of NJ and to the Hunterdon and Somerset freeholder boards.

On motion by Mrs. Dickey, seconded by Mr. Lance, authorization is given to submit the testimony as stated above and forward a letter signed by Mr. Houck to John Gibson, Chairman of the above committee.

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

Mr. Houck said that the Gibson bill has been amended again. There will be a hearing on the bill on March 25th and Pete will be attending.

County Administrator Henry Dinger reminded the board that they must make appointments to PRMUA.

Under closing public comments, Bob Shandor spoke to the board regarding his 15+ years of volunteer work for Warren County. He stated that at the Board of Ag dinner the previous evening, Mrs. Stone questioned his agenda. He at this time asked for Ann's comments and her agenda.

Mrs. Stone responded that regarding the \$20 million bond issue she thinks that he feels that should be left alone.

Mr. Shandor said that his agenda is to move forward with the open space plan and acquire the properties under the Green Acres Grant; there are 20 sites for consideration for farmland preservation. He doesn't approve of moving some on the open space plan; some are not deeded yet.

Mr. Shandor said he is upset with Mrs. Stone's comments at the Ag Board Meeting. He has always worked for the best interests of the county. He asked Mrs. Stone what her hidden agenda is?

Mrs. Stone replied that she works for the people.

Mr. Shandor handed out information regarding Stewart's Hunt. The Open Space Committee was not consulted regarding the Hamlen Property, it is not a Planning Board item either.

Mrs. Stone said that negotiations have been on-going for 18 months.

Mr. Shandor said that Mrs. Dickey had expressed her concerns but that Mrs. Stone did what she wanted to do.

Mrs. Stone pointed out that she has a right to her opinion. She had no further comment.

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Mr. Lance said that his personal opinion and not an opinion of the board is that he would like to move forward from that.

Mr. Shandor asked if it was the intention of the board to change the apportionments (the disbursement) of the money. Will the board modify and put it all in farmland preservation.

Mr. Dinger said that regarding the Hamlen farm property, there has been no voiced opposition to that purchase. A public hearing was held but no one has voiced any opposition. There are a variety of potential uses for the property and the buildings on it. It may eventually be used as a Parks Commission Office if we develop a Parks Commission to maintain the properties that the county owns. Mr. Dinger would like to see the Lee property developed into an operating museum. It would be run as a non-profit operation, no open space money has been touched. The initial money could come out of the treasury. A variety of boards and commissions have been appointed, some are statutory, but keep in mind that some committees that are board appointed are advisory in capacity and do not have control. They should be aware that their advice is not always going to be taken.

Mrs. Dickey questioned if they now know how many development easements you could buy for that money. Henry said that the money is driving the argument.

Dave Werkhiser asked if they had formed the Open Space Committee yet and Mrs. Stone said that we need two members yet but the resolution should be ready for the March 26th meeting. Mr. Dinger said that after that resolution is adopted, a meeting should be held within thirty days.

The board was asked if any action has been taken on Stewart's Hunt and they said no. There were no press comments or questions.

Mrs. Stone said that Orrie Terpstra has recommended Bob Canace or Jake Matthenius to serve as a member to replace Elliott Fox. Mr. Lance had a name submitted from the Hope Environmental Commission that he thought should be appointed. However, by board consensus, a resolution appointing Bob Canace is to be prepared for the March 26th meeting.

Mrs. Dickey said that the Ag Development Board has four year terms. There seems to be some confusion about that. Duane was mistaken about what she said. The appointments have to have a starting and ending date.

RESOLUTION 194-97

On motion by Mrs. Dickey, seconded by Mr. Lance, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren at a meeting held March 19, 1997.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS TO HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON MARCH 19, 1997. THE GENERAL NATURE OF THE SUBJECT TO BE DISCUSSED INCLUDES VARIOUS PERSONNEL MATTERS; CONTRACTS; LITIGATION, LAND ACQUISITION; ATTORNEY/CLIENT PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS AND IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE ABOVE STATED SUBJECT MATTER WILL BE MADE PUBLIC AT SUCH TIME AS THE PUBLIC INTEREST PERMITS DISCLOSURE AND/OR WHEN A REQUEST IS MADE CONSISTENT WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT AND WITH STATUTORY AND COMMON LAW "RIGHT TO KNOW" PROVISIONS WHEREAS, Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231,P.L. 1975,

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permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Warren in the State of New Jersey, pursuant to Section 8 of said act, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the hereinafter specified subject matter.

2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is:

1. Various personnel matters.

2. Contracts.

3. Litigation.

4. Land acquisition.

5. Attorney/client privileged communications.

3. It is anticipated that the above stated subject matter will be made public at such time as the public interest permits disclosure and/or when a request for disclosure is made consistent with the Open Public Meetings Act and with statutory and common law "right to know" provisions.

4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

Director Stone called for a ten minute recess at 8:50 p.m.

The board went into executive session at 9:07 p.m.

The board returned to open session at 9:21 p.m.

Nothing discussed in executive session has lost its confidentiality.

Mr. Dinger mentioned that regarding the Public Safety Director position, there was a slight complication involving the applicant. Jerry has sent letters to the board regarding this issue and it has been all straightened out. It is important that the OEM Coordinator live in the county and perhaps the Deputy Coordinator position should be eliminated.

Susan asked that a letter be sent to Victor Schmeltzly thanking him for his interest. Also, a resolution making the appointment should be prepared for the next meeting.

On motion by Mrs. Dickey, seconded by Mr. Lance, and there being no further official business to come before the board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

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

ATTESTED TO:

Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk