

## COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – January 22, 2025

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on January 22, 2025 at 6:00 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 – via telephone

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

### Work Session

Public Hearing - Green Acres Application

Colleen Crippen, Township Grant's Coordinator, informed that the Township is applying for a Jake's Law Accessible Playground as part of Phase 2 Rotary Community Park Renovations. Ms. Crippen explained the criteria and pointed out inclusions consisting of walking trails, seating, shaded areas, ramps, auditory stations, handicap restrooms and fencing. Also addressed were environmental concerns and findings, mitigation measures, and alternatives to the proposed act.

Will Hanson, project manager, spoke about the concept design for Phase 2 Rotary Park Renovations and the requirements for Jake's Law Accessible Playground, including accessible parking, accessible routes to the playground and facilities, unitary safety servicing, accessible bathrooms, shaded areas, fencing, inclusive play equipment, quiet play areas, ramps and transfer points as well as additional parking. Mr. Hanson pointed out that the concept design is subject to change contingent upon additional feedback from the public.

Councilmember Conrad voiced favor with the plan.

Councilmember Roy communicated this to be the first of its kind in the Township.

Deputy Mayor Coombs voiced favor with all aspects of the project.

Unknown attendee inquired about the surfacing material to be used.

Mr. Hanson stated that the surface will be pour-in-place rubber.

### Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes – January 2, 2025

Res. #2025-64 Authorization for the Payment of Vouchers \$ 1,284,771.58

Res. #2025-65 A Resolution of the Lower Township Council amending Resolution #24-85; To Include the Governing Body's Commitment to Long Term Maintenance of the Exterior Improvements at David Douglass Sr Memorial Park

Res. #2025-66 Approval of 2025 Rotary Towing Licenses

Res. #2025-67 A Resolution Authorizing a Shared Service Agreement between the Township of Lower and the Lower Cape May Regional School District for the Placement of School Resource Officers (SRO) Within the Lower Cape May Regional School District

Res. #2025-68 Issuance of 2025 Taxi, Limousine and Operator Licenses

Res. #2025-69 Renewal of Trailer Park Licenses for the Year 2025

Res. #2025-70 Authorization for Waiver of Permitting Fees for Historic Cold Spring Village Associated with the Cold Spring Grange Roof Restoration

Res. #2025-71 Reappointment to the Municipal Utilities Authority Board (K. Rechner)

- Res. #2025-72 Resolution Authorizing a Contract Through the State of New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing Program (T1654) for Procurement Card Services with US Bank #25-GNSV2-86532
- Res. #2025-73 Authorization for the Green Acres Application
- Res. #2025-74 Authorizing the Purchasing Agent to Advertise for Competitive Contracting for Third-Party Management of Lower Township Police Outside Contracts
- Res. #2025-75 Authorization for the Payout of Accumulated Sick Time
- Res. #2025-76 Transfer of 2024 Appropriations
- Res. #2025-77 Appointment of Patrick F Martin as Conflict Prosecutor for the Township of Lower as a Professional Service Contract without Public Bidding
- Res. #2025-78 Approving a Professional Service Contract with Remington & Vernick Engineers for Engineering Services to Investigate and Develop the Design Phase for the HVAC Replacement Project at the Township of Lower Municipal Building and Construction & Zoning Building
- Res. #2025-79 Approving a Professional Service Contract with Remington & Vernick Engineers for the Engineering Phase of the Roofing Replacement Project at the Township of Lower Municipal Building and Construction & Zoning Building

Ordinance #2025-03 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 3, Administration of Government, Article II, Township Council, Subsection 8, Powers and Duties of Township Council, of the Code of the Township of Lower This is the first reading of this Ordinance. The second reading and public hearing is scheduled for February 19, 2025

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

**Regular Agenda**

Res. #2025-80 A Resolution Authorizing the Sale of Real Property located in the Township of Lower by way of an Open Public Auction

Deputy Mayor Coombs pointed out that this resolution is associated with the sale of Township property located at 9600 Seaview Ave, Block 703, Lot 1, and announced the open public auction scheduled for February 7, 2025 at 9 a.m. in Township Hall, 2600 Bayshore Road. The minimum bid is set at \$1,000,000.

Bill Greenfield, Villas, inquired about the dimensions of the property.  
Clerk Picard informed that the information can be obtained from the Township Tax Assessor.

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

Ordinance 2025-01 An Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a CAP Bank (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-15.14 This is the second reading and public hearing for this Ordinance. This Ordinance has been published. Posted and made available to the public.

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

Ordinance 2025-02 An Ordinance amending chapter 400, land Development, Article XII, Affordable Housing Regulations, of the Code of the Township of Lower to establish a Mandatory Affordable Housing Set-Aside. This is the second reading and public hearing for this Ordinance. This Ordinance has been published. Posted and made available to the public.

Councilmember Conrad commented in favor of this Ordinance.

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

**Engineer Report**

Will Hanson gave Council an update on the following engineering projects being handled by DeBlasio & Associates, including: Rotary Community Park Renovations; Bay Outfall Extensions; Reconstruction of Ridgewood Avenue; 2023 Stormwater GIS Mapping Services; David Douglass Sr. Memorial Park Renovations; Public Works Building Concept Design; Holmes, Gorham & Scott Avenues Storm Sewer & Roadway Improvement Project; Municipal Pool Building Evaluation; Reconstruction of Beach Avenue; and Town Bank ADA Ramp Project.

Manager Laffey complimented Mr. Hanson on his presentation to the Cape May County Open Space Board regarding the David Douglass Sr Memorial Park.

**Administrative Reports**

Clerk, Construction, Dog, Tax, Treasurer, Vital Statistics  
Tax Collector Annual Report

**Public Comment - None**

**Council Comments**

Councilmember Conrad voiced appreciation for all Township volunteers.


Councilmember Wareham – no comments

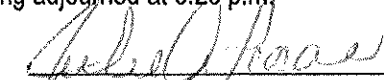
Councilmember Roy thanked the Public Works Department for a great job with storm clean up.

Deputy Mayor Coombs announced that Mayor Sippel will present the State of the Township Address at the next Council meeting on February 3<sup>rd</sup> and the Public Auction for 9600 Seaview Ave. will be held on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Go birds!

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Councilmember Roy, seconded by Councilmember Wareham. Motion to adjourn was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

  
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Frank Sippel, Mayor

  
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Township Clerk

Approved: Feb 2, 2025

