

Approved: June 1, 2021

## **MONTAGUE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **MINUTES**

**MAY 25, 2021**

**(Via GoToMeeting and In-Person)**

**7:00 PM**

#### **OPENING STATEMENT**

Mayor Innella called the Montague Township Committee meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. announcing that adequate notice has been provided to the New Jersey Herald and the Sunday New Jersey Herald for publication in which notice was given of the date, time, place and general agenda of the meeting according to the Open Public Meetings Act.

#### **FLAG SALUTE**

The Pledge of Allegiance commenced.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Present were: Ms. Martin, Mr. Merusi, Mr. Zitone and Mayor Innella  
Also present was Deputy Clerk Dana Klinger and Attorney Rossmeissl

Excused: Ms. Crawford

#### **MINUTES**

Ms. Martin made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 11, 2021. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

#### **ORDINANCES** (First Reading)

2021-10 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING CHAPTER 18, FEES AND COSTS, OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE TO ESTABLISH ARTICLE XCV; RENTAL FEE SCHEDULE FOR THE RENTAL AND USE OF THE MONTAGUE TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER.

Mr. Zitone made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-10 upon introduction. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2021-11 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, PROVIDING FOR THE REPAIR AND RESURFACING OF VARIOUS ROADS AND APPROPRIATING \$140,000.00 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (IMPROVEMENTS TO ROADS) AVAILABLE IN THE CAPITAL FUND FOR SUCH PURPOSES.

Mr. Zitone made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-11 upon introduction. Ms. Martin seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote

Before moving on to the next Agenda item Mayor Innella amended the Meeting Agenda to include under Old Business – American Rescue Plan Expenditures and under Reports – Ms. Martin has a few general announcements.

#### **ORDINANCES** (Second Reading)

2021-09 ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING CHAPTER 76, ZONING, OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE TO PROHIBIT THE OPERATION OF ANY CLASS OF CANNABIS BUSINESS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP'S GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES.

Ms. Martin made a motion to approve this Ordinance. Mr. Zitone seconded. Mr. Zitone made a motion to open to public for discussion regarding Ordinance 2021-09. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

With no comment from the public, Mr. Merusi made a motion to close to public. Mr. Zitone seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Attorney Rossmeissl commented that there has been lengthy discussion regarding this Ordinance, but just to clarify and simplify to all in attendance. The State legalization of cannabis permits six

different types of license, which means six different types of business that could potentially open within the Township, which would include cultivation, manufacturing, wholesale, distributor, retail and delivery. This Ordinance would prohibit any of these types of uses, but it does not affect the residents' ability to use cannabis or have cannabis delivered to them. In addition, it is important to note that the Township can revisit or amend this Ordinance at any time.

Deputy Clerk Klinger called the roll, and the motion to approve Ordinance 2021-09 carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

#### **2021-41 RESOLUTION AWARDING FIREWORKS CONTRACT**

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-41. Ms. Martin seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

#### **2021-42 LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL (Ponky LLC, Village Pizza, Mehdi Dushaj)**

Ms. Martin made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-42. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

#### **2021-45 GOVERNING BODY CERTIFICATION OF THE 2020 ANNUAL AUDIT**

Ms. Martin made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-45. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

#### **2021-46 APPROVE CORRECTIVE PLAN FOR 2020 AUDIT**

Ms. Martin made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-46. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

#### **2021-49 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MONTAGUE ASSOCIATION FOR RESTORATION OF COMMUNITY HISTORY TO UTILIZE THE MONTAGUE TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER FOR ITS MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MAY 27, 2021**

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-49. Ms. Martin seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Montague Volunteer Fire Department – Request approval of application for membership (Kevin A. Rudolph) – Ms. Martin made a motion to approve this membership request. Mr. Zitone seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Draft Ordinance Rental Registration and Inspection Fees – Attorney Rossmeissl explained that this draft would increase the rental registration fees from \$30 to \$100 and would raise the inspection fees from \$30 to \$50 and the re-inspection fees from \$30 to \$50. Attorney Rossmeissl asked the members of the Committee if they are all okay with the proposed change in the fees. Mr. Zitone commented that he feels that the registration fee should be assessed annually rather than a one-time fee. This Ordinance will be introduced at the next Committee Meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Strunk-Albert Engineering – Attorney Rossmeissl commented that he will touch base on this item within the next agenda item for the American Rescue Plan. Mr. Zitone commented that he was talking to an electrician and he was going over the plans and on those plans, Strunk-Albert Engineering has the existing electrical meter being relocated on the side of the building. The expense to have Jersey Central Power and Light come out to relocate the meter will be quite high. The electrician said that there is enough room inside of the building where you would not have to have the meter relocated and the township could elude an avoidable cost. Mayor Innella suggested taking out that provision when they put the job out to bid. Mr. Zitone then asked if the Township would be the ones paying for it or if the Fire Department would be paying for the Generator at the Firehouse/Community Center. Mayor Innella explained that they would be the ones paying for it as there would be a price savings since they do not have to use prevailing wage workers, the money from the sale of the old Firehouse would then be used to do so as per the agreement which allows the net proceeds from the old Firehouse to be spent on only certain items for the Fire Department or Community Center. The Committee agreed to have the Fire Department go out for quotes for a Generator for the Firehouse and Community Center.

Burned-Out Buildings – Attorney Rossmeissl commented that he did get an update from the Building Official, Bob Huber regarding some of these burned-out buildings, he still needs to get out to the properties to do an inspection in order for the Township to send out their notice to proceed. Unfortunately, with a limited amount of time available for him to do inspections in the Township he already has a backlog for inspections so he is trying to get these done as quickly as possible.

American Rescue Plan Expenditures – Attorney Rossmeissl gave a quick overview of the American Rescue Plan. Montague Township will receive \$358,351.11 and the Township will have until 2024 to spend these funds. The Department of Treasury has finally issued an expansive explanation of all the ways the funds can be spent. It is now clear that the Township would be unable to use these funds for the Scott Air-Packs and the Generator for the Fire Department as they initially thought they might be able to. These funds, just to mention a few, can be spent on anything related to Covid-19 response, mitigation and prevention, ventilation improvements, capital investments in public facilities to meet pandemic operational needs, assistance to households, assistance to small businesses and non-profits, aid to travel and tourism, support to low-income communities, mitigating the loss of municipal revenue and water, sewer and broadband projects. Attorney Rossmeissl advised the Township Committee to think creatively and think about what projects would be the most beneficial for the Township.

### **REPORTS**

General Announcements – Ms. Martin commented that the Township of Montague and the Sussex County Board of Health have been working together to get a pop-up vaccination clinic in the area for our residents. They have finally scheduled a date for June 2, 2021 at the Sandyston Township Municipal Building from 12 pm to 4 pm for anyone who would like to receive their Covid-19 vaccination. This is a completely free event, walk-ins are welcome and free transportation will be available by calling 973-579-0480. Ms. Martin also announced that the ‘Meet the Candidates Event’ has been moved to June 6<sup>th</sup> from 1pm to 2 pm at the New Community Center. The Montague Grange will be hosting a play at the Minisink Church Pavilion this Saturday, May 29<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm and this is a free event.

Deputy Clerk Klinger added that a phone call from Montague Water and Sewer was received early this morning issuing a boil advisory for the area of North Court, Birchwood, and North Gate as the water company is replacing a fire hydrant the advisory is issued for the next 48 hours.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (limited to three minutes per person)

Mr. Merusi made a motion to open to the public. Mr. Zitone seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

There being no comment from the public, Mr. Merusi made a motion to close to the public. Ms. Martin seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

### **ADJOURN**

Mr. Zitone made a motion to adjourn at 7:43 pm. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted:

**DANA KLINGER, RMC**  
**MUNICIPAL CLERK**