

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – February 3, 2025

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on February 3, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. in the meeting room of 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 Joseph Wareham
Councilmember Roland Roy, Jr.
Deputy Mayor Kevin Coombs
Mayor Frank Sippel

Also present: Michael Laffey, Township Manager, Robert Belasco, Township Solicitor and Karen Fournier, Deputy Township Clerk

Work Session

Presentation of Proclamation to Donna Blackley – Mayor Sippel

Mayor Sippel presented Donna Blackley with a Proclamation, on behalf of Council, congratulating her on her retirement from the Lower Township Fire Bureau and thanking her for her dedicated years of service.

Oath of Office - Patrolman Austin Cushman

Chief Lewis read Patrolman Austin Cushman's biography.

Mayor Sippel administered the Oath of Office to Patrolman Cushman while his wife, Anri Cushman, held the Bible.

PTL. Cushman's cousin, PTL. Michael Harkin, pinned his badge.

State of the Township – Mayor Sippel

Mayor Sippel presented the State of the Township Address highlighting 2024 Administrative Actions, Points of Interest, Capital Improvement Projects, Department Snapshot, and future Projects and Events. The power-point presentation is available on the Township website at www.townshipoflower.org.

Chris South, CMC Herald, inquired about the Bay Outfall Extension.

Manager Laffey informed that the Outfalls are pending final permits from the Army Corp. of Engineers.

Councilmember Conrad mentioned that the Township is eager to complete the project but has been facing continuous delays.

Presentation from Fire District #2 - Lew Conley

Lewis H. Conley, Jr., Secretary of Fire District #2, addressed Council for support of the upcoming Fire Election.

Councilmember Conrad commented in favor of a zero tax increase for Fire District #2.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes – January 22, 2025

Res. #2025-81 Authorization for the Payment of Vouchers \$ 426,165.25

Res. #2025-82 Authorization for the Payout of Accumulated Compensatory Time (M.Reilly \$2,645.61)

Res. #2025-83 Approval of Change Order #1 for Final As Built Quantity Adjustments for the Town Bank ADA Improvement Project (LT-C-056 \$10,635.15)

Res. #2025-84 Approval of Change Order #2 for the Final As Built Quantities and Contract Reduction for the Resurfacing of Corson Lane – Woolson Road to Southern End of Corson Lane (LT-C-050 \$- 6,064.71)

Res. #2025-85 Authorization for Refund of Taxes

Res. #2025-86 Authorization for the Payout of Accumulated Compensatory Time (E.Danze \$8,072.48)

Res. #2025-87 Authorization for the Payout of Accumulated Compensatory Time (M.James \$3,176.20)

Res. #2025-88 A Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Lower Approving the Renewal of a Class 5 Cannabis Retail License to Sea & Leaf, LLC.

Res. #2025-89 A Resolution Awarding a Professional Service Contract Without Public Bidding to Triad Advisory Services, Inc. to Provide Consulting Services in Connection with the Pursuit of Federal, State, Regional and Foundation Grants and/or Financial Resources

- Res. #2025-90 Approving Change Order #1 with Paving Plus LLC for the Final As Built Quantities and Contract Reduction for the FY2023 NJDOT Municipal Aid/Local Transportation Projects Fund Reconstruction of Wildwood Avenue (LT-C-034A) (-57,429.02)
- Res. #2025-91 Contract Award to Rave Mobile Safety for Alerts for Public Safety
- Res. #2025-92 Preserve New Jersey Historic Preservation Fund Administered by the New Jersey Historic Trust (grant \$150,000)
- Ordinance #2025-04; An Ordinance Amending Chapter 90, Police Department, Article III, Off-Duty Police Services, to Modify Administrative Fees to account for Additional Taxes Incurred by the Township and to Modify Fees Associated with the Use of Township Police Department Vehicles. This is the first reading of this Ordinance. The second reading and Public Hearing has been scheduled for February 19, 2025.
- Ordinance #2025-05; An Ordinance Amending Chapter 583, Streets and Sidewalks, Article 1, Excavation of Streets, of the Code of the Township of Lower . This is the first reading of this Ordinance. The second reading and Public Hearing has been scheduled for March 2, 2025.

Solicitor Belasco expounded on the reasons for Ordinance #2025-04.

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	RECUSE	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD	X		X				
WAREHAM			X				
ROY		X	X				
COOMBS			X				
SIPPEL			X				

Administrative Reports

Personnel Action Report

Public Comment - no comments

Council Comments

Councilmember Conrad – no comments

Councilmember Wareham thanked all volunteer fire fighters for their dedication and services.

Councilmember Roy – no comments

Deputy Mayor Coombs voiced his support for the Philadelphia Eagles.

Mayor Sippel announced the public auction to be held on Friday, Feb 7th, 9:00 a.m. in Township Hall.

Mayor Sippel also reminded about the upcoming Fire Elections, Feb 15th from 2-9 p.m.

Closed Session

Res. #2025-93 A Resolution Providing for a Meeting Not Open to the Public in accordance with the provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, NJSA 10:4-12 Negotiation Update

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	RECUSE	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD			X				
WAREHAM			X				
ROY		X	X				
COOMBS	X		X				
SIPPEL			X				

Council adjourned to Closed Session at 5:37 p.m.

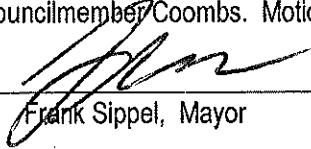
Council returned to Open Session at 5:50 p.m.

Res. #2025-94 A Resolution Amending Resolution #2024-102; Ratifying a Three (3) Year Memorandum of Agreement Between the Township of Lower and Lower Township Office Workers Association – Local #3779, AFSCME District Council 63 AFLCIO

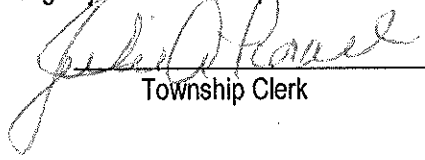
	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	RECUSE	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD			X				
WAREHAM		X	X				
ROY			X				
COOMBS			X				
SIPPEL	X		X				

Adjournment

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Councilmember Roy, seconded by Councilmember Coombs. Motion to adjourn was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.



 Frank Sippel, Mayor



 Township Clerk

Approved: Feb 19, 2025