

TOWNSHIP OF WYCKOFF
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OPEN WORK SESSION MEETING
SECOND FLOOR MUNICIPAL COURT ROOM
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.

PAUSE – Municipal Clerk posted the link to the live meeting on our website's homepage.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act NJSA 10:4-6 et seq., and in consideration of Executive Order #103, issued by Governor Murphy on March 9, 2020, declaring a State of Emergency in the State of New Jersey, the Township Committee of the Township of Wyckoff does hereby notify the public that to protect the health, safety and welfare of our citizens while ensuring the continued functioning of government, the meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Wyckoff scheduled for 7:00 pm Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at Wyckoff Town Hall, 340 Franklin Avenue, Wyckoff, NJ 07481 will be conducted via the Township of Wyckoff's YouTube channel and members of the public may call 201-891-7000, ext. #222 should they wish to provide public comment at the time for the public comment period. Members of the public may also e-mail their public comments to wyckoffclerk@wyckoff-nj.com before 4:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting. These comments will be read at the meeting during the public comment period.

These measures are implemented to allow members of the public to observe the meeting via live streaming and to provide the ability to comment during the periods for public comment during the meeting

Due to the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency, members of the public will not have access to Town Hall.

This Notice and Agenda have been posted on the front door of Town Hall (facing Franklin Avenue) and on the Township's Home Page wyckoff-nj.com at the Quick Link for "Minutes and Agendas" on Friday, December 11, 2020. Please select "Township Committee" and locate the date of the meeting to view documents, such as resolutions and ordinances which would otherwise be made available.

General instructions regarding access to the meeting will be posted on the Wyckoff web site's home page at www.wyckoff-nj.com as a "News" item on Friday, January 8, 2021 at 4:30 pm.

To view the live-streamed Township Committee meeting, please access the YouTube link which will be posted on the Wyckoff web site's home page at www.wyckoff-nj.com as a "NEWS" item immediately prior to the commencement of the meeting at approximately, 6:55 pm on January 12, 2021.

To be notified of all future live streamed Township meetings, please create a YouTube account and subscribe to our YouTube channel, "Township of Wyckoff."

In the event the YouTube platform modifies its connectivity protocols and does not announce these critical changes again in the future, instructions on how to view each meeting via Zoom technology will be posted at the "News" section of the Township's home page, Wyckoff-nj.com before 7:10 pm. This second method of conducting remote meetings is provided to ensure the continuity of government when platforms which the Township does not control establish unannounced changes and will **only** be utilized if it is not possible to conduct the meeting via livestream on YouTube. As a precaution, for this "plan B", the following instructions are provided:

Please locate the link posted on the "News" item announcing the Township Committee meeting on the homepage of our website and use this link for the January 12, 2021 Work Session and Business Meeting set to begin at 7:00 pm.

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Mayor Melissa D. Rubenstein opened the Open Work Session Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the second-floor municipal court room.

Nancy Brown, Acting Municipal Clerk read the Open Public Work Session statement: "This Open Public Work Session Meeting of the Wyckoff Township Committee is now in session. In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting appears on our Annual Schedule of meetings. A copy of said Annual Schedule has been posted on the Bulletin Board in Memorial Town Hall; a copy has been filed with the Municipal Clerk, The Record, The Ridgewood News and the North Jersey Herald and News – all newspapers having general circulation throughout the Township of Wyckoff. At least 48 hours prior to this meeting the Agenda thereof was similarly posted, filed and mailed to said newspapers. The Agenda with the resolutions and ordinances to be considered was posted on the Township's website at "Minutes & Agendas" on the Friday prior to this evening's meeting."

Present: Mayor Melissa D. Rubenstein, Committeemen Thomas J. Madigan, Peter J. Melchionne and Timothy E. Shanley

Also Present: Acting Municipal Clerk Nancy Brown and Township Attorney Robert Landel

Absent: Township Administrator Robert J. Shannon, Jr. and Committeeman Rudolf E. Boonstra

Mayor Rubenstein confirmed that the Finance Committee has reviewed and signed vouchers.

Acting Municipal Clerk Brown advised that no written comments have been received prior to this evening's meeting.

Mayor Rubenstein opened the meeting for the ten (10) minute public comment period, two (2) minutes per speaker for public comment on any governmental issue that a member of the public feels may be of concern to the residents of the Township of Wyckoff. Please call 201-891-7000, ext. 222 if you wish to make a public comment at this time. Motion from Committeeman Shanley, seconded by Committeeman Madigan, all voting yes to open the ten (10) minute public comment period.

Gina O'Rourke, 274 Birch Parkway:

Ms. O'Rourke requested that the Township Committee fly a flag during February, a Black History Month flag to show support and solidarity to the black community which includes her 9-year-old daughter, Sydney. Sydney and other black residents of Wyckoff deserve to feel empowered and supported by their town. Ms. O'Rourke stated that this small act of raising this flag will go a long way when it comes to acknowledging, honoring and celebrating black lives and their experiences. This act of raising the flag will remind and educate the members of our community of the importance of black history. In addition, I am also asking the Township of Wyckoff to pass a proclamation for Black History Month making February Black History Month. My family and I hope that raising a flag and passing a proclamation in honor of black history will be steppingstone to creating a more inclusive and aware culture, but especially to our black community that live in Wyckoff and to all those passing through. Thank you for your time.

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Seth Fischer, 740 Hickory Hill Road:

Happy New Year everyone. I guess I am calling for a similar reason to the previous caller. I am calling because I am increasingly uncomfortable that there is this perception amongst people in neighboring towns that Wyckoff is a racist town. I don't like hearing that and I'm sure you don't either. I hear people calling our town the Township of "Whitecock". Recently, there was that incident of racially motivated crime at our local Chinese restaurant and I'm not sure if anyone has been brought to justice on that, but racial injustice continues to be a major problem in our country. Like the previous caller, I am asking that you raise a flag in honor of black history for the month of February. I understand there is issues about flags, about who gets a flag, where do you draw the line on that, I get it, but the fact of the matter is, racial injustice is an issue over time and it is an issue right now, and you know what they say about perception. It is up to our leaders to mold a new reality, one where we are not perceived in these negative ways. Thank you for your time, I will hang up and listen to these other comments.

Sarah Derico, 190 Wyckoff Avenue:

I'm calling for Wyckoff to celebrate Black History Month with a flag. By doing so we give the community established ways to celebrate Black Heritage. We are currently living through some stark times where hate and fear are the only things in the spotlight and by standing with and celebrating our black brothers and sisters, Wyckoff is being involved in changing the spotlight and I think that is very important.

Samantha and Jessica Weir, 508 Clinton Avenue:

I just want to note that I grew up in Wyckoff, went through the whole K-8 school system, then Indian Hills for high school and my sister did the same. We would just like to echo the previous calls from community members and request that the Township Wyckoff fly a flag in honor of Black History Month and make a request that you pass a proclamation for Black History Month. We think it is quite obvious what a flag and proclamation represent. It shows the people of Wyckoff, both new and old residents, that our town is welcome to everyone, regardless of what you look like. The presence of this flag would be a sign of history, a sign of hope. I think it would be an incredible act of celebration of the black community and black experience. Speaking more personally, I know it would make us feel safer in a town that welcomes everyone, not just a select few. Doing something like this possesses to all the characteristics of what we ask of the citizens of Wyckoff and the community at large. A sign of community, a sign of respect and a sign of togetherness. After the crazy year that we have been through, I think we need a bit more of that. I hope that the Township of Wyckoff takes this seriously and makes this a top priority. Thank you.

Lisa Eidel, 408 Buckingham Circle:

I'd like to request that the Township Committee raise the Pan African flag, the one most commonly used by cities across the US during the month of February to celebrate Black History Month. This tri-color flag consists of three equal horizontal bands of red, black and green. I am asking that this flag be raised at the Government Speech flagpole at Memorial Field. The Library of Congress recognizes National African American History Month in February. This flag

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“celebrates the contributions that African Americans have made to American history and their struggles for freedom and equality and deepens our understanding of our nation’s history”. For this reason alone, Wyckoff should raise the flag. Recent public out-cry in Wyckoff about children not having off for Martin Luther King Day supports this decision. However, this is not the only reason why this flag should be raised – our government speech flagpole has a plaque that reads, “The Township of Wyckoff establishes this flagpole as a means of communicating messages of support, recognition and acceptance”. As the mother of two black children in Wyckoff, seeing visual representations of support, recognition and acceptance would be hugely important to me personally. However, it is more than just for my family. Every time we look into the news we are struck with visions of hatred and violence. How wonderful would it be for us to come together as a community to remember our past and to celebrate acceptance. Again, I hope the Township Committee will consider my request and the requests of others to fly the Pan African flag in celebration of Black History Month in Wyckoff as well as proclaim February as Black History Month. Thank you very much, and Happy New Year to you all.

Committeeman Shanley motioned to close the public comment period, seconded by Committeeman Madigan with an affirmative voice vote.

Township Committee Reports:

Peter Melchionne:

1. Mr. Melchionne attended the Ramapo Indian Hills Reorganization Meeting where Mr. Laforgia was selected as Board President and Mr. Butto was selected as Board Vice President.
2. Mr. Melchionne will attend the Board of Health meeting which will be held on Zoom on Thursday, January 14, 2021.
3. Mr. Melchionne attended part of the Shade Tree Meeting this evening.

Thomas Madigan:

1. Mr. Madigan attended the Wyckoff K-8 School Board Reorganization Meeting last week and this week he attended the Wyckoff K-8 School Board Meeting last evening. At this meeting, the board members presented their annual audit submitted by their auditors Mr. Madigan made comment on this stellar report and congratulated Patricia Salvati, who is the Business Administrator. No negative comments, just all positive.
2. Mr. Madigan reported some good news for our town and our residents; there was a \$650,000 budget surplus realized this year. The Finance Committee discussed this surplus and determined the surplus will be used for tax relief this year in the 2021/22 budget. This will be good for many of our residents.
3. The Township’s budget process begins this week with meetings on Wednesday and Friday, at which preliminary reports and discussions will take place.

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Timothy Shanley:

1. The Recreation Advisory Board met last night via Zoom. The Code of Conduct was discussed for all volunteer coaches. The Code is now on the Township's website and coaches must click through all the Code components before they can be accepted as a volunteer coach. A subcommittee has been formed who will investigate any complaints related to Code of Conduct violations. Recreation Roller Hockey and Recreation Basketball are being played.
2. Basketball is happening without fans in attendance. Players are wearing masks when they come back to the bench and are close to their teammates.
3. Registration for the Spring sports programs are currently underway. Recreation Director, Andy Wingfield has sent out 200 football helmets to be recertified for safety.
4. The DPW is conducting their second and final round of Christmas tree collection for recycling. They are also working on cleaning catch basins and sewers. The DPW Manager, Scott Fischer was able to obtain hot tar for pothole patching as the temperatures have been favorable. Crews are working to fill potholes around town.
5. PSE&G has been approved to install Smart Meters by the Board of Public Utilities. O & R is still making progress on the Brookside Avenue conduit project. A report was received from Sgt. Zivkovich regarding follow up on resident complaints related to debris being left behind at the Brookside Avenue project which is being addressed by the contractor.

Mayor Rubenstein:

1. The Friends of the Library have donated a beautiful piano in memory of longtime Friend of the Library Treasurer, Diana Ulrich.
2. On a Mayor's call earlier today, the roll-out of Covid-19 vaccinations was the main topic. There are changes daily to the categories. New Bridge Medical Center has received its first 1,000 doses and vaccinations are taking place at long term care facilities here in Bergen County.
3. On tonight's agenda there are two resolutions for the month of February, American Heart Month – we will be flying the Heart Month Flag for the month of February. It is also Black History Month and the Township Committee has prepared a proclamation which will appear on tonight's Consent Agenda to recognize February as Black History Month. Mayor Rubenstein read the following proclamation:

REFERENCE: February is Proclaimed Black History Month

WHEREAS,

during Black History Month, we celebrate the many achievements and contributions made by African Americans to our economic, cultural, spiritual and political development; and

WHEREAS,

in 1915, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, noted Black scholar and son of former slaves, founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History; and

WHEREAS,

Dr. Woodson initiated Black History Week, February 12, 1926; and for many years, the second week in February, chosen to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglas

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and Abraham Lincoln, was celebrated by African Americans in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, President Gerald Ford issued the first African American History Month proclamation seizing the opportunity to honor the often-neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our nation's history; and

WHEREAS, the observance of Black History Month calls our Nation's attention to the continued need to battle racism and to build a society that lives up to its democratic ideals.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Wyckoff, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that February 2021 is **Black History Month** in the Township of Wyckoff and we urge all citizens to celebrate our diverse heritage and culture and continue our efforts to create a world that is more just, peaceful and prosperous for all.

4. The Township has been recognized by two organizations, the National League of Cities and the NJ State League of Municipalities have awarded the Township of Wyckoff the 2020 Innovation in Governance Award for our public information campaign to increase our firefighter ranks. This campaign featured our many multi-generational firefighter families and encouraged others to "Create their Own Legacy" by joining the Wyckoff Volunteer Fire Department.

Township Attorney Report:

1. The Open Space Tax question will likely appear on the ballot again in November.
2. The application is being put together for the Maple Lake Subdivision. The plans have yet to be received.
3. The Township has received the Bergen County Planning Board approval for the Rose Garden subdivision which will provide the DPW with access to the wier/dam on the property for stormwater management purposes.
4. The NJ Division of Community Affairs (DCA) has issued updated Emergency Meeting protocols for public meetings. The actual regulations are in the process of being adopted and signed by the Governor. Mr. Landel will be issuing a memo to the governing body which will summarize the changes and as a result, some changes to our current protocols for public meetings may be required going forward.
5. A new bill has been passed regarding the legalization of marijuana and the Township Committee will have some work to do to distinguish the sale of medical marijuana from the sale of recreational marijuana. A memo from the Township Attorney will be forthcoming on this topic.

The Open Work Session Meeting concluded and adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

MOTION: SHANLEY SECOND MADIGAN
BOONSTRA ABSENT MADIGAN YES MELCHIONNE YES
SHANLEY YES RUBENSTEIN YES



Melissa D. Rubenstein
Mayor



Nancy A. Brown
Acting Municipal Clerk