

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – JULY 15, 2013

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on July 15, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the Township Hall, 2600 Bayshore Road, Villas, New Jersey.

The Clerk announced that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and that adequate notice of the meeting had been provided according to law.

The following members of Council were present for roll call taken by the Clerk:

Councilmember Thomas Conrad  
 Councilmember James Neville  
 Councilmember Glenn Douglass  
 Mayor Michael Beck

Also present: Michael Voll, Township Manager, Chuck Sandman, Township Solicitor and Karen Fournier, Clerk's Office

**Work Session**

**Consent Agenda**

Approval of Minutes July 1, 2013  
 Res. #2013-201 Payment of Vouchers \$350,056.85  
 Res. #2013-202 Authorization for 2013 Incentive Award for Insurance Waiver (M.Biersbach \$833.33)  
 Res. #2013-203 Authorizing Payout of Terminal Leave (G.Luzny \$5,748.19)  
 Res. #2013-204 A Resolution Requesting Release of Demolition Bond for Block 337, Lot 1, 315 Cloverdale Avenue (\$1,000.)  
 Res. #2013-205 Approval of Change Order No. 2 for Electrical Downgrade Change at Millman Center (decrease of \$800.)  
 Res. #2013-206 Renewal of Commercial Excavation (Gravel Pit) Licenses for Thomas F. Brodesser, Jr.

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD		X	X			
NEVILLE			X			
DOUGLASS	X		X			
CLARK						X
BECK			X			

**Regular Agenda**

Res. #2013-207 Authorizing the Payment of Vouchers (Douglass Landscaping \$5,192.50)  
 Councilmember Neville offered his comments about their great landscaping work.

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD		X	X			
NEVILLE	X		X			
DOUGLASS					X	
CLARK						X
BECK			X			

Mayor Beck read aloud the resolution.

Councilmember Conrad articulated that our intentions are clear.

Councilmember Neville stated that the resolution is well written.

Councilmember Douglass agreed that the resolution is well written.

Solicitor Sandman informed that Lower Township has indicated our intent to oppose the City of Cape May's attempt to change the composition of, or dissolve the Lower Cape May Regional School District. Due to statutory requirements, he recommended that we not comment any further on this issue.

Ed Butler of Villas addressed Council in support of this resolution and stated that he was aware of the school tax when he bought his property. He implied that it is the responsibility of every tax payer to educate the children, regardless of whether or not they utilize the school.

Janet Pitts of Villas addressed Council to support this resolution. She thanked Mayor and Council for not making this personal or attacking the citizens of Cape May, unlike Councilmember Wickterman from Cape May City's Council. She argued in opposition to Cape May's attempt to dissolve the regional school district and pointed out several reasons why. She expressed her concern about the negative impact this may have on our children's education, as well as damaging the concept of working together regionally.

John Sworonski of Arctic Avenue addressed Council to ascertain who pays for the Coast Guard children to attend the regional school.

Mayor Beck stated that he believes the City of Cape May gets aid from the government, but without exact figures he is reluctant to comment.

Solicitor Sandman suggested we limit the comments due to the likelihood that this will end in litigation.

John Sworonski stated that he agrees with the resolution and thinks that we have an outstanding high school, referring to LCMR.

Fred Long of Cold Spring addressed Council to thank them for the resolution and commend LCMR high school. As a part-time substitute teacher and grandfather of five graduates of LCMR (three of whom work in Cape May), Mr. Long attested to the school's credibility. He requested that Council continue to oppose Cape May's efforts to weaken the financial funding of the school.

Janet Pitts informed that there are 70 regional school districts in the state of NJ. This is happening in multiple districts where there are property wealthy towns involved.

Mayor Beck added that of all the regional school districts in the state, we are geographically the most regional of them all.

George Doherty of Breakwater Road addressed Council to question what Cape May wants, considering that the state mandates the formula. He also asked if the school can survive without Cape May.

Mayor Beck explained that they have to go through a process. His response to the latter was no, it won't survive. Like dominos, damage to the school means damage to the township. Damage to the township means damage to the region. This has the potential to be cataclysmic.

Wayne Wiesman of Villas addressed Council in accord with the comments about the school district. He also voiced his anger with Councilman Wickterman from Cape May for his disrespect to the people of Lower Township.

Robert Rizzo of Mickel's Run addressed Council to thank them for the resolution. He too was upset with Councilman Wickterman for the comments he made about Lower Township. As a former school teacher, he insisted that we need this school system and believes that we should fight for it at any cost.

	MOITON	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD		X	X			
NEVILLE	X		X			
DOUGLASS			X			
CLARK						X
BECK			X			

**Administrative Reports**

Monthly Reports - Animal Control, Construction, Dog, Fire Safety, Municipal Clerk, Tax Collector, Vital Statistics

**Council Comments**

Councilmember Conrad thanked everyone who took part in the Independence Day Festival, specifically Judy Gillis for keeping things clean. He also encouraged citizens to check on their elderly neighbors during this intense heat.

Councilmember Neville commented on the success of the fireworks and commended Public Works for the fine job they did cleaning up after the event. He also referenced an incident during Whale of a Day in which Patrolman Perry and Patrolman Coombs are to be commended.

Councilmember Douglass also commented on the success of the fireworks and the B Street Band Concert. He thanked Public Works, the Police Department, Rescue Squad and everyone involved in these events. He gave special recognition to Judy Gillis for the nice job she has done cleaning up along the beachfront.

Mayor Beck agreed that the fireworks were phenomenal. He thanked the Rotary for their beach clean-up initiative. He also announced the following upcoming events: The Sensational Soul Cruisers concert on July 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 on the ferry grounds; National Night Out at LCMR on August 6<sup>th</sup> from 7-9:00 p.m.; 15-Minute Child Break Parent Presentation on August 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in township hall; and Lower Township's Community Blood Drive on August 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:00-3:00 p.m. in township hall. In addition, he announced that all property tax bills have been mailed and Lower Township is now on Facebook.

**Call to Public**

Fred Long of Cold Spring requested that Council get a copy of Resolution #2013-208 into the hands of Cape May City's Councilmembers before their meeting Tuesday night.

Wayne Wiesman informed that the Sensational Soul Cruisers are a great band. He also complimented Harpoon Henry's Restaurant.

Frank Saracco of Villas thanked everyone for their support of this resolution. He asked if there is any other means of getting the word out about this issue.

Mayor Beck replied that the media has done a great job. He thanked the newspaper media for their fairness addressing both sides of this issue in the papers.

Councilmember Douglass said he appreciates Mr. Saracco's concern, but he feels we should follow our solicitor's recommendation of keeping our comments to a minimum.

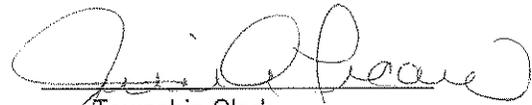
George Doherty of Seashore Road addresses Council to inquire if a referendum would be advantageous.

Mayor Beck informed that Council does not have the authority to do that because the school has their own level of government.  
Solicitor Sandman instructed that there is a specific procedure in the statute that has to be followed in order to oppose this. We intend to act accordingly.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Councilmember Douglass, seconded by Councilmember Neville. Motion to adjourn unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

  
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Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Township Clerk

Approved: 8/5/13