

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – January 20, 2021

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on January 20, 2021 at 7:00 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
- Councilmember Roland Roy, Jr.
- 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

Oath of Office: **Sergeant William Barcas** – Oath of Office administered by Mayor Frank Sippel, Bible held by mom, Denise Serafinelli, and children Beau and Grace; badge pinned by wife Bonnie.
Sergeant Anthony Greto – Oath of Office administered by Mayor Frank Sippel, Bible held by children Anthony, Ariana, Dominick and Vincent; badge pinned by wife Samantha.

Recognition of Provisional Promotions: Lieutenant Robert C .Smith
 Lieutenant John T. Armbruster

SHORT RECESS

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes - January 4, 2021

- Res. #2021-59 Payment of Vouchers \$314,298.46
- Res. #2021-60 A Resolution Requesting Release of Demolition Bond for Block 140, Lot 4; 8 Columbia Street, Villas, NJ
- Res. #2021-61 Reappointment to the Municipal Utilities Authority Board (H.Bitting)
- Res. #2021-62 Approval of the Township of Lower Emergency Operations Plan
- Res. #2021-63 Approval of Secondhand Merchant and Dealer of Precious Metals License (Adele's Jeweled Treasurers)
- Res. #2021-64 Issuance of 2021 Taxi / Limousine and Operators Licenses
- Res. #2021-65 A Resolution Authorizing the Annual Escape the Cape Triathlon Scheduled for June 5 & 6, 2021
- Res. #2021-66 Approval of Change Order #1 to Z-Tech Contracting, LLC for the Jonathan Hoffman Playground Improvements – Mitnick Park, for an Extension to the Project Completion Date (90 day)
- Res. #2021-67 Bid Acceptance and Contract Award for Management Information System Consultant (MIS) for 2021 & 2022 with an Option for 2023 (Barber Consulting Services LLC, \$15,000)
- Res. #2021-68 Transfer of 2020 Appropriations
- Res. #2021-69 A Resolution Amending Resolution #2021-43 Establishing Rules and Regulations Governing Public Comment During Township Council Meetings
- Res. #2021-70 A Resolution Awarding a Contract to Cape Mining and Recycling LLC for the Removal and Disposal of Wood Chips Located at the Municipal Utility Authority on an As Needed Basis
- Ordinance #2021-02 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 39, Fire Department, Specifically Subsection 4, Qualifications for Membership of the Code of the Township of Lower, to Facilitate Additional Volunteers for Township of Lower Fire Companies – this is the first reading of this Ordinance. The second reading and public hearing has been scheduled for February 17, 2020

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

Regular Agenda

Manager's Report

Manager Laffey informed that Cape May County has requested the use of the LCMR Field House for administering the COVID-19 vaccine. He updated Council on several matters including: the Schellenger's Landing project, Open Space grant funding for the Clem Mulligan Complex, and a timeline for beach access improvements. He also thanked all parties involved with the Open Space award, including the County Open Space Board.

Engineer's Report

Marc DeBlasio thanked the Township for the opportunity to serve as engineer. He introduced Cody Stanford to give an update on the projects being handled by DeBlasio & Associates.

Cody Stanford gave Council an update on the five (5) projects currently in design or construction by DeBlasio & Associates, including: Public Works Department Building, 2019 Road Program, Resurfacing of States Ave., Reconstruction of Wilson Drive, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Avenues, and Resurfacing of Miami, Florida, Jacksonville and Tampa Avenues and Elks Lodge Alley.

Mr. DeBlasio further explained the Wilson Drive reconstruction project.

Deputy Mayor Perry asked about flooding on Wilson Drive. Mr. DeBlasio explained.

Administrative Reports

Monthly Reports – Clerk, Construction, Tax, Vital Statistics

2020 Annual report on variances heard by the Zoning Board

2020 Tax Collector's Annual Report

Call to the Public

James Sanford, Diamond Beach, asked about progress regarding EMS services to Diamond Beach.

Mayor Sippel advised Mr. Sanford to reach out to Manager Laffey tomorrow.

Mr. Sanford thanked Manager Laffey for his time and visit to Diamond Beach.

Council Comments

Councilman Conrad addressed previous statements made by residents regarding EMS in Diamond Beach. He stated there is not a mandate regarding response times. He stated the US Fire Administration, part of FEMA, published an Emergency Vehicle Safety Initiative which set scenarios where lights/sirens should be used. He stated the average response time to Diamond beach is 10 min and 42 seconds, which is actually faster than the County response time, which is second in the state. He also stated that Diamond Beach represents 2% of all calls in the Township and 1% of emergency transports. He gave the breakdown of all calls for service during the month of November, 2022, noting that the Villas and North Cape May are 80% of the calls. He stated that Rescue moved their operations to the airport in an effort of reducing the response time to Diamond Beach. He also thanked Mayor Sippel for recognizing Vince Pale.

Councilman Coombs congratulated the Sergeants and Lieutenants and stated he will be visiting students who recently wrote letters to Mayor & Council suggesting changes in the Township. Mayor Sippel responded to each child with a personal letter, which Councilman Coombs will be delivering.

Councilman Roy congratulated the Sergeants and Lieutenants on their promotions and spoke of Vince Pale, a Lower Township resident and Veteran who recently passed away.

Deputy Mayor Perry stated he has recently met with County and MUA officials and discussed the need for the entities to work together on all projects so work is not being duplicated. He spoke on the County Project on Town Bank Road and the project on Bayshore Road. He also congratulated the Police Department on their promotions.

Mayor Sippel thanked Deputy Mayor Perry for taking the lead on infrastructure projects. He congratulated the Police Department on their promotions, he spoke of Vince Pale's passing, and he recognized leaders in the Villas Fire Department. Additionally, he made a statement about his allegiance to his Township and his Country, not to any person or party, and he remains hopeful that division will disappear.

Closed Session

Res. #2021 -71 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. **Litigation Update/Attorney-Client Privilege**

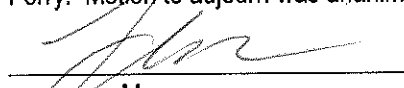
	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	RECUSE	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD			X				
COOMBS		X	X				
ROY			X				
PERRY	X		X				
SIPPEL			X				

Council Adjourned to Closed Session at 7:40 p.m.

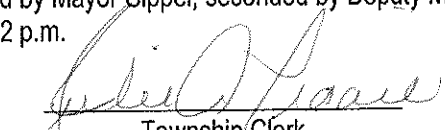
Council returned to Open Session at 9:00 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Mayor Sippel, seconded by Deputy Mayor Perry. Motion to adjourn was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.



Mayor



Township Clerk

Approved: *2/1/2021*