

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – June 3, 2024

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on June 3, 2024 at 5:00 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 Kevin Coombs

Deputy Mayor David Perry

Mayor Frank Sippel

Also present: Michael Laffey, Township Manager, David Stefankiewicz, Township Solicitor and Karen Fournier, Deputy Township Clerk

Work Session

Richard M. Teitelman Boys Basketball Team

Mayor Sippel congratulated the Teitelman Boys Basketball Team on an outstanding season and acknowledged their accomplishments and team record of 38-3.

Councilmember Coombs, on behalf of Council, presented certificates of congratulations to the following players, as well as Coach Steve Selby: Jacob Plenn, Chris Hawes, Cole Lewis, Stephen Lutjen, John Brunner, Cooper Milligan, Conner Milligan, Preston Parinella, Evan Ridgway, Cooper Turner and Blake Sedarland.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes – May 20, 2024

Res. #2024-185 Authorization for the Payment of Vouchers \$884,294.22

Res. #2024-186 A Resolution in Support of the County of Cape May's Anticipated Sunset Boulevard (CR606) Shared Use Pathway and Road Reconstruction Project and its Application for a Federal TAP Grant to Assist with Funding Same

Res. #2024-187 Approving Change Order #1 to Fred M Schavone Construction Inc for a No-Cost 30 day Contract Time Extension for Diamond Beach Park Improvements (LT-C-016)

Res. #2024-188 Insertion of Special Item of Revenue Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87, Chapter 159 (U Drive U Text U Pay, \$5,600.00)

Res. #2024-189 Insertion of Special Item of Revenue Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87, Chapter 159 (Small Cities Public Facilities Grant, \$400,000)

Res. #2024-190 Insertion of Special Item of Revenue Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87, Chapter 159 (Clean Communities, \$103,996.57)

Res. #2024-191 Authorization for Refund of Taxes

Res. #2024-192 A Resolution Authorizing the Removal of Fixed Asset #3832 and the Transfer of Recreation Playground Equipment to the Lower Township Elementary School District

Res. #2024-193 Bid Acceptance and Award of One (1) 2024 or Newer Chevrolet Yukon 4WD to Pellegrino Buick/GMC for Lower Township Bureau of Fire Safety

Res. #2024-194 A Resolution Rescinding Resolution #2024-141 Authorizing and Approving Professional Contractual Agreements with Six (6) Individual Bands to Perform at the DRBA Ferry Terminal in Connection with the Lower Township Summer Concert Series

Res. #2024-195 Approval for Behr Brewing 5K Scheduled for June 23, 2024

Ord #2024-06 An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution of a Grant Of Conservation Restriction/Easement to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for a Transition Area Waiver Received in Connection with ongoing Improvements to Rotary Park. This is the first reading of this Ordinance. The second reading and public hearing is scheduled for July 1, 2024.

Manager Laffey shared information about anticipated improvements to County Road, Sunset Boulevard, Resolution #2024-186.

Mayor Sippel voiced favor with the Sunset Boulevard Project and communicated the need being long overdue.

On the Consent:

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

Regular Agenda

Ord # 2024-05 An Ordinance of the Township of Lower Vacating, Surrendering and Extinguishing the Public Rights of a Portion of Yuma Avenue located between Cardinal Avenue and Georgia Avenue. This is the second reading and public hearing of this Ordinance. This Ordinance has been published, posted and made available to the public.

Gunner Arenberg, 3 Georgia Ave, inquired about the portion of property being vacated. Manager Laffey explained.

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

Manager Laffey commented on the success of the Healthy Youth Coalition Beach Cleanup and gave an update on the Village Road beach access.

Mayor Sippel commented on the unsafe condition of the beach access at Village Road.

Deputy Mayor Perry communicated that the beach erosion at Village Road has been an ongoing problem.

Public Comment

Jeannie Sansone, 303 Beechwood Ave, addressed Council regarding the beach access at Village Road prior to becoming an emergency access. She inquired about an estimated timeframe for the access to reopen.

Deputy Mayor Perry pointed out the restrictions from the DEP.

Manager Laffey anticipates reopening the access prior to the start of the season if/when it becomes safe to do so.

Patty Santovito, 219 Village Road, voiced concern about the Township's plan to construct stairs rather than a ramp at the Village Road beach access.

Manager Laffey pointed out the steep vertical drop.

Mayor Sippel acknowledged Ms. Santovito's concern and agreed to take it into consideration.

Blake Holden, 406 Village Road, addressed Council to voice concern about the Village Road crossing at Bay Drive. He also suggested painted lines for parking spots and voiced interest in a ramp access rather than stairs. He further communicated a problem with the owner at the end of Village Road making it difficult to access the beach.

Deputy Mayor Perry agreed that crosswalks are needed on all beach access roads.

Theresa Logan, 217 Hollywood Ave, voiced favor with a ramp access on Village Road and stressed the need for emergency accesses. She also communicated abusive behavior from the owner at the end of Village Road.

Marybeth Mahadas, 317 Oakdale Ave, shared her experience with harassing behavior from the owner at the end of Village Road. She also voiced interest in a ramp rather than stairs for beach access.

Terry Santovino, 219 Village Road, addressed Council about erosion on the beach entrance of Village Road and requested the Township consider a ramp rather than stairs. He also questioned the decision to close the access prior to a holiday weekend.

Manager Laffey communicated the Township's intent to reopen the access when it becomes safe to do so.

Councilmember Conrad reiterated the need for an emergency access.

Gaspare Grippi, 409 Beechwood, addressed Council to voice discontent about the beach access being closed and questioned the timeline to reopen it.

Council Comments

Councilmember Conrad – no comments

Councilmember Coombs – no comments

Deputy Mayor Perry – no comments

Mayor Sippel announced the following: Pool passes on sale, June is Pride month, Independence Day Festival and Fireworks, Primary Election, and Summer Concert Series.

Closed Session

Res. #2024-196 Resolution Providing for a Meeting Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12. **Attorney/Client Privilege, Personnel**

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

Council Adjourned to Closed Session at 5:50 p.m.

Council returned to Open Session at 6:20 p.m.

Res. #2024-197 Bid Acceptance and Contract Award for Emergency Medical Services for the Township of Lower

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

Adjournment

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Councilmember Conrad, seconded by Deputy Mayor Perry. Motion to adjourn was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.



 Frank Sippel, Mayor



 Township Clerk

Approved: *June 17, 2024*