

**TOWNSHIP OF MANSFIELD  
BURLINGTON COUNTY  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 27, 2016  
Executive Meeting  
6:00 PM**

The Executive Session Meeting of the Mansfield Township Committee was held on the above shown date with the following in attendance: **Mayor Sean Gable, Committeewoman Laverne Cholewa, Committeeman Robert J. Higgins, Committeeman Arthur Puglia, Attorney Michael Magee, Mark Remsa, Clerk Linda Semus, and Administrator Michael Fitzpatrick.** Deputy Mayor Robert Semptimphelter was not in attendance

**Mayor Gable** called the meeting to order followed by the following opening statement.

Public notice of this meeting pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act NJSA 10:4-6 to 10:4-21 has been satisfied. Notice of this meeting was properly given in the annual notice, which was adopted by the Mansfield Township Committee on January 4, 2016. Said Resolution was transmitted to the Burlington County Times and the Trenton Times, filed with the Clerk of the Township of Mansfield, posted on the official bulletin board at the Municipal Complex, filed with the members of this body and mailed to each person who has prepaid any charge fixed for such service. All of the mailing, posting, and filing having been accomplished as of January 8, 2016.

A motion was offered by **Committeeman Puglia** and second by **Committeewoman Cholewa** to go into Executive Session by adoption of the following Resolution. Motion carried.

**RESOLUTION 2016-4-10**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**WHEREAS**, Section 7 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 213, P.L. 1975 [NJSA 10:4-12(B)] 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 exists;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Mansfield, County of Burlington and State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of, action on and reviewing the Minutes of the hereinafter specified matters.
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows: potential contract negotiations, potential litigation and personnel issues.
3. It is anticipated at this time that the above subject matter will be made public when the matter has been resolved and approved for release by the Township Solicitor.

Upon conclusion of the Executive Session, a motion was offered by **Committeeman Puglia** and second by **Committeewoman Cholewa** to adjourn the Executive Session and open the Regular Session. Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Mansfield Township Committee was held on the above shown date with the following in attendance: **Mayor Sean Gable, Committeewoman Laverne Cholewa, Committeeman Robert J. Higgins, Committeeman Arthur Puglia, CFO Joseph Monzo, Assessor Jeff Burd, Engineer Richard Brown, Attorney Michael Magee, Township Administrator Michael Fitzpatrick, Clerk Linda Semus, and Deputy Clerk Barbara Crammer.** Deputy Mayor Robert Semptimphelter was not in attendance.

**Mayor Gable** opened the meeting with the Salute to the Flag and a moment of silence.

**Mayor Gable** explained the items discussed in Executive Session were:

**PROCLAMATION:** Jared Lee Shinn – Eagle Scout Project

**Clerk Semus** read the following proclamation.

***PROCLAMATION***

***WHEREAS**, Jared Lee Shinn a resident of Mansfield Township and a member of Boy Scout Troop 45 in Columbus, New Jersey, has fulfilled requirements in the areas of leadership, service, and outdoor skills, and*

*WHEREAS, Jared demonstrated Leadership qualities in planning and overseeing the construction of the installation of new signage at the entrance to the Columbus Cemetery, and*

*WHEREAS, Jared further painted and repaired the maintenance building including the repair of several broken windows and he also cleaned the grounds of the cemetery, and*

*Whereas, the site of this project was the Columbus Cemetery located on Cherry Lane in Columbus, New Jersey, and*

*WHEREAS, because of his extraordinary accomplishments, Jared has earned the Eagle Scout rank, the highest advancement position in Scouting.*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mansfield Township Committee, on behalf of the Township, the Officials, Employees, and Citizens thereof, hereby wishes to express sincere congratulations to Jared and to convey deep pride in the example he sets for the youth of our community, and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is the desire and intent of the Township Committee of the Township of Mansfield to publicly acknowledge Jared Lee Shinn's determination, good skills and enthusiasm toward Scouting and to see that such recognition is permanently made a part of the record of this Township.*

**PRESENTATION:** River Route – presented by Mark Remsa from the Burlington County Bridge Commission

Mr. Remsa was present to discuss a project which began in 1995 by the Burlington County Freeholders as a regional planning project initiated as a blue print to revitalize the Route 130 Corridor and the riverfront communities, running from Florence Township to Cinnaminson and Palmyra, consisting of 12 municipalities. When it was initially started, the lands north of Florence were quite rural and not as developed as they are today. The Freeholders were focused on improving the quality of life in this region and they wanted cooperation and participation from the municipalities. Mr. Remsa said it was a “bottom up” approach, not the type of approach where municipalities are told what to do. Goals were developed years ago which still hold true yet today. The project has been named the River Route.

Mr. Remsa said this type of project had never been done in New Jersey before. After they had an understanding of the way the area could be revitalized, in 1998, the recommendations were established for the 12 municipalities as well as the county. In 1999, the New Jersey State Planning Commission endorsed this project.

Mr. Remsa reviewed the goals of the Freeholders, the types of quality of life issues covered, and how it was developed by municipalities participating giving input as well as county staff, task groups and a steering committee which was appointed consisting of representatives from the municipalities.

Since things change over times including the economy, demographics, rules and regulations, mother nature plus new trends and ideas. All of these things have to be factored into the planning process.

At this point, Bordentown City, Bordentown Township, Fieldsboro and part of Mansfield has been added to complete the Corridor. The River Route now goes from the Mercer County Bordet to the Camden County Border. Mr. Remsa is here tonight to ask Mansfield to participate in this process. He felt that Mansfield holds potential for revitalization and development.

Mr. Remsa referred to two areas which have experienced revitalization, Cinnaminson and Willingboro. There had been dead space but now there is a vibrant town center which the County helped with the redevelopment.

Municipalities have to appoint representatives. Mr. Remsa had handed out a package to the Township Committee which includes a draft resolution which, if adopted, would make Mansfield part of the process. He asked for the designation of four representatives to serve on the steering committee. There will also be sub-committees to look deeper into the issues.

**Mayor Gable** questioned Mr. Remsa as to how soon he would want a resolution. Mr. Remsa said as soon as possible. He also noted that Mansfield has done a lot of work with the County, specifically the redevelopment area along Route 295 as well as down town Columbus.

**Committeeman Higgins** thanked Mr. Remsa for his part in helping Mansfield make great strides. He felt that, in the next few years, the residents will observe significant thanks to make them happy, at least tax wise. **Committeeman Higgins** encouraged the Committee to support this project and move forward as quick as possible.

**Mayor Gable** thanked Mr. Remsa for all his hard work and assistance he has provided to Mansfield. He will be contacted before the next meeting.

**COMPLIANCE PLAN:** Jeffrey Burd, Tax Assessor Appearing

**Mayor Gable** said a packet of information had been received from Mr. Alan Abramowitz at the last meeting. A response was to be presented tonight. **Assessor Burd** is present and he has reviewed the information. At this time, **Committeewoman Cholewa** stepped down from hearing this portion of the meeting.

**Assessor Burd** said he reviewed Mr. Abramowitz's information and read the letter he submitted to the committee as follows:

April 24, 2016  
Mr. Mayor and Mansfield Township Committee

This letter is in response to Mr. Abramowitz' report regarding the recently implemented Compliance Plan for Mansfield Township.

My summary concentrates on Mr. Abramowitz' methodology of his sales analysis. A major issue is that he appears to use the new 2016 assessments and compares them to 2014 and 2015 sales, which is flawed. Mr. Abramowitz also ignores the corridor of value, which in this case, is 94.30%. In other words, any sale that falls between 82.00% and 94.30% is deemed an acceptable assessment. He seems to be giving the majority of the weight of his analysis to sales that could be considered outliers.

Probably most important, Mr. Abramowitz ignores the general trend that values are increasing in Four Seasons, which would make the sales ratio decline. Please see attached graph/chart which should easily demonstrate that market trend. Remember a declining sales ratio indicates increasing market values.

There is also some question as to the accuracy of his statistics on the second page of his letter. Mr. Abramowitz claims that the average residential assessment in Mansfield Township is 110,000. In fact, for 2016, it is 246,965. As per Mr. Abramowitz, the average assessment for the 427 homes in Four Seasons is 219,922. Based on the 2016 assessments, the Four Seasons development would be less than ten percent of the total valuation of the township (9.55%).

In summary, I am very comfortable and satisfied with the results of the Mansfield Township Compliance Plan. Please contact me if you need any further information.

Sincerely,  
Jeffrey M. Burd, CTA  
Assessor

Mr. Abramowitz, 73 Chamber Lane, came forward felt Mr. Burd's response left out a number of items on of which he did not notify the township in writing which is required. He had put in an Opra request and was told there is no written letter from the township. He referred to numbers which he felt were incorrect. He also felt the ratio was 14.1% which was not as required for compliance plan. Mr. Abramowitz also referred to Mr. Burd's calculation of "low ball" homes as being below the 82 percent. He didn't think this was fair. Mr. Abramowitz went on to list other numbers in Mr. Burd's report which he felt were incorrect.

Mr. Burd responded saying he spoke to the Division of Taxation today about written notification. He was told the reason that sentence is in the Compliance Plan is because it is more for courtesy to let the governing body know what the Assessor is doing. The fact that there was a meeting where it was presented verbally and was part of the minutes that the Division of Taxation as well as the County Board of Taxation did not have a problem with that as everyone was aware of what was going on. He further said that the final sales from May of 2015 to October of 2015 indicated the increasing of value and the falling of the ratio. The general trend was that values were increasing in Four Seasons as well as Homestead and Country Walk which is where he came up with the data for the Compliance Plan submission.

Mr. Abramowitz said a lot of people like himself, with the new assessment, are paying way over 82%. They are paying 104%. When you take the community as a whole, it brings the lower people up and the ratio is very close to 75%.

Mr. Burd noted that Mr. Abramowitz is one of three people from Four Seasons who have filed an appeal. If he had been the assessor in 2014, he probably would have made his sale an unusable sale. Based on sales, Mr. Burd felt comfortable with information provided.

Mr. Abramowitz said he will be going to the County next about the Compliance Plan.

**Attorney Magee** explained that, if he has an issue with the Compliance Plan that was approved by the County Tax Board, that is the place to take the complaint.

## **ENGINEER'S REPORT**

**Rick Brown, Engineer**, referred to his Project Status Report dated April 27, 2016.

He said he is currently preparing a revised proposal for Axe Factory Road as the County has not informed him that they will participate in the project.

An initial site visit with the architect was held on April 13<sup>th</sup> who is in the process of preparing a concept plan. Once approved, they will move forward with preparation of specifications for the public bidding. This is in regard to the CDBG Application.

The Local Aid Application for Mansfield Road East original prepared and submitted to the DOT was for the entire length of Mansfield Road East. This was for a total sum of \$1,066,577.00 which was broken down into construction and administration costs. The actual award was \$220,000. Therefore, we will set project limits and approve a little over ½ mile on the area of the road in front of the school. HE will define the limits and prepare the proposal accordingly.

Water testing information received from Remington & Vernick was sent to a consultant they worked with in the past. They will meet with them in the next two weeks with Mr. Jones to review a plan.

Quotations are being solicited for the drainage issue at 330 Mansfield Road East. These will be submitted for review.

In addition to receiving Engineering plans from Mr. Albanesi's consultant, they also received a subsequent drainage report which he is in the process of evaluating.

Signs will be installed at the North Island/School Access Driveway by Mr. Jones.

A motion was offered by **Committeeman Puglia** and second by **Committeewoman Cholewa** to accept the Engineer's report. Motion carried.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **RESOLUTION 2016-4-11**

#### **RESOLUTION FOR REFUND OF DEDUCTION**

**WHEREAS**, a Veteran Tax Deduction were allowed on the property listed below for the year 2015 and;  
**WHEREAS**, this allowance resulted in an overpayment on said property, and the refund is due to the homeowner,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Township Committee of the Township of Mansfield, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey at their regular meeting held on April 27, 2016 hereby memorializes the refunding of the following:

Block	Lot	Property Owner	Deduction	Amount	Check #
10.09	9	LaRessa Aoun	Veteran	\$250.00	5254

A motion was offered by **Committeeman Puglia** and second by **Committeewoman Cholewa** to adopt Resolution j2016-4-11. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, recorded as follows:

**AYE: PUGLIA, CHOLEWA, HIGGINS, GABLE**

**NAY: NONE ABSTAIN: NONE ABSENT: SEMPTIMPHELTER**

### **RESOLUTION 2016-4-12**

#### **RESOLUTION FOR REFUND OF TAX OVERPAYMENTS**

**WHEREAS**, Property Taxes were overpaid on the property listed below; and  
**WHEREAS**, this overpayment was due to a payment by Corelogic Real Estate Tax Service., and they are requesting a refund;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Township Committee of the Township of Mansfield, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey at their regular meeting held on April 27, 2016 hereby memorializes the refunding of the following to **Corelogic Real Estate Tax Service** by the Tax Collector.

<b>Block</b>	<b>Lot</b>	<b>Property Owner</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Check #</b>
42.30	24	Angela Stefani	\$3,079.83	5236

A motion was offered by **Committeeman Puglia** and second by **Committeewoman Cholewa** to adopt Resolution 2016-4-12. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, recorded as follows:

**AYE: PUGLIA, CHOLEWA, HIGGINS, GABLE**  
**NAY: NONE ABSTAIN: NONE ABSENT: SEMPTIMHELTER**

**RESOLUTION 2016-4-13**  
**RESOLUTION FOR THE REFUND OF TAX OVERPAYMENTS**

**WHEREAS**, Property Taxes were overpaid on the property listed below; and  
**WHEREAS**, this overpayment was due to a payment by Corelogic Real Estate Tax Service., and they are requesting a refund;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Township Committee of the Township of Mansfield, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey at their regular meeting held on April 27, 2016 hereby memorializes the refunding of the following to **Corelogic Real Estate Tax Service** by the Tax Collector.

<b>Block</b>	<b>Lot</b>	<b>Property Owner</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Check #</b>
24.01	3	Concetta Holloway	\$4,486.28	5235

**RESOLUTION 2016-4-14**  
**RESOLUTION FOR THE REDEMPTION OF TAX LIEN**

**WHEREAS**, at the Mansfield Township Tax Sale held on September 18, 2015, a lien was sold on Block 22, Lot 7.01, also known as 26360 Mount Pleasant Road for 2014 delinquent taxes; and,

**WHEREAS**, this lien, known as Tax Sale Certificate # 15-00002 was sold to MTAG Cust for Empire VII NJ in the amount of \$18,433.59 and,

**WHEREAS**, the property owner, Pleasant Farm, Inc. has affected redemption of Certificate #15-00002,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Township Committee of the Township of Mansfield, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey, authorizes that a check be issued to MTAG Cust for Empire VII, NJ; for the redemption of this lien.

<b>Lien Holder</b>	<b>Lien #</b>	<b>Amount</b>
MTAG Cust for Empire VII NJ	15-00002	\$59,534.37

**CFO Monzo** explained where every year the municipality has a tax sale where taxes are sold on properties where taxes haven't been paid from the prior year. The investors who buy the taxes have an option to hold the tax lien up to two years and, if the property owner does not pay the individual, the taxes and the interest paid over two years the property can be foreclosed on. If the tax payer pays off the lien within the two years, they can do so. In this case, the tax payer is paying off the lien. The money has to run through our trust fund to pay off the person who invested by buying the lien.

A motion was offered by **Committeeman Higgins** and second by **Committeeman Puglia** to adopt Resolution 2016-4-4. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, recorded as follows:

**AYE: HIGGINS, PUGLIA, CHOLEWA, GABLE**  
**NAY: NONE ABSENT: SEMPTIMHELTER ABSTAIN: NONE**

**RESOLUTION 2016-4-15**  
**A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE INSERTION OF A SPECIAL ITEM OF REVENUE IN THE 2016 BUDGET PURSUANT TO NJSA 40A:4-87 (CHAPTER 159, P.L. 1948)**

**WHEREAS**, NJSA 40A:4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of any county or municipality when such item shall have been made available by law and the amount thereof was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget, and

**WHEREAS**, said Director may also approve the insertion of any item of appropriation for equal amount.

**SECTION 1**

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** on this 27<sup>th</sup> of April, 2016, that the Township of Mansfield hereby requests the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the budget of the year 2016 in the sum of

\$220,000.00 which item is now available as an additional revenue for the DOT Mansfield Rd East

**SECTION 2**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a like sum of \$ 220,000.00 be and the same is hereby appropriated under the caption of:  
Section 1 (a)  
DOT Mansfield Rd East

**CFO Monzo** explained that we received a grant from the state for Mansfield Road East for \$220,000. In order to use the money, we have to amend the budget.

A motion was offered by **Committeeman Puglia** and second by **Committeeman Higgins** to adopt Resolution 2016-4-5. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, recorded as follows:

**AYE: PUGLIA, HIGGINS, CHOLEWA, GABLE**  
**NAY: NONE ABSTAIN: NONE ABSENT: SEMPTIMHELTER**

**RESOLUTION 2016-4-16**  
**RESOLUTION CONDITIONALLY DESIGNATING FLORENCE-COLUMBUS ROAD, LLC AS A REDEVELOPER FOR A PORTION OF THE FLORENCE/COLUMBUS REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, *et seq.* (the “**LRHL**”) **THE TOWNSHIP OF MANSFIELD** (hereinafter referred to as the “**Township**”) adopted a Resolution duly designating an area in the Township as an area in need of redevelopment, referred to as the Florence/Columbus Redevelopment Area (the “**Redevelopment Area**”); and

**WHEREAS**, via Ordinance No. 2016-4 the Township Committee adopted the Florence/Columbus Redevelopment Plan for the Redevelopment Area (the “**Redevelopment Plan**”); and

**WHEREAS**, on April 21, 2016, the Township received a request from Florence-Columbus Road, LLC, having offices at 1911 South Federal Highway, Suite 800, Delray Beach, Florida 33483, to be conditionally designated redeveloper of the portion of the Florence/Columbus Redevelopment Area consisting of property which is owned by Alan Margolis and is located on Florence/Columbus Road and designated as Block 47.01, Lots 13.02,9.01,9.02,9.03,10.01,10.02, 11 and 12 (the “**Property**”); and

**WHEREAS**, Florence-Columbus Road, LLC has met with representatives of the Township Redevelopment Committee and staff to discuss the details of developing the Property in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Redevelopment Committee has conveyed its summary of discussions with Alan Margolis of Florence-Columbus Road, LLC to the Township Committee, and the Township Committee finds it desirable to conditionally designate Florence-Columbus Road, LLC as the redeveloper of the Property; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Township Committee of the Township of Mansfield conditionally designates Florence-Columbus Road, LLC as the redeveloper of the Property provided the following actions are taken within one hundred twenty (120) days from the adoption of this resolution:

1. Ownership of the Property is legally organized as an Urban Renewal Entity pursuant to LRHL and all applicable laws of the State of New Jersey.
2. Florence-Columbus Road, LLC submits to the Township a written proposal consisting of a project description and site plan.
3. Florence-Columbus Road LLC submits to the Township a draft redevelopment agreement for Township review.

**AND IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED**, upon receiving evidence of the execution of the three (3) conditions set forth above, the Township Committee of the Township shall designate the Urban Renewal Entity, Florence-Columbus Road, LLC, formed by Alan Margolis, as the redeveloper of the Property.

**Attorney Magee** said that we are conditionally approving the owner of the property for the redevelopment zone. In order to qualify for available programs, both the municipality and the developer, the developer would have to be qualified as a redevelopment entity. We are conditionally approving the owner of the property for 120 days subject to him being approved by the appropriate state agencies to qualify as the ultimate redeveloper.

A motion was offered by **Committeeman Puglia** and second by **Committeewoman Cholewa** to adopt Resolution 2016-4=16. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, recorded as follows:

**AYE: PUGLIA, CHOLEWA, HIGGINS, GABLE**  
**NAY: NONE ABSTAIN: NONE ABSENT: SEMPTIMHELTER**

**MINUTES: April 13, 2016**

A motion was offered by **Committeewoman Cholewa** and second by **Committeeman Puglia** to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2016 meeting. Motion carried

**BILL LIST: Regular and Escrow**

A motion was offered by **Committeewoman Cholewa** and second by **Committeeman Puglia** to approve the bill list as submitted. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, recorded as follows:

**AYE: CHOLEWA, PUGLIA, HIGGINS (see below) GABLE**  
**NAY: NONE ABSTAIN: GABLE (on check #5324)**  
**ABSENT: SEMPTIMHELTER**

## **DISCUSSION**

### **a. Trash Pro-bid for private sanitation contract**

**CFO Monzo** explained that three years ago we went out for private trash contracting. The contract was awarded and expires November 30. TrashPro developed the bid specifications for us which went out to bidders. Trash Pro has reached out to us to see if we want to retain their services again for the same work. The price is the same - \$2,640.

A motion was offered by **Committeeman Puglia** and second by **Committeewoman Cholewa** to approve TrashPro again this year. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, recorded as follows:

**AYE: PUGLIA, CHOLEWA, HIGGINS, GABLE**  
**NAY: NONE ABSENT: SEMPTIMHELTER ABSTAIN: NONE**

### **b. Rental Re-registration – laws updated**

**Administrator Fitzpatrick** explained that, in doing research, our current ordinance is not current with the change in law for rental properties and registration. Our current ordinance requires an initial registration and then a re-registration every year. By statute, we are no longer allowed to charge for such. Thus, we need an ordinance change to continue with the registration and re-registration but not the current dollar amounts. In speaking to the Fire Inspector, he was told much of that money is used for fire inspections to keep the property up to code. The inspector has suggested raising the inspection fee to \$100 as typical of surrounding towns so houses comply with the fire code. The \$100 is charged every time there is a change in the tenant for four years when it would be re-inspected for code compliance. Or, if there is a change in the landlord-tenant relationship, there would be \$100 fee. **Administrator Magee** is to work with **Attorney Magee** to change our current ordinance.

### **c. Road Overlay – County**

**Mayor Gable** said we received notice from the county in regard to road projects they have for this year. Main Street from Petticoat Bridge road to ¼ mile east of Island Road will be done. Also, Jacksonville-Hedding Road from Springfield into Mansfield will be addressed.

### **d. Recreation**

1. Doppler, Hounds Camp, July 11-14, 2016 9am-12 noon, Civic Club field and Indoor facility.

A motion was offered by **Committee Puglia** and second by **Committeewoman Cholewa** to approve the above. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, recorded as follows:

**AYE: PUGLIA, CHOLEWA, GABLE**  
**NAY: NONE ABSENT: SEMPTIMHELTER ABSTAIN: HIGGINS**

2. Bordentown Blast 13U Baseball, Babe Ruth fields, various dates are on application
3. New Jersey Outlaws-Elite, girls softball, various tournament dates at MCP and Civic

A motion was offered by **Committeeman Puglia** and second by **Committeewoman Cholewa** to approve the above, Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, recorded as follows:

**AYE: PUGLIA, CHOLEWA, HIGGINS, GABLE**  
**NAY: NONE ABSENT: SEMPTIMHELTER ABSTAIN: NONE**

4. The Recreation Committee received an application from Northern Burlington Football Booster Club requesting use of the open area near the concession stand for a bonfire on October 28, 2016. The committee did not make a motion as they felt that the Township Committee should review the request based on the fact that committee had issues with this event last year.

**Mayor Gable** felt there was no issue in approving this request as everything went well with no issues. **Committeewoman Cholewa** said that some people on the Rec Committee felt this should be a rotating event, we should not have the expense since it is for the High School. Other sending districts should take a turn and do this. Why wasn't it on school property? **Mayor Gable** said that it was the Booster Club where the school doesn't recognize all of the events. Some concerns of the previous years were the location and the cleanup. However, last year it was handled very well. **Committeeman Puglia** said he spoke to Jef Jones who said it wasn't a problem last year and has no problem this year. **Committeeman Higgins** referred to problems in the past with clean-up but this improved. He felt it was nice to have it in the community and he had no problem with it although he would have to abstain on it. **Committeewoman Cholewa** said she still had a problem with other sending districts not participating with it. **Committeeman Puglia** added that we are doing this for the children. He then made a motion to approve this request. This motion was second by **Mayor Gable** who recommended asking the Booster Club to consider rotating Townships and give us a written response back about issues for them to be able to do that. That way, we will have a better understanding of why they want to continue to have it in our park. The motion was carried on a Roll Call Vote, recorded as follows:

**AYE: PUGLIA, GABLE, CHOLEWA**  
**NAY: NONE ABSENT: SEMPTIMPHELTER**  
**ABSTAIN: HIGGINS** (explained that son-in-law is football coach)

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Ed Koenig**, a Homestead resident who said he has lived there 16 years and is a Real Estate Agent with Homestead Realty. He referred to a newspaper article in the Burlington County Times about the assessments. He noted a situation in Homestead when, a few years ago, there is a street out there where half of the street has the erroneous age of the home and the erroneous year it was built. He said he could be fined for misrepresenting a property.

He said, as a resident of 8 Horseshoe Lane, he has been selling Real Estate in Homestead for 12.5 years, 5.5 years with Falconer/Bell in Bordentown, and about 7+ with Homestead. There are about 25 homes for sale in Homestead ranging from \$126,000 to \$290,000. Most of the sales in Homestead are Estate sales as well as various other sales. In 2012, there was a reassessment of the entire township. Twelve people hired someone to contest the assessment. They all won. His assessment went from \$248,600 to \$155,400. As of now, his house has gone up to \$190,400 or an increase in assessment of \$35,000. He feels he will appeal this new number as will several others. He felt the township was fortunate in having Homestead and Four Seasons in the township. Mr. Koenig expressed concern over outrageous education expenses and noted that no one in the two developments don't have children. Mr. Koenig said he wanted to bring this to the Committee's attention.

**Janice DiGiuseppe**, 16 Garfield Court, wants clarification on some of her questions. She said the gentlemen who just spoke clearly described that the Township was not aware of the Compliance Plan until he read the paper. Mr. Burd stated he spoke to the Division of Taxation who told him it was a courtesy. The word written was in the statute. She felt the legislature who approved that legislation would agree with that. The word written is in the statute that you are to notify the Township Committee in writing. In addition, upon doing a Compliance Plan, you are to notify the residents prior to January 10<sup>th</sup> when the assessment is filed with the County. This was never done. The Statute further states that a legal advertisement is required in the Township which is being assessed. That was never done. She said she wanted to know who gave the information that it was a courtesy. Mrs. DiGiuseppi said she went on the taxation website today and observed that the rules are clearly there. It clearly states that, prior to December 31<sup>st</sup>, legal advertisement is required, and the assessor is to notify by mail prior to February 1<sup>st</sup> all taxpayers. None of this was done. She took offense to the fact that he said this was a courtesy. These taxpayers are owed the responsibility according to the laws of New Jersey.

**Attorney Magee** understood a couple of issues in regard to the Compliance Plan. One is the issue of the actual assessment, the other is the issue is with the process which was submitted, approved, and adopted by the County Tax Board. He said there is nothing the Township Committee can do. If she and the residents feel the process was flawed, the place to take the complaint is the County Tax Board because they are the only ones who can change anything.



**Mrs. DiGiuseppe** said she understood this but what she is saying is, prior to January 10<sup>th</sup>, the residents should have been notified by advertisement and they were not. She said she didn't know a Compliance Plan was being done. She said the process should have been done more clearly. She said her issue is not with the assessment but with the process and the notification.

**Richard Langan**, 51 Vandevere, Four Seasons, said his complaint is not the specifics brought up by Mr. Abramowitz or the legal ramifications brought up by Mrs. Giuseppe, but of fairness. Between the three areas where the increase is being considered, about 35% of the total population is being represented. He felt the proportion of taxes versus the rest of the residents is going up. Assuming that none of the other residents have experienced an increase, with the increases in home sales and price of homes nationally and in the state, you are ignoring the bulk of the constituency and hitting the 60 year and older. He doesn't know how the Committee can make an excuse for this.

**Jeffrey Burd, Tax Assessor**, said every sale for the past two years for every neighborhood was reviewed.

**Myra Dickert**, 8 Allister, wanted to know the results of the review of the rest of the rest of the Township, She also questioned the reasons it was not publicized. **Mr. Burd** responded saying the people of the Division of Taxation said the wording was to make sure the Assessor did not do a Compliance Plan on his or her own or move on without the knowledge of the Committee which was done in Executive Session with a presentation and approval of the Committee. **Mr. Burd** further explained that discussions with the Division of Taxation, the green and white post card notifications that go out the end of January are considered suitable notification for assessment changes. He said the county would have had an issue if he did the process incorrectly. Mrs. Dickert questioned whether the three communities were the only ones he included and **Mr. Burd** explained they were the areas that were identified as selling way below their assessed value.

**Fred Gottesman**, 29 Harrington Lane, he referred to notification in the newspaper so the assessed person can meet informally with the Assessor to discuss what their number was going to be prior to the post care. He said when people go to the county, there will be errors revealed. **Attorney Magee** again said there is no one in this room or in this Township that was prejudiced because by the fact of lack of notification, time of notification. Everyone received their green cards ahead of time. **Attorney Magee** said, if he feels there is a failed error, he should argue with the County or State. Once the County certifies the list, the Governing Body goes it. The property owner can file his appeal with the County Tax Board.

#### **MAYOR AND COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

**Committeewoman Cholewa** recommended the people start looking at the schools and where their taxes are going. People should go to the meetings as they are spending a lot of money. She further referred to Jared Shinn and his accomplishment as an Eagle Scout.

**Committeeman Puglia** wished all a good night.

**Committeeman Higgins** said he was happy to see everyone here but wished it was under different circumstances. He felt that, if you look at the school budget, the administration is a big problem. He spoke of prior revaluations. As a Committeeman he said he gets more frustrated every time we try to do something to equalize the tax rates. He wished everyone would come out and spend some time at another Committee meeting to see some good things being done.

**Mayor Gable** said it was nice to see a big turn out tonight. He hopes everyone would come back again to participate in the meetings.

#### **MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was offered by **Committeeman Puglia** and second by **Committeewoman Cholewa** to adjourn. Motion carried.

**PREPARED BY:**

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:**

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**Barbara A. Crammer**  
**Deputy Clerk**

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**Linda Semus, RMC**  
**Municipal Clerk**

Approved: May 11, 2016