

REORGANIZATION MEETING – LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING
COUNCIL MEETING ROOM

Wednesday, January 1, 2014 – 12:00 Noon

The Reorganization Meeting of the Lawrence Township Council was held on Wednesday, January 1, 2014, at the Lawrence Township Municipal Building – Council Meeting Room at 12:00 Noon.

The Municipal Clerk read the following statement of proper notice:

STATEMENT OF PROPER NOTICE: “Adequate notice of the January 1, 2014 Reorganization Meeting of the Lawrence Township Council was forwarded to The Times, The Trentonian and The Lawrence Ledger on December 10, 2013 by the Municipal Clerk.”

The Municipal Clerk stated that Imam Mubin Khatdara of the Islamic Society of Central Jersey will give the Invocation, and the Verga Brothers - Jake, Zack, Connor and Cole will lead them in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll call for continuing Council members was then called as follows:

Present: Councilmembers Lewis and Powers.
Absent: Councilman Maffei.

Also in attendance were Richard S. Krawczun, Municipal Manager, and David M. Roskos, Esq.

The Municipal Clerk stated, “It is my pleasure to announce the results of the November 5, 2013 General Election for the following members of Township Council for a four-year term:”

Stephen C. Brame
James S. Kownacki

The Municipal Clerk advised that the following individuals would be administering the Oath of Office to the (2) two elected officials.

- ❖ Senator Shirley Turner administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Brame.
- ❖ Assemblyman Gusciora administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Kownacki.

The Municipal Clerk called for nominations for Office of Mayor for a two-year term (2014-2015).

Mr. Powers nominated Cathleen M. Lewis for the Office of Mayor, seconded by Mr. Brame.

The Municipal Clerk asked if there were any other nominations. There being none, Ms. Norcia declared the nominations closed and asked Ms. Carter, Deputy Municipal Clerk, to call the roll for the nomination of Cathleen M. Lewis as Mayor.

RECORD OF VOTE

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Mr. Brame	X						X
Mr. Kownacki	X						
Ms. Lewis	X						
Dr. Maffei				X			
Mr. Powers	X					X	

United States Congressman Rush Holt administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Lewis.

~~~

Mayor Lewis welcomed and wished everyone a “Happy New Year”, after which she gave special recognition to the following dignitaries: *Congressman Rush Holt, Senator Shirley Turner, Assemblyman Reed Gusciora, County Executive Brian Hughes, Freeholders - Pasquale Colavita and Anthony Carabelli, Trenton Councilmember Zach Chester, Ewing Councilmember Jennifer Keyes-Maloney, Former Mayors of Lawrence Township - Doris Weisberg, Joseph Cermele, Gregory Puliti and Harold Vereen, Executive Director of ELSA Robert Filler, The Imam and members from the Islamic Society of Central Jersey and the Verga Brothers - Jake, Zack and Connor from the Boy Scout Troop 27 and Cole from the Cub Scout Pack 28.*

~~~

Mayor Lewis’ Mayoral remarks:

Good afternoon and Happy New Year!

“First let me thank my friends and family for being here today and for all the residents who are joining us today. Thank you for taking time out of your holiday to be here. Now to my parents who are here today thank you for all your support. To my grandmother who is also here, I am glad to say we have four generations of strong women here today to help swear me in.

And most importantly to my husband, Paul, and my girls, Abigail and Bridget, the heavy work is not done here by me, but by the three of you who understand what that sacrifice means and for your patience at all of the meetings and events that will come up over the next two years. Thank you!

Now, no one will say that the past two years have been easy; but, Mayor Kownacki deserves our thanks for his leadership and continuity during a difficult period. Over the last few years this Township has been tested, the Administration rose to that challenge by cutting the budget and presenting a 2013 budget that was a million dollars less year over year. Our Township employees have risen to that challenge by finding ways to continue exemplary service in the face of drastic cuts. And our residents have risen to the challenge; when we asked for your input you spoke loudly and we thank you.

Each deserves our thanks and now we must rise to the next challenge to rediscover all our Township has to offer. It is a diverse community, as our ceremony here today demonstrates. I ask that everyone that is here today and all of residents join me in committing to finding at least one new way to participate in our community this year. Whether it's to sign your child up for a rec recreation program or to join us at the Colonel Hand March on Saturday; find one new way to reconnect with the Township.

Help us find ways to make this Township better, volunteer on one of our boards. Help us to share the great things this Township can do. And we as a Township must also find new ways to connect with the residents. That is why I am asking each Board to present a report to Council about their activities and goals. Our volunteers do wonderful work, it should be highlighted and residents should be aware of what they are working on so they can willfully participate.

Over the last year I have worked on two projects that I hope will highlight new ways our residents can connect with community; the Special Olympics and the Composting Initiative – both are opportunities to highlight what is great about Lawrence, our ability to work together and our desire to lead when it comes to efforts of sustainability.

We have a unique opportunity to highlight businesses and amenities that this town offers when the National Special Olympic Games come to town. The Special Olympics Committee will be able to find ways for residents to show our enthusiasm and support for these important games.

Our new Composting Program will give residents the opportunity to compost through curbside pickup; fellow residents are working on how to encourage the required 300 households to sign up. It's a great opportunity to cut down on costly waste pickup and help our environment. I encourage all residents to look at this program.

While I've touched on some of the great things this Township will be doing, the budget continues to loom over us. Over the last two years we have highlighted some of the inequities in the current system. I will continue to carry this message to Trenton. As always we should continue to look for ways to reduce cost. I challenge every member of

this Township to bring new ideas on how we can find savings from members of this Council and Administration; to our residents we must continue to look for ways to share more services and save taxpayers from unnecessary expenses. And I look for support and partnerships from other municipalities, the county and state in doing that.

This year we face another challenge as residents receive their reassessments. Happy New Year your house is worth more. While in the long term this process allows us to maintain a stable tax base and prevents the costly reassessments that caused us so much trouble over the last few years, these changes will cause residents concern. We must work to have open lines of communication during this process and work with the County and State to find ways to prevent such long gaps between revals in the future so we don't face these budget problems.

Each of my goals for this Township has one common thread; we must work to find ways to communicate with our residents not just on the serious issues, but in everything we do.

As I wrote this speech my two year old who is standing right here asked me what I was doing, I told her I was writing my speech for Mayor and she said, as you can tell "I can be Mayor too" So I asked her what a mayor does, her response was " She laughs and plays". Toddlers have a way of reminding us of the bright side of life and we need to remind residents of the bright side of Lawrence Township, our diverse community, our great programs from our soccer teams, to our senior center, to our health services. We do so...much for our residents.

As a mother I know we need to find time to laugh and play in the midst of household budgets, serious work and speeches. So, while we have serious work to do here, from finding cost savings to keeping our Township on the cutting edge. I want to find time to laugh and play with our residents, to celebrate our successes and join in the fun. I hope you'll join me.

Thank you very much! And one last thing thank you to our Clerk who did a wonderful job leading our meeting this afternoon.

Thank you all."

Mayor Lewis administered the Oaths of Office of the Chiefs of the Fire Companies as follows:

Chief Mark Lenarski
Chief R.J. Liard

Slackwood Fire Company
Lawrence Road Fire Company

Public Participation

There was no public participation.

Resolutions

Resolution Nos. 1-14 thru 18-14 (A-Q) with the exception of Resolution 10-14 (J) were approved by the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Mr. Brame	X						
Mr. Kownacki	X						X
Dr. Maffei				X			
Mr. Powers	X					X	
Mayor Lewis	X						

All adopted Resolutions are spread in their entirety in the 2014 Resolution Book.

~~~

Resolution No. 10-14 (J) was approved by the following roll call vote:

| COUNCIL      | AYE | NAY | PRESENT | ABSENT | ABSTAIN | MOVE | SECOND |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|---------|------|--------|
| Mr. Brame    | X   |     |         |        |         |      | X      |
| Mr. Kownacki | X   |     |         |        |         | X    |        |
| Dr. Maffei   |     |     |         | X      |         |      |        |
| Mr. Powers   |     |     |         |        | X       |      |        |
| Mayor Lewis  | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |

All adopted Resolution is spread in its entirety in the 2014 Resolution Book.

---

Mayor Lewis asked Council for their remarks:

**Councilmember Kownacki's remarks:**

"I wish everyone a Happy New Year and thank you for coming out."

~~

**Councilmember Powers' remarks:**

"First I want to wish everybody a Happy New Year, and I especially want to recognize my family that's here, my wife, Nancy, my daughter, Lauren, my son Christopher, my son, Hunter.

Twenty-thirteen (2013), as I was telling the Mayor, we were the walking wounded. I had my hernia surgery, Councilman Maffei had his shingles and his shingles flared up today so he wanted to extend his regrets for not being here today and his wishes for a Happy New Year to everyone.

If I had one wish for our community, I know in 2013 for the first time the stores were open on Thanksgiving and I think we're losing those opportunities of quiet times where we have moments of reflection. So my wish to our community is take some time, put the smart phones down and just have a moment once a month for some quite time and some solitude.

And, again, Happy New Year to everyone"

~~

**Councilmember Brame's remarks:**

"To my wife, my aunt, my cousin and all here gathered it is an honor to serve you and I promise you that I will do my very best to represent all of us fairly and equitably; equitably as I said so in my oath. I recognize that we are a super majority. I also recognized that under a republic we have even a greater responsibility to listen to all sides of the argument, to evaluate things carefully and with great thought for benefit, the general welfare of all of us. As we seek not victory...we seek reconciliation.

Thank you."

---

**Mayor Lewis' closing comments:**

Mayor Lewis thanked everybody for coming out and invited everyone to join them downstairs in the Lower Level Conference Room for refreshments sponsored by the Lawrence Township Democratic Club. She further advised that the Colonel Hand March is scheduled for Saturday (January 4) at 10:00 a.m. here at Town Hall for those who would like to participate and encouraged all to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:33 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Kathleen S. Norcia  
Municipal Clerk

Attest:

---

Cathleen M. Lewis, Mayor