

Senior Advisory Committee Meeting
Tuesday, May 3, 2016
4pm

A meeting of the Senior Advisory Committee was held Tuesday May 3, 2016 at 4pm. Present were Council Liaison Noonan , Sylvia Ormando, Jean Lotito, Michael W. Hale, Nathan A. Abbe,. Also present were Secretary for the committee Karen Stallings. Absent were Gilbert Wels, Jay Glasgow, Brady Palmer, Al Molinaro and Teri Ristaino.
The Committee rose for the Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Present: Ormando, Lotito, Hale , Abbe,

Absent: Wels, Ristaino, Glasgow , Palmer, Molinaro,

1. Approval of Minutes Of April 5, 2016

The committee did not have a quorum so they did not vote on the approval of the minutes

2. Old Business Review

Councilwoman Noonan explained what has transpired with the Comcast Lawsuit. Their attorney and Comcast's attorney from Philadelphia had a meeting. Mr. Clifton showed up again. Our attorney came up with solutions but Comcast's attorney seemed liked they could care less what we had to say. At a Coalition meeting someone gave her a phone number, when she called the number it was Optimum and they asked her how she got the number she learned that they have an agreement with the BPU not to give Comcast competition and Comcast would not compete with them. Because of anti-trust laws she thought that was illegal. She takes this very seriously and whatever political party you are she doesn't care this is bigger than that. Our pensions didn't go up neither did Social Security but Comcast bills keep going up. We can't afford more expenses. My attorney explained to me that we need a politician to back us

I went to the Freeholders meeting and there were a lot of people upset about not being able to watch the Yankee games because they took the YES network away. Freeholder Vicari knew what I was there for and called me up to discuss Comcast and they support my efforts.

Comcast pays about \$155,000.00 to Berkeley Township for a Franchise fee. But how unfair is it to learn there is a an unwritten agreement between Comcast & Optimum regarding competition.

We have to determine what exactly we want from Comcast because the case is now going to arbitration and they don't want the class action lawsuit.

I will be on WOBM on May 25th at 7pm speaking about the Comcast suit.

Mrs. Lotito said they she did see something in the paper about people asking for a refund because they no longer get the Yankee games.

Councilwoman Noonan explains that is on the tip of the problem no one wants to say what I am saying. It's political on both sides. We went to Federal Court and Comcast is trying to keep in in NJ. We are trying to change the suit to an anti-trust suit and Freeholder Vicari agrees with us that this is wrong.

Mr. Hale adds there have been articles that communications law has not kept up with the changes. Even if Optimum did come in the cost for the wiring alone would be astronomical for them.

Councilwoman Noonan explains when they were asked why they couldn't come and they didn't say anything about the finances they said they had an agreement with Comcast not to come into their territory.

Mr. hale asked if her attorney requested a copy of that agreement.

Councilwoman Noonan explains her attorney is in the process of doing that and adds Mr. Clifton from Comcast could have let us know about this but he didn't. It's all about money.

Mr. Hale adds this is happening all over the country and started when the bigger companies started buying the smaller ones out and they have these huge franchise areas.

Councilwoman Noonan Adds she spoke with Verizon yesterday and they are not coming in.

Chairman Abbe adds it is too expensive for Verizon to lay the lines they need to come.

Councilwoman Noonan explains right now they are on strike and they don't want to make any type of plan until the labor dispute is solved they may reconsider. When they first wanted to come in with FIOs they polled Silver Ridge/Holiday City and the Heights told them no.

Mrs. Lotito says that is not true. She was at the meeting and that did not happen.

Councilwoman Noonan explains that is what she was told by Verizon.

Chairman Abbe explains that 10-11 years ago the laws regarding competition changed and that is what allowed Verizon to come in the Township gives them the right of way no Association can stop them.

Councilwoman Noonan clarifies that at the Coalition meeting that Verizon was at, the Verizon representative specifically stated that all the associations had to agree in order for them to come into Berkeley Township it was in the newspaper as well.

Mr. Hale feels a class action against Comcast is warranted for restraint of trade, but Comcast is at \$45 Billion and growing and they could care less.

Councilwoman Noonan explains she is still going to try.

Mr. Hale agrees she should and people are very proud that she is working so hard. Younger people are not of the same mind set.

Councilwoman Noonan adds that part of what she is doing is trying to educate the seniors as well.

3. New Business??

Councilwoman Noonan explains about NJ Natural Gas and the intended pipeline and adds she gave everyone handouts regarding it.

Councilwoman Noonan explains she went to the public hearing regarding the rate increase and there were about 100 people there. There was only testimony regarding the rate but there is more to it, but they want to install a 30 inch pipeline into Ocean County which is part of why they are asking for an increase and even though it goes into Ocean County our community will not reap any benefits from the pipeline. The increase could be as much as \$20 on your bill and believes it is part of Hovnanian's plan to build 6000 homes in Manchester on the heritage Mineral site. Our Engineer told us not to worry about it at the Coalition meeting, well the pipeline is part of it because NJ Natural Gas's infrastructure won't support the proposed homes.

Chairman Abbe explains that year's ago Hovnanian went before the Manchester Planning Board for this development and was turned down.

Councilwoman Noonan explains they are coming into Toms River too. There are signs from Pennsylvania to Ocean County saying "stop the pipeline", there are a lot of people against this.

Councilwoman Noonan adds that JCP&L is right behind them and they are trying to convince us why they need a raise, Our pensions or Social Security have not gone up the average person's salary has not either, how can we afford all these increases. Our taxes are going up. Elections are coming up we gave Christie 79,000 votes in the last

election, any politician has to realize it's the seniors that vote. The BPU looks at us and laughs and every utility company that goes before them gets an increase.

Mr. Hale adds that when they go for an increase they have to prove that they have put money into infrastructure to warrant the increase and asks is there a huge demand in this area for natural gas supply to warrant the increase.

Councilwoman Noonan adds her point is that NJ Natural gas has a hidden agenda with Hovnanian.

Mr. Hale asked if it was brought up in the hearing.

Councilwoman Noonan explains she did not but others did, it's very underhanded. Hovnanian also wants to build in South Toms River backing up to Manitou Park and we were never noticed for those meetings.

Councilwoman Noonan adds that all of this will be in her newspaper. She feels that everyone should know what's going on.

Mr. Hale asks about the legislation for the retirement communities and asks where it's at.

Councilwoman Noonan explains it hasn't gone anywhere but she has gotten feedback from the other side saying the senior communities needed management. The bill was re-introduced but hasn't gone anywhere.

Mr. Hale adds there is too much intrusion by the state in the bill. Most associations do things the right way and this seems like a big move for the handful of associations that run roughshod, our communities pay attention.

Councilwoman Noonan explains she is also going to have another TV program with the prosecutor's office about people who are being taken advantage by Power of Attorney scams.

4. Public Comment

Chairman Abbe opens the meeting for Public Comment, there being none.

On motion by Mrs. Lotito seconded by Mr. Hale to close the public portion of the meeting and adjourn.

In a voice vote all aye votes were heard and no nay votes were heard.