

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Warren Cooper called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and stated that in compliance with the "Open Public Meetings Act" this Meeting was duly advertised and published in the Hunterdon County Democrat on January 12, 2012 and the Express Times on January 12, 2012; the Agenda has been posted at Borough Hall and distributed to the Courier News, the Express Times, the Hunterdon County Democrat, and the Star Ledger on February 15, 2012.

FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Cooper asked everyone to stand for the flag salute.

ROLL CALL

Present for the Meeting:

Seth A. Grossman
Cathy Leach
Brad Myhre
Gerry St. Onge
William Sullivan

Absent from Meeting:

Robb Arent

Attorney Albert Cruz, and Borough Clerk, Brenda S. Shepherd, were present for the Meeting. 8 members of the public were also present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Cooper opened the public comment session.

Mayor Cooper noted that the first item under public comments is the Green Fair proposal.

Adrienne Crombie, member of the green team formed by the Council, stated that the Council received a copy of their proposal by email. The green fair will fulfill actions on Sustainable New Jersey and the Borough receives points. We will receive certification this year which will make us eligible for funding. The Green fair would gain us 20 points. We put together a green fair committee and have been meeting since before Christmas. Adrienne Crombie provided the mission statement, objectives and strategies. She is asking for the new council's blessing to go public. We are putting together events, reaching out to schools, planning earth day events that will be documented toward another action for sustainable jersey. Sustainable jersey certification program helps municipality go green, such as infrastructure, education, etc. The first thing you need to do is create a green team, in order to move forward to fulfill sustainable actions. When we have 150 points we will get certification. We already have our community gardens, the audits on this building, etc. When we reach certification we become eligible for major corporate and government funding. Adrienne Crombie asked for approval for the Green Fair for September 29, 2012 with a rain date of September 30, 2012 from Noon to 6 pm. Responding to Council, Adrienne Crombie stated that she spoke with the business association and spoke to Chief Kurylka and Lieutenant Winfield. The plan has become simple and centralized since those discussions. The insurance coverage is by the Borough. Seth A. Grossman noted that Riverfest will not happen which was always around Labor Day. This will be a replacement to that event. The Business

Association has agreed that it promotes and serves the purpose. On motion by Gerry St. Onge, seconded by Brad Myhre and carried by favorable voice vote, the Mayor and Common Council approved the Green Fair on September 29, 2012 with a rain date of September 30, 2012 as presented by Adrienne Crombie, member of the Green Team Advisory Committee.

Mayor Cooper stated that the Council established a green team advisory committee but now the names are different. He requested that the Green Team submit a new list of the existing members. Adrienne Crombie noted that she will email that list. Gerry St. Onge noted that Cathy Leach is the Coordinator.

Rivernet

Mayor Cooper noted that David Cahill of Rivernet Computers offered to create and host the Borough's official website gratis. He is going to show us a draft of the Borough's website. This is an opportunity for Council and the public to look at what we have in mind. David Cahill displayed the website and noted the navigation. Whenever you do website, 80% is organizing. He spent 5 days putting that together. He thanked Mr. Brokaw for donating art work. He added that Mayor Cooper and he spent a lot of time on navigation. The "About Frenchtown" section links to the business association website. There is the ability for the police to host information about floods, etc. If someone runs the Delaware River it will link to Frenchtown's site. Cathy Leach asked about posting what events are going on. Mr. Cahill noted that there is a community calendar on the site. Police, fire and school events will be listed. The library hours will be listed and when the library is open it will say "Open now". Each department will be listed with email addresses and a phone directory. Agendas for the meetings could go under the calendar of events. People can register their emails. We will get a lot of web traffic. Mayor Cooper noted that there is a requirement that 3 years of budget be available on the municipal website. If we can digitize the Borough code and planning documents we will put them on the site. We will make it as friendly and easy to use as possible for the residents and we will make it interactive. If a resident or visitor wants to know something, the website will take the place of a phone call to borough hall. Any additional time maintaining things on the website will result in a savings in time when the phone does not ring. Dave Cahill stated that if someone would google search us, it will come to our website. It will not eliminate all calls. When you have a lot of forms, etc., Council can go right there. It will promote businesses in town. Hacking is almost impossible with their security and customer service. Hacking usually occurs in big companies. If you leave an email open, it can be hacked. We can have credentials for uploads. We can address it if it happens. Police could touch their page and no one else can. Everyone can view it but can not change it. No financial data will be stored. When they pay bills on line, it will email a pdf. Mayor Cooper added that the URL is frenchtownboro.com. If someone tries frenchtownborough they will be linked. David Cahill noted that the pictures can be rolled. Other people can donate their talents. Mayor Cooper requesting to have a specific area of upcoming event scrolling so they disappear when the event is over. Cathy Leach asked that the scrolling of events appears on the home page. Mayor Cooper stated that the Council will be deciding on what we want the front page to look like. We do not want the home page to be so dense. Cathy Leach commented that a newsletter can be updated weekly. Dave Cahill stated that the front page can stay the same or you can put the latest posts on it. Getting the content is the hardest. Making the site is easy. Mayor Cooper requested that the site be made available to council members to go in, go through it, get input and make changes. It may be ready at the next meeting on March 7th. Dave Cahill commented that you could put "coming soon" if

information is not ready. Responding to William Sullivan as to the management of the website, Mayor Cooper stated that the administrative committee would be the management of the site. Brad Myhre asked if we can put in a survey section for council. Dave Cahill stated that he can show you how easy it is to do a poll. Word press is an open source and it is all free. Mayor Cooper added that David Cahill could do the emails right away. The Council has to decide the format. We could use first initial and full last names. Dave Cahill noted that he can set up positions like Mayor, etc. and if someone wants to use the park for example, the form will be available and they can submit the form. Mayor Cooper stated that anyone can report a problem by sending an email to the proper department.

Donna Miller noted that we are a town that has floods. Is there a way to gather emails and if there is an emergency, you can email. I want to be emailed. Dave Cahill noted that we can do so. Flooding is important. They can register and we email it. Mayor Cooper added that he believes the Borough has access to Nixel, an Emergency Alert System for floods, fires, closed roads and we can get a message sent to you. We can have that available through the website. Dave Cahill stated that he will maximize use to provide information. Anything of concern can be posted on the front page.

Skye Van Saun asked if there will be an opportunity for people to submit information. Dave Cahill responded "absolutely". Mayor Cooper added that we will have one community form for comments. We will have the ability to allow comments or disallow comments. We do not want the official website to morph into a Frenchtown Facebook. We could link to it. We do not know yet. David Cahill noted that as the website evolves, we will figure it out as we go. Mayor Cooper noted that the administrative committee will provide information by March 7 and approve to go live. Responding to Frank Mustac reporter for the Hunterdon County Democrat, David Cahill noted that they use webhosting and the servers are backed up everyday. Webhosting is rated number one at a cost of \$8.00 per month. They have a good operation, are open 24/7 and never had a problem. Council thanked David Cahill.

Skye Van Saun of Eighth Street noted that the hole she has expressed concern about is on Eighth Street. She also wanted to thank the Mayor or the road department for taking away the large chunk of tree in front of her house. Mayor Cooper stated that there is a rising awareness from the department of Public Works.

Skye Van Saun also expressed concern for the one spot on the towpath with a drop. Mayor Cooper noted that the bike path is state property. We do not have any influence on what they do but we can communicate issues to them.

Having no other comments, Mayor Cooper closed the public comment session.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #2012-36 – Award of the Bridge Street Improvement Project contract

Mayor Cooper noted that the project is being funded by the DRJTBC. The funding goes back years and helped build the park and ride. The funding was to be used to build infrastructure on the piece of property to be donated to the Borough by George Michael. Ron Sworen was able to get that grant moved to do the Bridge Street improvement project. We received seven bids for the project.

We sought bids in two ways, a base bid for paving and storm sewer drainage along Bridge and S. Harrison Streets and an alternate bid for Bridge Street paving with raised concrete walkways in certain areas. The low bid came in to do basic repairs of Bridge and S. Harrison Streets but not to include concrete tabletops walkways. The low bidder is A-Team Concrete at \$188,912.75. The Engineer reviewed and determined that A-Team Concrete was the lowest responsive bid. Attorney Cruz also reviewed it. The Council can award the bid. On motion by Seth A. Grossman, seconded by Brad Myhre and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Mayor and Common Council approved Resolution #2012-36 as follows:

RESOLUTION #2012-36

WHEREAS, the Borough of Frenchtown advertised, and subsequently received bids for the Bridge Street and South Harrison Street Road Improvement Project on Tuesday, January 31, 2012 as outlined on the attached bid summary;

WHEREAS, seven (7) bids were received as follows:

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Base Bid</u>	<u>Alternate Bid</u>
A-Team Concrete, South River, NJ	\$188,912.75	\$169,117.75
Top Line Construction, Somerville, NJ	\$218,168.98	\$202,581.37
Jonico, Inc., Lambertville, NJ	\$235,511.00	\$216,996.00
Hale Built, Easton, PA	\$244,478.33	\$220,061.88
Caro Corporation, Florham Park, NJ	\$276,042.83	\$243,862.83
A&A Curbing, South River, NJ	\$302,495.75	\$285,130.75
Diamond Construction, Brick, NJ	\$311,745.00	\$289,745.00

WHEREAS, Robert J. Clerico, has reviewed the submitted bids and determined that A-Team Concrete, 104 George Street, South River, New Jersey 08882, submitted the lowest responsive base bid in the amount of \$188,912.75 for the Bridge Street and South Harrison Street Road Improvement Project and;

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that funds are available for the Common Council to make this award.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Frenchtown that the Bid Contract for the Bridge Street and South Harrison Street Road Improvement Project be and is hereby awarded to A-Team Concrete, 104 George Street, South River, New Jersey 08882 for their base bid in the amount of \$188,912.75 subject to the following conditions:

1. The Contract is awarded as a unit price bid Contract and final payment will be based upon the actual quantities installed at the unit prices bid, as outlined in the Plans and Specifications prepared by Robert J. Clerico, P.E.
2. The Borough accepts the substitute price for complete replacement of the inlet castings, but rejects the optional Concrete Crosswalk bid item. The substitute

price has no impact on the contract base bid price of \$188,912.75.

3. The award of this Contract is made subject to review and approval by the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission.

Warren Cooper, Mayor

ATTEST:

Brenda Shepherd, RMC
Borough Clerk

Resolution #2012-38 – Resolution creating an ad hoc Downtown Revitalization and Planning Committee in the Borough of Frenchtown

Seth A. Grossman noted that to move ahead on planning downtown, street scape and how we market the town, customer service, etc. that makes the downtown work, he will volunteer his time. There has not been a lot of planning through a citizen driven process. He will be seeking funds for planners, architects, etc. to develop business and to work with the rest of the community. This will give us ideas of how to manage things. This community does not oversee the planning board. The signage we want to plan is navigational. He is proposing to create an Ad Hoc committee to include 9 members. The committee will include the strategic planning committee of himself, Cathy Leach and Robb Arent, the streets and road commissioner or his designee, two members of the Business and Professional Association and one other business person at large and two members of the public, all to be appointed by the mayor with advice and consent of the Council. Mayor Cooper expressed concerned that if all three members of the committee and the streets and road commissioner meet on that committee, it will constitute a quorum. He suggested that only two members of strategic planning committee be on the ad hoc committee and add a third as a Borough resident. Brad Myhre noted that Mike Reino can sit in William Sullivan's place as his designee. Responding to Seth A. Grossman, Mayor Cooper stated that he will send an email to the town for membership and will also email for the streets/safety committee. William Sullivan commented that the website would be excellent to communicate this. Gerry St. Onge recommended that the Planning Board Chair be a member of the committee as well. Seth A. Grossman stated that it is a reasonable request and he will reach out to the Planning Board Chair. That would make it a 10 member committee. Responding to the Council, Attorney Cruz stated that a resolution is usually good for a year. At the reorganization meeting, you can decide whether to continue or disband committees. On motion by Seth Grossman, seconded by Brad Myhre and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Mayor and Common Council approved the committee to be designated as 2 members of the strategic planning committee, the streets and roads commissioner and/or his designee, the Planning Board Chairman, 3 Borough residents, 2 members of the Frenchtown Business and Professional Association, 1 business person at large for a total of 10 committee members and approved resolution #2012-38 as follows:

Resolution #2012-38

**Resolution creating an ad hoc Downtown Revitalization and Planning Committee
in the Borough of Frenchtown**

Whereas the downtown business district is comprised of Race St., Bridge St. Trenton Avenue, Harrison St., S. Harrison St., Front St., Lott St., Second St., and Kingwood Avenue in the borough and is a key responsibility of municipal government

Whereas the Council of the Borough of Frenchtown believes it is in the best interest of the municipality to have its citizens and businesses participate in determining how best to plan and revitalize the borough and the business district

Whereas the Council believes that the best mechanism for receiving input from those citizens is to have their direct involvement in developing policy and plans regarding such matters

Therefore, be it resolved that the Borough Council of Frenchtown create an ad hoc Downtown Revitalization and Planning Committee to consider such issues and concerns as may affect the improvement, growth, development, and economic success of the borough and its residents, businesses and visitors and make recommendations to the Council as regards strategies to achieve the goal of downtown revitalization in the borough, and to seek grants to obtain professional services to achieve this endeavor as needed and determined

Be it further resolved that the committee be comprised of ten members, including the Chairman or his/her designee and a member of the Economic Development and Strategic Planning Committee, the Streets and Roads Commissioner or his/her designee, the Planning Board Chairman, at least two borough residents, two members of the Frenchtown Business & Professional Association, one business person at large appointed by the Mayor with advice and consent of Council.

Be it further resolved that the committee be charged with considering the following concerns: the economic vitality of the borough, a strategic business development plan, cooperative business practices and customer service, streetscape improvements, parking, building and sign design, lighting, signage, marketing, advertising and promotions, downtown management, and use of the N J Special Improvement District statutes and any other related matters

Be it further resolved that the committee shall bring to Council, no later than Dec. 1, recommendations for achieving the goal of revitalizing and improving the success of the borough's business district and the community as a whole.

By _____
Warren E. Cooper, Mayor

Dated: February 15, 2012

ATTEST:

Brenda S. Shepherd, RMC
Borough Clerk

Resolution #2012-39 - Resolution awarding a professional services contract to Phoenix Advisors, LLC, as financial advisor to the Borough of Frenchtown

Mayor Cooper noted that this resolution is necessary because of a last minute requirement from the state to fund the NJEIT loan. They want a bond rating. Our bond counsel recommended Phoenix Advisors, LLC at \$9,500.00 including reimbursements. It will be paid out of the bond itself. We reached out to three firms and received 2 quotes. The other quote was for \$17,500.00 plus reimbursements. On motion by Brad Myhre, seconded by Gerry St. Onge and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Mayor and Common Council approved Resolution #2012-39 as follows:

RESOLUTION #2012-39

**RESOLUTION AWARDING A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
CONTRACT TO PHOENIX ADVISORS, LLC, AS FINANCIAL
ADVISOR TO THE BOROUGH OF FRENCHTOWN.**

WHEREAS, the Borough of Frenchtown Common Council authorized the design, construction and financing of a Wastewater Treatment Plant; and

WHEREAS, in order to obtain the lowest possible financing, along with loan forgiveness, the Borough of Frenchtown applied to the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust Fund ("NJEITF") and the United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA"); and

WHEREAS, the Borough was successful in qualifying for low interest loans, along with loan forgiveness, from the NJEITF and USDA; and

WHEREAS, as a condition of continuing to qualify for one or both of the loans, the Borough requires the services of a Financial Advisor to assist the Borough in obtaining a rating deeming the Borough to have an "Investment Grade" rating, and to provide assistance in establishing the sewer rates; and

WHEREAS, the services provided by a Financial Advisor are considered a professional service exempt from the bidding process required by the Local Public Contracts Law; and

WHEREAS, the Borough requires the assistance of a Financial Advisor to obtain such a rating; and

WHEREAS, Bond Counsel prepared a scope of services and solicited quotes for a Financial Advisor; and

WHEREAS, two (2) quotes were received as follows:

Phoenix Advisors, LLC - \$9,500.00
inclusive of all reimbursable expenses; and

Acacia Financial Group - \$17,500.00

plus reimbursable expenses; and

WHEREAS, these quotes were reviewed by Borough officials, both elected and appointed, and the quote of Phoenix Advisors, LLC, was deemed the most beneficial to the Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that funds are available for the Common Council to make this award.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Common Council of the Borough of Frenchtown, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that the Common Council awards a professional service contract to Phoenix Advisors, LLC, of 4 West Park Street, Bordentown, New Jersey 08505, to serve as Financial Advisor to the Borough of Frenchtown in an amount not to exceed \$9,500.00, inclusive of all reimbursables, based upon Phoenix's quote, dated February 8, 2012; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to enter into a professional services contract with Phoenix Advisors, LLC, and the Clerk is authorized to advertise this contract according to law.

Warren Cooper, Mayor

Adopted:

CERTIFICATION

I, Brenda S. Shepherd, Municipal Clerk of the Borough of Frenchtown, County of Hunterdon and State of New Jersey, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of a Resolution duly adopted by the Common Council of the Borough of Frenchtown on February 15, 2012.

Brenda S. Shepherd, Clerk

Seth A. Grossman left the meeting at 8:40 pm.

PROCLAMATION

NEA's Read Across America

Mayor Cooper proclaimed the following:

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the citizens of the Borough of Frenchtown stand firmly committed to promoting reading as the catalyst for our students' future academic success, their preparation for America's jobs of the future, and their ability to compete in a global economy; and

WHEREAS, NEA's Read Across America, a national celebration of reading, will be conducted on March 2, 2012, which would have been the 108th birthday of Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Frenchtown calls on the citizens of the Borough to assure that every child is in a safe place reading together with a caring adult on March 2, 2012.

Warren E. Cooper, Mayor

Attest:

Brenda S. Shepherd, RMC

NEW BUSINESS

2012 EMS Contract

Gerry St. Onge noted that they have data and will be meeting with Milford Holland Rescue next Tuesday. The Chief of Police will help make a recommendation.

Recycling Coordinator

Gerry St. Onge noted that we have an offer from a resident, Richard Reilly, to go through training for Recycling Coordinator. The cost is about \$1,600.00. We have grant money to cover it. Mayor Cooper stated that he would like to put off a decision until the administrative committee has determined how they will perform duties and if we will pay for it. In addition, the administrative committee is still working on a draft budget before we spend money. One of the technicalities is having a certified recycling coordinator sign our tonnage report.

Approval of Roving Nature Day Camp program at Frenchtown Park from July 9-August 17, 2012 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm.

Mayor Cooper stated that this is a program the Borough has enjoyed for years. On motion by William Sullivan, seconded by Cathy Leach and carried by favorable voice vote, the Mayor and Common Council approved the Roving Nature Day Camp program at Frenchtown Park from July 9 – August 17, 2012 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm.

Approval of Raffle License Application from Lion Club Frenchtown for Casino Night on March 24, 2012 at the National Hotel

On motion by Gerry St. Onge, seconded by Brad Myhre and carried by favorable voice vote, the Mayor and Common Council approved the Raffle License Application from the Lions Club

Frenchtown for a Casino Night on March 24, 2012 at the National Hotel. Brad Myhre encouraged the community to attend and recommended putting it on the website.

OLD BUSINESS

Hole on Eighth Street property

Mayor Cooper noted that Brenda Shepherd sent letter to the property owner for a status report. We have not heard anything in response to that letter.

Gordon Dragt letter

Mayor Cooper noted that he sent a letter to Gordon Dragt in reference to the discussion he had with Public Works Manager Mike Reino.

Lighting problem on Everittstown Road

Mayor Cooper noted that Seth A. Grossman will write a letter to those residents on Everittstown Road.

Kingwood Avenue sewer pipe problem

Brad Myhre noted that he is working with Robb Arent. The pillar was washed out that holds the sewer line under the bridge. There is a report from Engineer Clerico. Last week FEMA came to inspect in the town. FEMA will reimburse the town 75%. The other 25% would have to be absorbed by the town. They would be willing to fund just to restore the pier that was there. They can not do anything further. Because the sewer line was not cracked, they would only allow for replacement. The pillar did not have proper footing. FEMA will fund 100% up to \$70,000.00 if the town shows a significant mitigation item. If we can have Engineer Clerico review the plan and put in a more substantial footing, they would be willing to pay. There is a threshold of \$63,800.00. If it is higher than that you hit the large project classification. Then, it makes it a reimbursable grant. If it is under \$63,800.00, we get the money up front. They do not think we will go over that threshold. We should get documentation and a mitigation plan together. We would then be in line for other funding in the future. Mayor Cooper noted that he is trying to get feedback from the NJDEP regarding the emergency nature of repair. They are looking into it. Brad Myhre added that the turn around for money is anywhere from a month to three months. We have to following bidding rules. He asked the Council to give him authority to contact Engineer Clerico to put together a report. The Council consented. Attorney Cruz asked where the other 25% would come from? Responding to Council, Attorney Cruz stated that it could be from capital. It is a long term improvement with a life expectancy over so many years. You could take it from the sewer fund. Brad Myhre noted that he will talk to the CFO and auditor. There is money in the sewer capital account.

Sewer Plant construction insurance coverage

Mayor Cooper noted that he wanted to make sure that the project did not require that we get additional insurance. We have gotten a letter stating that we are covered during the course of the construction. They sent us options to look at regarding potential coverage after the plant is built. He will come back with a recommendation.

Fire Prevention Official

Gerry St. Onge stated that they should be ready to provide the budget information for the state. The issue was "How do we get approval for the anticipated revenue?" We are getting details on the buildings from the tax assessor. It is looking promising to get that revenue approved.

COUNCIL COMMENTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Responding to Council in reference to a letter from Michael Padavan, Mayor Cooper noted that he spoke with Mr. Padavan. Mr. Padavan informed Mayor Cooper that he ran into the surveyor who was figuring out the slope of the street. His doors will not work anymore after the sidewalk is improved. There will be a preconstruction meeting before the work is done. We will bring it up. Engineer Clerico is away on vacation. We will get back to Michael Padavan.

Mayor Cooper also noted that we received a letter from the County in reference to the pilot program. The County sought to collect money from municipalities ten years in arrears for that payment in lieu program. We sent a letter to the County that our Counsel would review it. We received notification that the County said "never mind".

Gerry St. Onge reported that the Council has a copy of the fire department report and for the first month, 100% of the EMS calls were covered by our squad. This is a result of a volunteer who is fully EMT trained. The concern was coverage from 6 am to 6 pm. People are recognizing that our squad is blossoming. Friends of the Frenchtown Fire Department are working on "file for life" with coordination from the Fire Department, Police Department, Friends of the Fire Department, etc. Gerry St. Onge also reported that the Fire Department is hosting a blood drive on Saturday at the Fire House from 10 am to 4 pm. It is on the Facebook page.

At 9:00 pm, Council agreed to continue the meeting for another 15 minutes.

William Sullivan reported that Public Works got rid of leaves to a local farmer and the rest to the community garden. We are looking into repairing the police stations front porch. This is a Capital Improvement project. We have one carpenter looking into it. We will see what we have to do.

Cathy Leach thanked Gerry St. Onge who spent a lot of time with the committee. She noted that she attended a Riverdog meeting. They will have a fundraiser at the National Hotel. They are also going to do an educational presentation at the school to teach children how to interact with dogs.

Brad Myhre noted that there was damage at the park from the storm. William Sullivan stated that the Shade Tree Commission used shade tree funds to cut and remove some of the damaged trees. Robb Arent has that information. Brad Myhre noted that not all the information transitioned to the new year. We are trying to track down all the information.

Brad Myhre complimented the police on their heavy enforcement of traffic. They are working on budgetary stuff. They are starting conversations on the National Night Out program. Every year, National Night Out gets better. Brad Myhre also complimented Chief Kurylka and Chief Hoffman for working together. Mayor Cooper noted that we have the latest municipal court figures from January. There were 145 traffic tickets issued and 28 criminal complaints. We pay out Title 39 split where 50% of ticket fees go to the County. It has to be on a county road per the attorney. It is

a lot of money.

Brad Myhre noted that in the February issue of "Cops", the Santa Claus activity by our Police Department was mentioned. Our Police Department brought Borough cheer to a couple of local families.

Mayor Cooper reported that the League of Municipalities has posted a brochure on property taxes and why they are high if anyone want to see it.

Mayor Cooper reported that the Army Corp of Engineers has been conducting a risk management study. There is a public open house scheduled for February 22, at 3:30 pm at Warren County Technical School. There is another open house at Mercer County Library in Lawrenceville.

Mayor Cooper noted that we received a request to endorse a mutual aid agreement for law enforcement. He asked Brad Myhre to look at that and see if we would like to do that.

Mayor Cooper also noted that due to recent cuts at the County, the Freeholders have decided to restructure the Health Board. He was told that the Freeholders have streamlined programs that will affect our communities. We will lose a lot of shared services. I would like to recommend that the Council reinstate the Board of Health. He also would like council to consider establishing an environmental commission. That is not an ad hoc committee. Attorney Cruz noted that an Environmental Commission has to be created by ordinance.

Mayor Cooper asked if Frenchtown participate in the state's wellness campaign? He added that if not, he would like to explore that. Council consented.

Mayor Cooper commented that Cathy Leach and himself attended a budget update presentation by the Division of Local Government services. Cathy Leach stated that she learned a lot about the budget schedule, resources and statistics. EMA site is another source. Mayor Cooper stated that the seminar was targeted toward finance managers. Gerry St. Onge commented that the shared services research that Rob Walton chaired put a data base together of all the town's budgets. We may be able to get ideas from that. Mayor Cooper noted that the data is two years old.

Mayor Cooper reported that they have begun working with Mayors for Delaware Valley Regional High School. We will meet on a monthly basis to look at ways to function together.

Mayor Cooper also reported that as we have spoken about a number of times, the rate of uncollected taxes is an abomination. We will have outstanding taxes at about 8%. That is frighteningly high. We should be at about 98% or higher. We have been around 94% for a few years and now we are at 92%. This is a problem we need to address. We have to put money in the budget for that, approximately \$368,000.00. We have to come up with that money. The rest of the taxpayers have to pay for that. It has immediate consequences. Previously, we heard that it is a handful of property owners. That is not true this year. Recession has caught up with homeowners. Brad Myhre stated that we discussed moving up the tax sale with the auditor. Cash flow may become a problem. William Sullivan added that we have to make an impact and let them know there are consequences. Mayor Cooper commented that there are laws that govern that process.

We will recommend that we move the tax sale date up. William Sullivan recommended publishing the delinquent list on the website. Mayor Cooper noted that currently there is a list on the counter in the Clerk's Office. It will be shared. We need to be more aggressive about that. We want to be compassionate as well. The state has come forward with help for those facing foreclosure as a result of unemployment, etc. It is the NJ home keepers program. Mayor Cooper stated that he will send that out to Frenchtown Facebook and also put it on the Borough's website. Council consented.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm on motion by Brad Myhre, seconded by Gerry St. Onge and carried by unanimous favorable voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Shepherd, RMC
Borough Clerk