

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Morris Plains Board of Health, held on May 13, 2015, in the Council Chambers, Borough Hall, 531 Speedwell Avenue, Morris Plains, New Jersey.

The following members were present: Mrs. Catherine Marshall
Mrs. Pam Nelson
Dr. Dario Fenimore
Dr. Colin O'Reilly
Mrs. Jan Ryan

Attending: Mr. James Breiten – Environmental Health Specialist
Mr. Jack Doherty – Council Liaison
Mr. Tom Wood – Animal Control Solutions
Mrs. Colleen Drucker – Resident
Mrs. Carole Howell – Secretary

Call to Order

Mrs. Marshall called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM, declaring that adequate notice of this meeting has been published and posted in accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, "Open Public Meetings Act."

Mrs. Marshall welcomed Mr. Tom Wood from Animal Control Solutions. Mr. Wood began by telling the Board that he has worked for Morris Plains since January. Things were fairly quiet during the winter months, which is normal. Spring has brought the problem of feral cats being fed by well meaning residents. By putting food out, more and more wildlife is attracted to it. One resident had 6 cats. One was unfortunately hit and killed by a car. This pick-up brought to light the fact that she was feeding at least 6 feral cats. The owner was issued a summons, despite the fact that she blamed the feeding on her son. Her case is due to come up in court next week. Hopefully the situation will be cleared up at that time. This resident claimed ignorance about feeding and licensing these cats. Mr. Wood feels that things are quiet now but will inevitably pick up in the summer months. He believes that feral cats are the main problem he sees in Morris Plains. Mrs. Marshall agreed and then asked him to explain the case of the aggressive raccoon. He explained in depth how the Fish and Game laws limit what Animal Control can do. In the case of the raccoon, the owner was faced with an aggressive animal that even began chewing on the siding of the house. But unfortunately for her, she needed to call pest control, since it was on the outside of her home. The animal could have been sick or could have been gnawing on the wood to make a home. The State sets the following criteria for Animal Control to come out:

- 1) The animal is engaged in a fight.
- 2) The animal is sick or injured and cannot defend itself.
- 3) There is any threat to humans.
- 4) It is considered nuisance wildlife and must cause more than \$500 in property damage.

Mr. Wood explained that he is also a licensed pest control business but tells callers to utilize their own pest control, if they have a contract with one. The resident was not pleased that Animal Control could not handle this case, but did call a friend in pest control, who removed the raccoon. The Board appreciated this explanation of the criteria given by Mr. Wood.

Mrs. Marshall then gave Mr. Wood copies of correspondence regarding recent cat problems in the Borough. A question then came up about why a homeowner was charged \$175 for a trap to be set. Mr. Wood explained that this was a deposit and that it is returned to the resident once the animal is caught. This deposit is a deterrent to people damaging the traps because they don't want to see the cats

trapped and removed. Mr. Doherty then asked how long the traps are left in place. He was told that it was for 5 days. But Mr. Wood noted that the traps are checked daily and can be left longer if needed. Mr. Doherty felt that this important information about the traps should reach the residents. Dr. O'Reilly suggested placing it in the next edition of Plains Talk. The Board agreed with him. Mr. Wood then pointed out that the Fish & Game web site contains valuable information for homeowners on how to live with your wild neighbors.

Mr. Doherty then noted that the Mayor and Council agree that they do not believe in TNR. He then asked Mr. Wood how he would limit the number of cats. His feeling is that an ordinance is needed that limits the number of cats an owner may have. He pointed to Westfield's ordinance as an excellent one to look at. Mr. Doherty worries that a limit on the number of cats will bring a great number of complaints from cat loving residents. Current ordinances only limit the number of dogs allowed. Mr. Wood then gave the example of a home in Chester that had 170+ cats. None had been spayed or neutered, so they continued to breed until Animal Control took action.

Mrs. Marshall then explained to Mr. Wood that the monthly reports are excellent. But the Board would like to see what the disposition is in each case. Mr. Breiten suggested a sentence that tells the disposition. Mr. Wood agreed to add this. He is also happy to give the Board a rundown on any case with a simple phone call to him. He even offered to fax any information on a case, if it is requested. He noted that he takes pictures of feeding bowls and areas when he investigates.

Mrs. Marshall then asked Mr. Wood how long he thinks it will take to bring the cat population under control. He believes he can do it in one year, depending on the court system. He feels that if the judge is willing to work with what the town wants, he can work with the courts and solve the problems.

Mrs. Marshall then handed Mr. Wood copies of important correspondence relating to the cat problems the Borough has experienced in the past year. He was very appreciative to get this background information. Mr. Wood noted that animals he retrieves can be seen by Vets and subsequently adopted. His company has the highest adoption rate in New Jersey. He also works with over 200 rescue groups. He wishes he could save all of the animals but unfortunately disease prevents this.

Mr. Doherty asked about the status of the cat situation on Birch Drive. Mr. Wood explained that his roadblock is that the homeowner keeps changing her mind. He hopes it will be resolved at her court date next week. The owner did not show for her first court date, tried to say that they belonged to her son during the second date, and so now the court is going after the son as well.

Mrs. Marshall thanked Mr. Wood on behalf of the entire Board. He offered his link for the Borough website: animalcontrolsolutions.org

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Fenimore made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 8, 2015, as circulated. Mrs. Ryan seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Environmental Health Specialist's Report

Mr. Breiten reported that Carlos Perez is sending out letters to all existing massage parlors about the stringent licensing procedures that must now be followed. Carlos was concerned about the need to waive the fine for these establishments, if their paperwork was not completed by June 1. The Board was

in total agreement with him that these fees could be waived, as long as the application was in progress by June 1.

Mr. Breiten reported that all inspections were satisfactory. Bottle King is in the process of adding a 3 compartment sink. Fines were levied on two eating establishments for their waste containers. He visited Foxwood today and found several issues with their pool. They are working to bring them into compliance and he will stay on it. He plans to visit Idlewild and Community Park next week.

The next ordinance Carlos would like to revise is the Vending Machine Ordinance. Since they expire in May, the date for compliance will be whenever the new ordinance takes shape. The Massage Parlor Ordinance must take precedence at the moment. Carlos must also make sure he has all of the stickers for the vending machines. Mrs. Marshall asked James to pass on to Carlos the desire for him to study Westfield's Cat Ordinance, as well. The Secretary was asked to forward a copy of the current Vending Machine Ordinance to Gail Fraser.

The Secretary is working with Cindie Bella to secure the library for the last week in June. It will be the site of the Mosquito Display. Mrs. Marshall asked Mr. Breiten about any problems with the churches as food handlers. He explained that it is hard to see them in operation but Carlos feels they should be licensed. There would not be a fee. Carlos does plan to meet with them again in the near future and James will inspect them. Dr. O'Reilly was concerned about inspecting carnivals. After a recent carnival, there was a major outbreak of gastroenteritis. James explained that there is no mandatory inspection required at the present time.

Bills

Publication of Massage Ordinance passage in the News Bee - \$23.72

Dr. O'Reilly made a motion to approve passage. Mrs. Nelson seconded the motion.

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| Roll Call: | Mrs. Marshall | yes |
| | Mrs. Nelson | yes |
| | Dr. Fenimore | yes |
| | Dr. O'Reilly | yes |
| | Mrs. Ryan | yes |

Motion carried.

Mrs. Marshall then handed the newest Board members (Dr. O'Reilly and Jan Ryan) copies of the Board Members Manual.

Publicity

Mrs. Ryan reported that the information she worked on with Cindie Bella should appear in the upcoming edition of Plains Talk. Mrs. Marshall asked the Board for suggestions about publicizing Animal Control Solutions to the residents. It was decided that the Fall edition of Plains Talk could contain an article on it.

Council News

Mr. Doherty reported that the Mayor and Council toured the Honeywell property and were very pleased. They expect to occupy the space by Sept. 11, 2015. Tomorrow evening there will be a hearing on soil removal on the property across the street.

Municipal Alliance

Dr. Fenimore attended their meeting and was very impressed with how active they are. They handle several projects relating to teenagers and drugs.

With no further business to come before the Board, Dr. Fenimore made a motion to adjourn. Dr. O'Reilly seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Carole J. Howell
Secretary