

**THE BOROUGH OF WOODMONT
31 Clinton Street
Woodmont, CT 06460**

**ANNUAL MEETING
August 28, 2014**

**The Annual Meeting of the residents of the Borough of Woodmont
was held on Thursday, August 28, 2014.**

Meeting Opening

The meeting was called to order by Warden Edward W. Bonessi, Jr., at 8:02PM.

In attendance, thus meeting the requirements for a quorum with at least thirty Woodmont residents in attendance were a total of sixty one voter-registered freeholders in attendance.

Pledge

The Warden led the group in saluting the American flag and in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introduction of Officials & Staff

Warden Bonessi reviewed ground rules for the meeting and then introduced Burgesses and Officers.

Approval of 2013

Warden Bonessi reminded everyone that the minutes are a summary of what happened. The minutes were reviewed by Borough residents. A Motion to approve the minutes was made by Pat Del Vecchio of 56 Mark St., seconded by Raymond Jablonski of 25 Bonsilene St and the Motion carried unanimously.

Comments of the Warden

A visual presentation of 2013-2014 projects and improvements was shown and an orated overview was given on the following subjects:

- Borough Taxes and City Grant (the rebate of taxes we pay to Milford to cover standard municipal public works)
- Borough Taxes Additional police coverage Maintaining Borough property * Flood & Erosion Control Woodmont Library Borough Staff Freeholder Directed Projects \$125,000+-
- City Rebate Base public works contract:
 - Snow Removal, etc.
 - Street paving projects
- Sidewalk and seawall repairs
- Storm drain projects

- Drainage Groin Repair/Replacement
- Landscaping contract
- Street lighting expenses
- \$257,000 (requested) - \$220,000 (received)

Beaches

- \$2.3M Army Corp Cat G Beach Replacement (Sandy)
- \$23K Hazard Mitigation

Street Paving

- Hawley Ave: Chapel to Usher & Dunbar Rd: lower and upper

Borough Web Site

Beautification Committee

- Benches & other aesthetic improvements

Building Committee

- Company 5 Firehouse *Final Acquisition* Next Steps

Anticipated 2014-2015 Projects

- Street Paving *continued*
- New Borough Hall – Phase I
- next STEAP Grant Application
- Sale of 31 Clinton Street
- Borough Beautification Plan *cont.*

Building Committee Annual Report

Building Committee 2014 Annual Report

The acquisition of the former Milford Fire Station #5 on Kings Highway for purposes of converting it into a new Borough Hall/Municipal Center was finally achieved on May 30, 2014 when Mayor Blake executed the deed transferring the property to the Borough for \$1.00. The Borough still has the state \$500K STEAP Grant available for construction.

The Committee had hoped to have had title much sooner, and construction underway by this past spring, but the City of Milford was not able to transfer the station until after the Police Department installed a 50 foot emergency relay tower on the property, with its supporting equipment now taking over a former bed room on the second floor.

The requirement that there be an EMCOMM tower caught everyone by surprise, and it was never discussed until after the Board of Alderman voted to transfer the building to us on September 9, 2013. That vote too was delayed due to an unrelated political dispute in the Borough last summer that drew the aldermen's attention away from our request.

It seems that no one at City Hall told the Police Department that the old Station #6 was being put up for sale, and that Station #5 was to go to the Borough. The Police Department had only recently installed the EMCOMM system at #6, and thought that it was being retained for public use. To make matters worse, the Police and Fire Departments really do not communicate with each other either, as the Fire Department took the (our) back up generator at #5 with it when it left, leaving no back up power supply for the EMCOMM, or for that matter our building.

And the building committee's plans certainly did not have provision for the tower either. The Police and their contractor in fact wanted to install right in the middle of our new front entrance and court yard!

Well, this has all been worked out now, we have OUR generator back, and the tower and its equipment are placed in positions that will not materially affect our building plans.

The project is now in the bidding stage. There was an open house for contractors on July 23, 2014, with approximately two dozen companies in attendance, and formal bids were submitted by nine companies. The first round of bids received unfortunately did not meet our budget requirements, and no contract could be awarded. The committee and its architects have identified some cost saving measures. Revised plans and bid specifications will be placed back out for re-bidding, and hopefully we will have a ground breaking ceremony shortly. A six month construction time frame is envisioned for Phase One, consisting mostly of interior remodeling of the former truck bays and converting them into an immediately usable assembly hall.

Respectfully submitted,

C. D. Rockwell, Chairman

New Business / 61 Freeholders in Attendance

Susan Mills of 1630 New Haven Ave commented on the new sign at the top of Rosemary Ct since they are going to put a garden around it. E&D landscaping was working there and down the slope covering the beach roses are tall weeds that block the view of the roses. Asked E&D about their removal and responded that they needed to talk with the Borough. Warden Bonessi said that he would look into the matter.

Allen Resnick of 19 Beach Ave said this is our 3rd summer here and we have some history here since my wife's family lived here in the 1930s and 1940s. As you know I do have some concerns about the beach restoration project. We have rocks that are about one foot deep along the beach with no topping, and will there be a topping put on the beach and since the public uses our beach, will the private portion of our beaches be cleaned. Warden Bonessi explained that everything east of the Bonsilene St groin was raised by approximately four feet. Prior to storm Beth, there was no beach. Every three to four years the sand would migrate around to Rosemary Ct and now that beach is huge. We cannot replenish private beaches, clean, or expand private property with city funds. The public trust is below the high mean water, regulated by the state, and is not maintained. Warden Bonessi gave a historical account of the situation.

Claire Zeidenberg of 6 Dunbar Rd would like to thank everyone for our great new street. Claire Zeidenberg said the budget was not emailed out to everyone and we receive everything else by email. We used to get a break down of city and Borough side of the budget. Warden Bonessi said that it will be emailed and put on the web site and he would provide her with the details she was asking for.

Myra Saxon of 4 Village Rd said that she walks frequently and has noticed that at Village Rd and Kings Highway that there needs to be a crosswalk. It is a heavily traveled and is a

dangerous location. Warden Bonessi said that this is the northern part of Kings Highway and it is up to the police department to determine if a crosswalk is necessary and that we can only recommend. Burgess Richard Raucci said that he would look into it.

Kristina Sancher of 13 Beach Ave said that she was in the eighth grade when the sand was added and pumped up to the top of the 10 foot sea wall for the entire stretch of the beach that lasted about 20 years. The sand has gone out to sea and it has come back in due to storm activity but I am asking for your help since the rough surf has brought back the rocks. Warden Bonessi explained that Judge Rottman in 1957 as Warden of the Borough was able to have sand placed from Oyster River to the Villa Rosa. The DEP, now the DEEP evolved 13 years after this was done and do not care about what has been done in the past and want the beaches to go back to their natural state. Looking at photographs of Woodmont before 1957, Woodmont did not have sandy beaches. The Warden continued to explain the processes for sand replenishment for our category "G" beach. A discussion followed.

Frank Grazioso of 27 Hawley Ave said that due the increased popularity of our beaches traffic has increased that people are driving in the wrong direction on our streets and are driving too fast. Other cities have used speed bumps to slow traffic and have used improved signage to alleviate these situations. Warden Bonessi responded that we have discussed this in many meetings, we are contact with the police concerning this, we have stepped up patrols, the patrol car has a calibrated radar gun, and you are welcome to read out police reports, we are enforcing violations. Senior Burgess John Barrett of 32 Hawley Ave added that he is aware of these issues and now that we have a new administration it may be possible to request speed bumps that city currently does not allow. There are other solutions for traffic calming solutions that we can propose to the city said Warden Bonessi.

Michael Graetz of 32 Beach Ave said that we need to think about lighting. Beach Ave used to be lite and you could see where you were walking, now you cannot see where you are walking. I urge you that we do something about it. Senior Burgess John Barrett responded by saying that the UI came in and reviewed our lighting and balanced our lights during a national balancing initiative to save electricity. This was free of charge. The UI will add additional lights and up the dose for free, but will charge handsomely to reduce or remove additional lights. Warden Bonessi said that we are going to look at it again. A discussion followed.

Approval of Proposed 2014-2015 Borough Budget

Constable Ray Jablonski of 25 Bonsilene St Motioned to accept the proposed budget, seconded by Hillary Fried of 16 Usher St., and the Motion passed with two opposed.

Burgess Christopher Schmeisser explained the Borough budget. A discussion followed concerning the Borough budget and city fund.

Use of police funds followed concerning scheduling issues that caused a surplus. Burgess Richard Raucci explained when requests were not filled, Warden Bonessi concurred with Burgess Richard Raucci. A discussion followed.

Carmen Corvino of 31 Chapel St questioned the \$2,000 line item for the volunteer fire

fighters saying that they were decertified some 30 years ago. Warden Bonessi agreed and said it was in 1985 that they had been decertified. Carmen Corvino said that she objected to the line item since they are a social group and why should Borough funds be used to support a social group. Burgess Christopher Schmeisser reminded everyone that this line item was added by the request of the freeholders last year. Warden Bonessi said that the volunteer firemen were spending the money to purchase supplies and that they are to be trained for CERT, they will be manning the Point of Distribution Center (POD), they will be involved with the emergency response civil preparedness system, and providing smoke and CO2 alarms to Borough residence. A discussion followed.

Carmen Corvino of 31 Chapel St Motioned to have the \$2,000 line item for the volunteer fire fighters removed from the budget, seconded by Richard Epstein of 21 Abigail St, and the Motion did not pass with 14 in favor, and 21 opposed to the Motion.

David Casey of 18 Blackhall St said that the amount of money, as a neighborhood organization to increase our level of safety was a bargain.

Kelley Cummings of 7 Chapel St agreed with David Casey of 18 Blackhall St, and said that this part of Woodmont and we would lose a part of the community.

Tina Della Vella of 135 Kings Highway wanted to know who maintained the volunteer fire department's property. Warden Bonessi said they only use the small red building and that the remainder of the land is maintained by the Borough. The decision concerning maintain the building was up to the volunteer firemen.

Tina Della Vella of 135 Kings Highway wanted to know if the city public works or UI maintained trees covering wires. Warden Bonessi advised her to call the UI concerning this.

Burgess Christopher Schmeisser Motioned to transfer the current surplus to the reserve budget for erosion control and house, seconded by Kelley Cummings of 7 Chapel Street, and the Motion passed without opposition.

Michael Graetz of 32 Beach Ave wanted to move \$5,000 of the reserve to be used for lighting. Warden Bonessi and Senior Burgess Barrett pointed out that lighting is part of the city budget and not the Borough budget currently under consideration. A discussion followed.

Adjourn

Warden Bonessi of 83 Beach Ave entertained a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Pat Del Vecchio of 56 Mark St Motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Richard Raucci of 22 Dunbar Rd and the Motion passed unanimously by voice vote at 10:03PM

Minutes taken by William Guelakis

Attached Freeholder Signatures: