

**TOWNSHIP OF WYCKOFF  
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OPEN WORK SESSION MEETING  
SECOND FLOOR MUNICIPAL COURT ROOM  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2018 – 7:30 P.M.**

Township Committeeman Rudolf E. Boonstra opened the Open Work Session Meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the second floor municipal court room.

Municipal Clerk Santimauro 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."

**Present:** Committeemen Thomas J. Madigan, Rudolf E. Boonstra, Timothy E. Shanley and Melissa D. Rubenstein

**Also Present:** Township Administrator Robert J. Shannon, Jr., Township Attorney Robert Landel, Municipal Clerk Joyce C. Santimauro and Thomas Garlick, Esq., Attorney with Mr. Landel

**Absent:** Mayor Brian D. Scanlan

Mayor Scanlan is away on a business trip today and requested Committeeman Boonstra to chair the Open Work Session Meeting this evening.

Committeeman Boonstra 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, with a motion from Committeeman Shanley, seconded by Committeeman Madigan.

Timothy Buchman, 430 Meer Avenue commented that when the Township Committee adopted an ordinance regarding emergency generators, it required those generators to be tested only during daylight hours. Mr. Buchman expressed concern with the action of the Planning Board which approved approximately seven (7) emergency generators at Ridgewood Water's facility well houses. Mr. Buchman suggested that this "quality of life" condition be extended to those generators. Mr. Boonstra, who has served on the Planning Board when these applications were reviewed, indicated that one (1) of the conditions of approval was that the emergency generators could only be tested during daytime hours.

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

Committeeman Boonstra advised that the Finance Committee has reviewed and signed vouchers.

**Township Committee Reports:**

**Thomas Madigan:**

1. Mr. Madigan advised that snow is predicted this evening and extended "KUDOS" to the DPW as they prepare for the weather event. Mr. Madigan continued to say that he receives many compliments from residents regarding the DPW's efforts.
2. Mr. Madigan attended the Free Rabies Prevention Program on Saturday, January 6, 2018 at the DPW Garage, 475 West Main Street.

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3. The Environmental Commission is working diligently on the Environmental Resources Inventory Report which is well underway.
4. The Zabriskie House Trustees Meeting was conducted earlier today where a report was received from the architect they have contracted with to provide a historical preservation report regarding the structure of the Zabriskie House. This report was primarily paid for by a Bergen County Grant. The report addresses various structural presentation action items which will be addressed in the next five (5) to seven (7) years. The Township Engineer and the Building Inspector attended the meeting and were extremely helpful.
5. Last week, Mr. Madigan attended a Finance Committee Meeting with Committeewoman Rubenstein, the Administrator and the Chief Financial Officer. A meeting is scheduled for next week.
6. Mr. Madigan urged all residents to consider attending the Wyckoff Volunteer Fire Department's fundraiser on Friday, February 9, 2018 at the Wyckoff Family YMCA Performing Arts Center.

**Melissa Rubenstein:**

1. Ms. Rubenstein also attended the Free Rabies Prevention Program and is happy to report that 147 dogs and 4 cats received vaccinations and thanked the DPW crews for setting-up the garage for the program.
2. Ms. Rubenstein attended the January Board of Health Meeting where a discussion concerning a "Stigma Free" basketball game will be scheduled at the high schools on Wednesday, February 13, 2018. Also, a program will be provided on Tuesday, January 30, 2018 regarding "fall prevention" for senior citizens.
3. The Wyckoff Public Library presented a program by the Ramapo Engineering Students entitled "Cardboard Challenge." Ms. Rubenstein described the program as enjoyable and well attended.
4. The Finance Committee began work on the 2018 Municipal Budget.
5. Ms. Rubenstein made reference that Marsha Stolz, reporter for the Suburban News is present at the meeting this evening.

**Timothy Shanley:**

1. Mr. Shanley attended the Wyckoff Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting last evening. At that meeting, Doug Arnone was chosen as Chair. Also discussed, a twelve (12) foot fence was installed at Memorial Field that separates center field from the playground. At the meeting, the Advisory Board adopted a reciprocal facility use policy which allows the Township's Recreation Program to utilize gymnasiums at the high school and Eastern Christian Schools and conversely, those entities are permitted the use of the municipal basketball courts and/or tennis courts. In addition, a petition was received from resident Gavin Fowley to provide an Ultimate Frisbee Facility. The Advisory Board will explore this request.

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2. The Shade Tree Commission conducted their monthly meeting on Tuesday, January 9, 2018. Mark Borst was selected as Chairman. The primary discussion was the removal of twelve (12) trees from the Russell Farm Community Park Arboretum and replant same in locations around the community. A number of those trees will be planted at Wyckoff Community Park to provide shade for spectators.
3. Mr. Shanley also volunteered at the Free Rabies Prevention Program on Saturday, January 6, 2018. Due to the extreme cold weather, many residents may not have participated in the program this year. However, thanks to the efforts of the DPW crew, ample space was made available in the DPW Garage for participants to remain indoors while on queue.
4. In his role as Personnel Committee, Mr. Shanley participated in a meeting where the Township will advertise to fill three (3) staffing vacancies. The Administrator injected that these positions have been vacant for almost three (3) months. During that time, the Township considered various options on staffing these positions.
5. The Wyckoff Volunteer Ambulance Corps Awards Ceremony will be held on Saturday, January 20, 2018. Mr. Shanley will administer the oaths of office to the new officers.
6. The Zoning Board of Adjustment will meet on Thursday, January 18, 2018.

**Rudy Boonstra:**

1. On January 1, 2018 the Wyckoff Police Department began working a twelve (12) hour work shift. Committeemen Boonstra and Madigan arrived at Police Headquarters at 6:00 a.m. to speak to the officers who were working the “inaugural” shift. The Police Committee had met to review an unintended consequence of the work shift – an additional spare police vehicle will be needed due to the redeployment of officers on this work shift. This need will be considered during the budget process.
2. Mr. Boonstra and Mayor Scanlan attended the first Planning Board Meeting of 2018. Robert Fortunato was appointed as Chair and Kevin Hanley as Vice-Chair.
3. Ordinance #1848 has been placed on this evening’s Agenda for Township Committee consideration and introduction. This ordinance has been recommended by the Township’s Consulting Engineer.
4. Mr. Boonstra provided a report from the Sewer Committee which indicated that in the last two (2) months, two (2) meetings were conducted by the Township Engineer, the Township’s Consulting Engineer, the DPW Manager, the Administrator and representatives of the Northwest Bergen Sewer Utilities Authority. The purpose of the meeting was to determine if the Northwest Bergen Sewer Authority would be able to extend, at their cost, any sewer mains along Wyckoff Avenue to residents who may require public sanitary sewer connections. Specifically, the Knolls section of Wyckoff remains “unsewered” and a five (5) lot subdivision will be constructed on the Meer Estate on Wyckoff Avenue. A number of scenarios were discussed to achieve this objective including extending the sewer from Wyckoff and Russell Avenues along Wyckoff Avenue towards Sunset Boulevard and extending the sewer line through the Wyckoff Community Park into Wyckoff Avenue in the area of Brownstone Court. More information will be forthcoming. Mr. Shanley inquired as to

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the impact on the Wyckoff Community Park and the recreational programs. Mr. Boonstra advised that the sewer line is in the area of the wetlands which would require a DEP permit. Therefore, there should be no conflict with the playing fields.

Committeewoman Rubenstein inquired as to the cost to restore a ballfield if the sewer extension would proceed in the area of these fields. Mr. Boonstra will explore a definite answer to this inquiry.

**Report of the Administrator:**

1. The 8:00 p.m. Action Agenda includes two (2) ordinances for public hearing and further consideration; the first ordinance reflects the fire department's desire to incorporate the new assistant chief position into the LOSAP point system. The Fire Chief has recommended the adoption of this ordinance. The second ordinance relates to the code of the Township which regulates the towing process in the Township when an inoperable motor vehicle requires towing. The Police Chief recommends the adoption of this ordinance.
2. Ordinance #1848 has been recommended by the Township's professional service provider – the Township's Consulting Engineer for introduction as a Best Practice.
3. Listed on this evening's Agenda is a presentation by the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church to the Wyckoff Volunteer Ambulance Corps in recognition of their dedicated service to the community.

**Work Session Items:**

1. Mr. Shannon thanked Clerk Santimauro for "quarterbacking" and organizing the Free Rabies Prevention Program on Saturday, January 6, 2018. Again, it was another well run and successful and trouble free event.
2. The Township Committee is again participating in the New Jersey League of Municipalities Future Leadership Scholarship Program. Several years ago, a Wyckoff student won the statewide essay scholarship. This information has been disseminated to high schools and posted on the Township's social media accounts and will be included in the Friday e-blast.
4. At the meeting of December 19, 2017, the governing body received the report from the Mayor's Selection Subcommittee to be reviewed by all members and further considered at this evening's meeting. Since Mayor Scanlan is not in attendance this evening, the Administrator suggested that this item be carried to the February 6, 2018 meeting. The Township Committee agreed.
5. The Administrator complimented Mr. Landel and Mr. Garlick for their assistance to the Township and Police Department regarding a towing operator who the Police Chief suspended for an allegation of overcharging. The tower appealed that suspension and the Township's legal staff was able to settle the matter while upholding the suspension action.

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6. With regard to the progress on the affordable housing substantive certification, that legal process is still before the Bergen County Superior Court. However, Mr. Landel was asked to provide any brief comments that could be provided without impacting the litigation strategy. Mr. Landel advised he has obtained an extension of the judgement of repose immunity until February 28, 2018. This immunity prohibits any property owner or developer during the performance of this litigation before the court that Wyckoff cannot be sued for affordable housing while they develop their plan. The Township's Affordable Housing Planner continues to work on amending the Fair Share Plan. Mr. Landel indicates that a Fair Share hearing before the Superior Court is expected sometime in March. After this hearing and a resolution is reached, the Township will proceed to amend its Fair Share Plan and Affordable Housing Plan. This will require the Planning Board to amend the Fair Share Element of the Master Plan. Committeeman Madigan inquired as to the status of the construction of the special needs housing at 370 Clinton Avenue. Mr. Landel responded stating he received a call from the Township Engineer that a developer's agreement was required because the Planning Board resolution contemplated one and is being prepared. However, in accordance with the updates from the Administrator, the Building Department has provided approval for the United Way of Bergen County to begin site work as that can be performed without UCC permits.
7. The Administrator advised that the fire department is diligently working on a grant to apply to the Federal Assistance to Fire Department Grant Application. The application is due in early February 2018. Two (2) grant applications will be submitted – one to replace and improve the communications center at Fire Company #1 and the second application to purchase fire ground communication radios that function in accordance with the new digital frequency. To ensure that the governing body was made aware of the fire department's efforts in this regard, the Administrator has provided this up to date information. The Township Committee approved.
8. Resolution #18-75, adopted on January 1, 2018, which addresses a procedure for spectators and/or the press to videotape meetings, was provided for review. The Township Attorney indicated that the version adopted on January 1<sup>st</sup> is acceptable.
9. The Joint Insurance Fund Elected Officials Training has been scheduled for Tuesday, January 23, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Court Room. Governing Body Members and the Administrator who attend will earn a \$250 deduction in the Township's insurance cost for each member in attendance.
10. With regard to the request from the new property owner at 162 Packard Avenue to remove the sidewalk in front of the home instead of repairing same, this discussion will be carried to the next business meeting.
11. A request was received from a Girl Scout Troop to utilize the Pulis Field Complex Concession Stand to stage their cookie delivery. Mr. Shannon contacted the Recreation Director and the DPW Manager and both parties had no objections to this request.
12. A request was received from the New Jersey Beekeepers Association urging the governing body to express opposition via a resolution to the new New Jersey Department of Agriculture proposed rules. It was suggested that this item be carried until the next meeting when the full governing body is present.

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13. The Administrator provided a request from the project team that is working to digitize our forms and applications for resident convenience to shift to the next phase. The Township Committee provided authority to move forward.
14. This evening's Agenda includes a Closed Session discussion after the 8:00 p.m. business meeting regarding Ridgewood Water Litigation and contract negotiation.
15. Wyckoff received \$10.8 million from residents looking to prepay their 2018 property taxes in December, most of it during a last-minute rush by homeowners to maximize their federal tax deductions before new Federal IRS rules took effect this year even though the IRS has not determined whether (or how much) of prepaid 2018 taxes can be deducted on 2017 Federal tax returns.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act signed by President Donald Trump on December 22<sup>nd</sup> caps the amount of state and local taxes that can be deducted on federal income tax returns at a total of \$10,000. In a state where the average homeowner's yearly property tax bill surpasses that number by almost \$8,000, residents took to their local tax offices to try to pay by year's end and deduct their 2018 property taxes from 2017's federal taxes.

The total payments in Wyckoff came from approximately 2,500 separate transactions where the average property tax bill is \$13,800 per year. This year marked a nearly twenty-fold increase in pre-payments from 2016, when the Township received just over \$300,000 in 2017 property taxes.

Administrator Shannon thanked the Finance Office staff of CFO Diana McLeod, Peg Keen, Darlene King and MaryAnn Sweeney who worked cheerfully and accommodated the long line of residents by not taking their lunch hour the last four (4) days of the year to assist taxpayers.

16. Mr. Shannon is exploring additional shared services with the Wyckoff Board of Education.

Mr. Boonstra announced that this is the 50<sup>th</sup> year that he has provided continuous service to the community. In 1968, at twenty-one (21) years of age, Mr. Boonstra joined the Sicomac Volunteer Fire Company and has served in many various municipal capacities including; elected member of the K-8 School Board, the Ramapo/Indian Hills School District, Board of Adjustment and Township Committee. The Township Committee Members thanked Mr. Boonstra for his dedicated service.

The Open Work Session Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

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Rudolf E. Boonstra  
Township Committee

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Joyce C. Santimauro  
Municipal Clerk

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