

**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 10, 2013 and the Express Times on January 10, 2013; 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 20, 2013.

**FLAG SALUTE**

Mayor Cooper asked everyone to stand for the flag salute.

**ROLL CALL**

Present for the Meeting:

Robb Arent  
Seth A. Grossman  
Michele Liebttag  
Brad Myhre  
William Sullivan

Absent from Meeting:

Cathy Leach

Attorney Albert Cruz, and Borough Clerk, Brenda S. Shepherd, were present for the meeting. 13 members of the public were also present.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Mayor and Common Council approved to open the public comment session by favorable voice vote.

John Mizin, resident of Frenchtown, noted that he is here on behalf of the Frenchtown Green Team to offer a concept of a farmers market in Frenchtown. They were recently approached by the Frenchtown Business and Professional Association to activate a farmers market. The Frenchtown Business and Professional Association would be the lead agency. We had a brief meeting with Chief Kurylka about traffic during the period of the market. We thought the market would be best sustained somewhere downtown. We understand parking is an issue. Chief Kurylka suggested parking at Cathy’s on Kingwood Avenue. Diane Dalrymple approached Kathee’s and did get permission to hold it there. We are in the process of forming a strategy. Purpose of the market is to give local residents an opportunity to shop for fruits and vegetables grown in local locations. The market would be held on Sundays from 8am to 2pm through October. We are looking at feasibility as to are there enough growers in the local area. We will not go any further until we have your approval. Mayor Cooper noted that it is a great idea. He asked about the issue of insurance as it will be on private property. Responding to William Sullivan in reference to the Board of Health inspections, John Mizin stated that it is his understanding that the ordinance for fresh markets does not require inspections by food inspectors because it is not prepared food. Council thought it was a good idea. Robb Arent wished them good luck and noted that he tried to do this 3 years ago and the local growers were spread out. John Mizin noted that the fees are expensive. Our fees will be nominal. This will give the back yard gardeners and opportunity. The Frenchtown Business and Professional Association wants to provide community service and bring more visitors to

Frenchtown. Council consented to the Farmers Market. Mayor Cooper asked Mr. Mizin to let the Council know the progress.

Responding to Robb Arent as to garden spots, Mr. Mizin reported that there is a waiting list. Most of the plots are filled. He recommended that Mr. Arent contact one of the members of the community garden to get on the waiting list. Mr. Mizin also reported that they are in the process of building a website for the community garden. There are other projects that could be explored later such as beautification of the downtown with flowers grown in the garden. There is also a spot in front of the police station. This will be a learning process. They also want to expand and beautify the garden.

Mayor Cooper asked what the plan for the future structure of the community garden is? Mr. Mizin noted that it was a Lions Club project for 3 years. They are now going through a process for a board of directors, etc. There will be bylaws and they are looking to be a non-profit organization. They are trying to keep fees low. It is a learning experience and at some point, they would like the schools to be involved. They presented the idea so it is a matter for the Board of Education now. They have a school garden in Kingwood. Mayor Cooper stated that the governing body would like to see this go further.

The Mayor and Common Council approved to close the public comment session by favorable voice vote.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

All matters listed on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Governing Body and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

Mayor Cooper stated that the duplicate bills turned out to be a result of a combination of errors. There were two vouchers submitted in the same amount at different times. Diane Laudenbach did not catch it. Mayor Cooper gave kudos to Brenda Shepherd for preparing the minutes from last meeting so quickly.

On motion by Brad Myhre, seconded by Michele Liebttag and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Mayor and Common Council approved the consent agenda approving the minutes of the February 6, 2013 regular Council meeting and the bills list dated 2/20/13 as attached to this set of minutes.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

Brad Myhre stated that the resolutions are fine if we make the effective date March 1<sup>st</sup>. He is waiting to finish the Fire Department paperwork with FEMA. He added that we are putting in a request for Creek Road. FEMA was out there today. The estimate is over \$100,000.00. We hope to get 75%.

**Resolution #2032-25 - Appointment of the OEM Coordinator**

On motion by Robb Arent, seconded by Brad Myhre and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Mayor and Common Council approved Resolution #2013-25 as follows:

**BOROUGH OF FRENCHTOWN**

**RESOLUTION #2013-25**

**APPOINTMENT – EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR**

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Frenchtown wishes to appoint a new Emergency Management Coordinator; and

**WHEREAS**, Karen Harmon is qualified for this position;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Common Council of the Borough of Frenchtown to appoint Karen Harmon as the new Emergency Management Coordinator through the current term ending 12/31/2014 effective March 1, 2013.

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Warren E. Cooper, Mayor

Dated: February 20, 2013

Attest:

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Brenda S. Shepherd, RMC  
Borough Clerk

**Resolution #2013-26 - Appointment of the Deputy OEM Coordinator**

On motion by William Sullivan, seconded by Brad Myhre and carried by unanimous favorable roll call vote, the Mayor and Common Council approved Resolution #2013-26 as follows:

**BOROUGH OF FRENCHTOWN**

**RESOLUTION #2013-26**

**APPOINTMENT – DEPUTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR**

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Frenchtown wishes to appoint a new Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator; and

**WHEREAS**, Amy Cochrane is qualified for this position;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Common Council of the Borough of Frenchtown to appoint Amy Cochrane as the new Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator through the current term ending 12/31/2014 effective March 1, 2013.

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Warren E. Cooper, Mayor

Dated: February 20, 2013

Attest:

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Brenda S. Shepherd, RMC  
Borough Clerk

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **OATH OF OFFICE - the Environmental Commission**

Mayor Cooper noted that there are 5 of the 6 members present this evening. Bruce Myhre will have to come in later to get sworn in. The Mayor administered the oath of office to the following members: Adrienne Crombie, Richard Reilly, Joel Boriek, Tom Woodruff and Pete Palac. They all accepted their oaths of office. Mayor Cooper introduced the members to Council and noted that the environmental commission will meet the second Wednesday of the month. They will put together an environmental resource inventory and will be reviewing applications that will come before the planning board and will provide advice to planning board on what impact an application might have. The meetings are open to the public and the environmental commission has to follow the open public meetings act. They will have to advertise meetings, record minutes, etc.

### **Board of Health**

Mayor Cooper asked the Council to consider that the Borough start thinking about whether we recreate a Board of Health in town. Over the last many years, the County Health Department has taken on much of those responsibilities. The county has been shedding responsibilities over the last several years. For example, when we have issues like the vulture issue, they are not much help to us and issues of debris, etc., they are no help to us. As time goes on, we will probably have to take it over. They currently do the health inspections for the businesses and charge the business owners. That is a function they still do. Brad Myhre recommended that the Borough ask the county to have a representative tell us what they are doing, what their goals are, etc. Seth A. Grossman recommended

creating a small task force to look to see what the board of health would do, what they would review, etc. Mayor Cooper noted that in Alexandria Township, the Board of Health is comprised of two of the township committee men. They meet 5 minutes before a committee meeting. It is not a lot of work on a regular basis. The Borough's last agreement in place with the County was 2009.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Dog Park**

Mayor Cooper noted that a report will be given at the next meeting since Cathy Leach is absent this evening.

### **Memorial Day Reenactment**

Mayor Cooper noted that we got a letter from Mr. Mayer proposing that we allow a Memorial day reenactment. Mr. Mayer got in touch with someone from the American Legion and they were not willing to provide insurance coverage for the reenactment. His understanding is they will withdraw the request if the Borough does not provide the insurance coverage.

### **Nishisackiwick Creek Project**

Mayor Cooper reported that the project is complete

### **River Mills**

Attorney Cruz noted that he has not gotten any further information. There was suppose to be a meeting last week between George Michael and the property owner with the access easement. The mayor and he have an idea to have it move along more quickly.

### **Ice Skating at the Borough Park**

Mayor Cooper stated that we will not see enough cold weather for ice skating. He did get an email from Patty Atheras wherein she indicated that Michael Atheras has someone who will donate a liner to the Borough for next year.

### **Storage**

Mayor Cooper stated that we will be using the County facility. Brenda Shepherd has reviewed the agreement with the County and the language for owner and depository was switched.

### **2013 Budget**

Mayor Cooper noted that this item will be discussed a little later in the meeting.

### **Community garden**

John Mizin noted that Brendan Edmonds is the President of the community garden this year. Brendan Edmonds noted that they have acquired a grant for the planter boxes, etc. The grant was provided from the Garden Club of New Jersey for \$1,000.00 to provide additional spaces. They are using the spaces to provide vegetables. They have expanded two additional plots at this point. They still have a list of 5 or 6. They are also looking into grants for pest control. There are a lot of great things going on with the community garden. Mayor Cooper thanked them.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Seth A. Grossman noted that the reconstituted downtown revitalization committee will meet tomorrow at Borough Hall at 3:30 to discuss the downtown revitalization program and plan and see what we will need. He added that Flemington is considering a performing arts center. Downtown talked about a performing arts center. It may be a trend and maybe collaboration could occur on the subject of arts, culture and tourism. Mayor Cooper added that a number of people have spoken about identifying a location or a piece of property that may work as an art center. Seth A. Grossman noted that it is important for us to follow those things. We did not determine that we would address it right away. There is an interested in it. Flemington is moving forward. John Mizin commented that we have an opportunity in our back yard. There are beautiful buildings that could be converted to a community center in our neighboring community and there may be an opportunity to work with our neighboring municipality.

### **2013 budget**

Mayor Cooper stated that the Council has in front of them a spreadsheet with the 2012 budget, what was budgeted, the second column on what was revised, the third column is the unencumbered number and the last column represents what the amount would be with an increase of 2%, the state cap, from last year's budget. Mayor Cooper added that he had asked the department heads to prepare a budget based on needs for this year and desires for this year, projects and equipment that we should be investing in for the betterment of the community. He would like to discuss some of those items. He prefers that we do not discuss salaries at this time. The Administrative Committee will come to Council with a recommendation. Brad Myhre commented that some of the unencumbered numbers are in question. Mayor Cooper noted that the \$113,000.00 represents the surplus on this past year's spending plan. This represented a good position for 2013. We can use some of that money to put in the capital fund. We started last year with a deficit of \$58,000. In addition, the tax collection rate has increased from 92.5% to 94.6%, an increase of 2%. For a municipality of our size, we should be closer to 97% or 98%. We have a few recommendations from various departments that he would like to discuss.

Mayor Cooper noted that there is a request from DPW and the safe streets and roads committee to spend money to replace crosswalks, repaint and restripe, and mark handicapped locations. This was a recommendation from Hart. The cost was 6 or 7 thousand dollars depending on what method we use. Mike Reino estimated for 28 crosswalks and 3 handicapped locations at about \$10,000.00. DPW also recommended spending \$7,500.00 to reconstruct 5 catch basins, \$5,000.00 to do infrastructure repair on the drainage pipes of Ward and Chestnut Streets as well as the pipe that leads from Creek Road to the restroom area. \$22,500.00 could be budgeted out of the capital expense. The Administrative Committee would like to see that included in the budget. William Sullivan noted that if we do not maintain the drainage, it will wash out the road. We should fix it now if we have money. We have been operating on a conservative budget and Mike Reino is cooperating. We have not been maintaining and we let a lot of routine maintenance lapse. We are just repairing. If Mike Reino is asking for it, it is needed. Mayor Cooper stated that they are also looking for \$10,000 for fleet maintenance. The line item will almost double. Some is capital. Brad Myhre noted that the Borough slashed a considerable amount over the last several years. Robb Arent noted that it was

Council's intent to restore that line item. William Sullivan noted that the leaf vac will have to be maintained. The town wants the leaf collection so we will have to maintain it to continue to pick up leaves. Mayor Cooper noted that some of the requests can be accommodated out of the capital budget.

Mayor Cooper stated that as to the proposal from the Frenchtown Fire Department, at page 2, Department 415, aid to volunteer ambulance, shows the amount paid to Frenchtown and the amount below of \$13,770.00 is the amount budgeted for Milford Holland rescue. Brad Myhre and Michele Liebttag think the number for Milford Holland Rescue should be higher. We overspent that line item last year. Michele Liebttag noted that Brad Myhre and her are auditing the figures and think it may be closer to \$15,000.00. They have been approach by Diane Lutz from Milford Holland Rescue to make a more formal arrangement. They are picking up more calls for Frenchtown. The EMS position has not been handled by the Frenchtown Fire Department. The last few months of the year, they were at 0%. Brad Myhre noted that they are presenting the concept of a Frenchtown, Milford and Holland squad. Currently, we are paying on a per call basis. They will put something in writing. We would have to consider contributing more at a partnership level, with paid people like they do now. The last 4 years were on a per call basis. Frenchtown's call response dropped drastically. Retaining and staffing is difficult. Mayor Cooper stated that it is something that we need to consider. He is hoping the figure will not exceed by too much from what we are paying both Milford-Holland and Frenchtown now. Robb Arent stated that we are doing ourselves a disservice on way we account for things. We are not able to capture the true cost. It does not included insurance costs, etc. We also cover the Fire Departments utilities, fuel, gasoline, etc. Mayor Cooper stated that we are talking about the possibility of making a change in the EMS response. Insurance on the building, etc. will not go away. Brad Myhre stated that we need to have discussion with the fire company. Milford-Holland Rescue would be the first called. It seems that for the future, EMS groups will come together and share the costs for future ambulances, etc. Each town budgets for a new ambulance over several years. Mayor Cooper stated that the Fire company's budget is right below the EMS line item. There proposal has not changed from last year to this year. Last year, we budgeted \$21,312.00 and they are seeking \$21,350.00. Brad Myhre added that we also put in the request for new radios. Mayor Cooper stated that the county communication system is changing. We have two years to get radios compatible with their system at a cost of \$850.00 a piece. We need 12 radios. He attended the meeting with the county about this. It was presented to us that because we have two years until we go fully live, we do not have to spend it all in one year. Mike Atheras told him he does not want half the crew with old radios and half with new. He recommends that we get them all at once. Michele Liebttag stated that they will need to have more conversations on this. Brad Myhre stated that we are required to get off the narrow banding system in 2014. There was FEMA money out there for grants. We will have to fund the radios at a cost of \$13,000.00. We want to split that at \$6,500.00 over the next two years. Mayor Cooper commented that we do not have a choice but how do we go ahead with the purchase, half this year and half next year? Mayor Cooper stated that the Fire Department is essentially asking for the same amount this year for hydraulic tools, turn out gear, etc. Michele Liebttag noted that they will purchase one piece this year through the next 5 years.

Brad Myhre noted that they discussed going through a co-op for cost sharing advantages and using a qualified purchasing agent. Mayor Cooper stated that this became a topic when the boiler quotes

were over the bid threshold. He sent an email to John Davenport, the County purchasing agent, to see about a share service. Unfortunately, there are legal impediments as an employee of the county. It is not a legal impediment to hire him as a consultant on a contractual basis. Attorney Cruz asked if it can be a shared service? Brad Myhre stated that he will speak with the County Freeholders.

Robb Arent commented that we have the only fire company that does not do fund raising to help defer some of the cost for their equipment. Michele Liebttag noted that they have had conversations and they are having more fund raising through “friends of the fire company” to do significant funding raising. Brad Myhre stated that the overall reality is low membership. There is not enough manpower to go around. There are only 12 members, 6 of who are active. There has to be a boarder discussion on what we are going to do going forward. Seth A. Grossman commented that the cost of running a fire company is different than 20 years ago. It is coming down to volunteers. You will find a need in the future for regional services in that area. William Sullivan recommended looking at Kingwood to see what they do to keep membership high. Maybe they can make recommendations. Brad Myhre noted that the Union Fire Department physically staffs the Frenchtown Fire Department. They have been around since the 1800s. You can not be a member unless you are certified. You can join other fire companies where you are not fully certified and can do administrative duties, cleaning, etc. The Union Fire department does not allow that. Responding to Robb Arent, Brad Myhre noted that some municipalities give the fire department a check and the fire department maintains their own. Mayor Cooper noted that we have three municipalities that have fire districts in Hunterdon County and he thinks it is a bad way to go. It is an additional tax for the property owners. The governing body has no control over a fire district. Brad Myhre noted that we have an oversight of the funds for reimbursement. Their books are always audited and there is accountability to the taxpayers. William Sullivan commented that he has seen improved relationships and would like to see it grow. They should try to make it easier to grow. If we will give them more money, consider changes to its charter concerning membership. Mayor Cooper added that he has seen over the last few years some changes. Gerry St. Onge was working on getting them to be more responsive and self reliant. Brad Myhre added that it is the same group of volunteers. They have to look at the charter to make changes. William Sullivan noted that there has to be incentives to get people there and to want to get training. Bless the ones that are there. Change can be fearful but they have to do it. Robb Arent asked how much the Borough truly provides to them? Mayor Cooper responded that he will have the CFO give us the information.

As to the Police o&e, Mayor Cooper stated that on the same page, under Department 299, last year’s o&e budget was \$28,888.66. The Chief submitted a proposed increase to \$30,048.00 which is slightly over 2%. They did not spend all of it last year. If you look at the salary and wage line item, \$20,000.00 was not spent last year because we applied for an extension with the COPS grant. This year we will begin to pay on our own so there will be a significant increase in the salary line item. The reason for the increase in this year’s o&e budget is the vehicle that we said we would fund last year. We are trying to figure out the best way to do that. The intent was not to lease until the end of last year and in addition some of the money got spent on computers, camera systems, etc. Brad Myhre stated that the cars will be replaced, so one is going this year. Robb Arent commented that four cars seem excessive for the department. Mayor Cooper stated that we do not want to expand the fleet. We are waiting for dollar figures on selling. Robb Arent asked about the CERT bus. We insure and maintain it.

Mayor Cooper noted that on page 1, department 4, the CFO had come to us in the past with concerns that our software system was out of date. It is no longer serving the Borough well. We asked her to get estimates. She came back with a figure of \$6,500.00 and \$10,000.00 and both require an \$1,800.00 annual maintenance fee. According to our auditor, the cost of the software can be capital but maintenance can not. Throughout last year, Mayor Cooper stated that he heard concerns from almost every department about reports and Diane Laudenbach's difficulties with getting expenses at any given moment. Robb Arent noted that when Joe Monza gave the Council a budget seminar, he told us then that our system was garbage. Responding to Robb Arent as to the codification line item, Mayor Cooper stated that the item will be reduced. We are clustering the ordinances so expenditures overall will decline. The figure in the spreadsheet shows a 2% increase from last year's figure.

Mayor Cooper noted that the last item on page one is the engineering line item. Last year, we budgeted \$1,500.00. We have been fortunate to be able to pay our engineers from grants, etc. Next year we are proposing that we hire an engineer to do a roadway maintenance study for repairs, etc. William Sullivan stated that we will need money for engineering for the upper numbered streets. Seth A. Grossman noted that at the last meeting, he discussed design cost estimates for downtown. Robb Arent commented that we will also be looking at roadway standards and design. Mayor Cooper stated that he would like Engineer William Burr to assess roads already dedicated to the Borough of Frenchtown, schedule preventative maintenance and a maintenance plan going forward. William Sullivan stated that he supports that as a number one priority. Seth A. Grossman agreed that it is a priority and added that he will be looking into alternatives for the design plan for the downtown as discussed last month. Mayor Cooper stated that the number they are considering is \$7,000.00 for the engineering line item. As to the Hilltop areas, we will not set money aside until we decide what can be done and what our legal constraints are. There will be extra money needed for legal costs for that as well.

As to the Shade Tree Commission, Mayor Cooper noted that he received a request that we restore their budget to \$6,000.00. William Sullivan commented that they have been taking down a lot of trees and they have not been able to replace them. This year, they want to do replanting and remove stumps on Third and Eighth Streets.

#### **COUNCIL COMMENTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Robb Arent noted that he received comments from 50 people in town whose jobs are to erect steel buildings that the buildings are not going up quick enough. He pointed out two things, one, that when we solicited bids, we received 5, 3 were thrown out and 1 was withdrawn and secondly, the steel beams are so cold that you could not work with them for too long even with the gloves on. The contractor has a dead line and they say they are on schedule.

Mayor Cooper noted that he did receive an email from Robert Clerico today regarding the sewer pipe repair. He will prepare bid specs and the funding ordinance will need to be prepared.

Michele Liebttag reported that she spoke with Adrienne Crombie about the date for the Green Fair. It will be September 28<sup>th</sup>. Michele Liebttag added that she would like to do a recycling table again

this year.

Mayor Cooper reported that the date for the National Night Out is August 17<sup>th</sup> with a raindate of August 18<sup>th</sup>.

Robb Arent reported that we saved \$50,000.00 today because it was determined that the uv system would be ineffective. A wiping system is recommended. Mayor Cooper stated that we asked them to determine how much it would cost to replace it with an electronic system. They will come back to us.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

None addressed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Brad Myhre, and second by Michele Liebttag to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 pm. Motion carried by favorable voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brenda Shepherd, RMC  
Borough Clerk