

Approved: March 8, 2022

MONTAGUE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

**February 22, 2022
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: Mr. Krumpfer, Mr. LeDonne, Mr. Merusi, Mr. Zitone and Mayor Innella. Also present was Municipal Clerk Eileen DeFabiis and Municipal Attorney Robert Rossmeissl

Absent: None

MINUTES Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve Regular Meeting Minutes of February 8, 2022. Mr. LeDonne seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Mayor Innella then took a moment to thank the DPW for their great job in painting the Meeting Room and Lobby at the Municipal Building. Mayor Innella also thanked Mr. Merusi for taking time to fix the draft on the front door by installing a new seal. Mr. Merusi replied saying he installed the seal, but Mr. Zitone was the one who ordered the piece for the repair.

Mayor Innella then amended the Meeting Agenda to include under Resolutions (Not within the Consent Agenda) Resolution 2022-030 - DELAWARE WATER GAP NATIONAL RECREATION AREA SPECIAL USE PERMIT

ORDINANCES (First Reading)

None

ORDINANCES (Second Reading)

2022-01 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 59 "STREETS" BY ADDING ARTICLE II "INCIDENTAL DAMAGE CAUSED BY TOWNSHIP OPERATIONS," SECTION 59-7, "REIMBURSEMENT FOR MAILBOX DAMAGE," OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE

Mr. Zitone made a motion to approve this Ordinance. Mr. Merusi seconded. Mr. Zitone made a motion to open to public for discussion regarding Ordinance 2022-01. 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. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Municipal Clerk DeFabiis then called the roll, and the motion to approve Ordinance 2022-01 carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2022-02 AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE SALARIES OF OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, COUNTY OF SUSSEX AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY FOR THE YEAR 2022

Mr. LeDonne made a motion to approve this Ordinance. Mr. Merusi seconded. Mr. Merusi made a motion to open to public for discussion regarding Ordinance 2022-02. Mr. Krumpfer 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. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Municipal Clerk DeFabiis then called the roll, and the motion to approve Ordinance 2022-02 carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2022-03 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 36-7 “NON-LIFE HAZARD USES” AND SUPPLEMENTING AND AMENDING CHAPTER XXXVI OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE ENTITLED “FIRE CODE”

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve this Ordinance. Mr. Zitone seconded. Mr. Merusi made a motion to open to public for discussion regarding Ordinance 2022-03. Mr. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

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

Municipal Clerk DeFabiis then called the roll, and the motion to approve Ordinance 2022-03 carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

RESOLUTIONS (Added at meeting)

2022-030 DELAWARE WATER GAP NATIONAL RECREATION AREA SPECIAL USE PERMIT

Mr. Krumpfer made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-030. Mr. LeDonne seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

All items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Township Committee and will be approved by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Committee member so requests, in which case the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the Agenda.

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. LeDonne seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote for all Consent Agenda items.

CONSENT AGENDA	
<u>RESOLUTIONS</u>	
2022-024*	RESOLUTION AWARDDING FIREWORKS CONTRACT
2022-025*	AUTHORIZE TAX COLLECTOR TO REFUND A TAX OVERPAYMENT (BL 46, LT 25.02)
2022-026*	URGING THE SWIFT PASSAGE OF S-330 WHICH RESTORES ENERGY TAX RECEIPTS
2022-027*	RESOLUTION APPROVING THE EXECUTION OF A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE BOROUGH OF SUSSEX FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE TO PROVIDE THE BOROUGH OF SUSSEX WITH ZONING, HOUSING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES FROM JANUARY 1, 2022 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2024
2022-028*	A RESOLUTION AMENDING AND FIXING THE SALARIES OF OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, COUNTY OF SUSSEX AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY FOR THE YEAR 2022

CORRESPONDENCE

Montague Volunteer Fire Department – NJ State Firemen’s Association Application Membership Approval (John Conroy) – Mr. LeDonne made a motion to approve this request. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

New Jersey Division of Taxation – Table of Equalized Valuations Amended by the New Jersey Tax Court – Mr. Zitone commented that the report states that the average ratio assessed to true value is 87.75%. Mr. Zitone then asked Mr. Krumpfer if he felt that that was an accurate figure. Mr. Krumpfer replied saying that he does, given the fact that it has been some time since the town has done a reassessment.

Joint Inter-Municipal Court – Public Defender Salary/Agreement – Mayor Innella informed those in attendance that previously the Township had approved salary increases for the Joint Inter-Municipal Court employees; this did not include the prosecutors and public defenders. Two of the Prosecutors and/or Public Defenders that represent the Joint Inter-Municipal Court are foregoing any salary increases for this year, but one is leaving that decision up to the Townships that are a part of the joint court. Mr. Zitone would like to hold off on making any decision on this for now. Mr. LeDonne asked if any of the other towns that participate in the Joint Court have made any decisions. Clerk DeFabiis replied no. Mr. Zitone made a motion to table this item until the next Township Committee Meeting. Mr. LeDonne seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Montague Little League – Application for Use of Facilities (Zitone Ballfield) – Clerk DeFabiis stated that the Montague Little League has provided the Township with their Certificate of Insurance and will be providing Hold Harmless Agreements once signups start. Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve the application for use of the Zitone Ballfield by the Montague Little League. Mr. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

Foreclosures (Zitone) – Mr. Zitone mentioned that the Attorney and the Tax Assessor have compiled a list of properties that would be the most advantageous to the Township to Auction. Mr. Zitone further added that he went and took a look at those properties and some of them look like they are decent properties, but others look like they could be wet or unbuildable. Attorney Rossmeissl asked if there are some that are included on the list that the Committee feels should be removed. Mr. Zitone said they could try to sell them all, but in his opinion, there are many that will not be purchased to be built on. Mr. Zitone said he would like to see BL 8, LT 23 added to the list for Land Auction as well. Attorney Rossmeissl will include this parcel as well.

GP7 Lots – Attorney Rossmeissl has drafted a letter to the owner of the lots within High Point Community Corp. in which the Township holds Tax Sale Certificates on; these lots are owned by GP7. The Committee felt that a letter threatening foreclosure of these properties might get them to move on these, or the other outcome could be that the Township could possible bid the Tax Sale Certificates down for less than they are worth and then have these sold to a buyer that might actually do something with these properties rather than just sitting on the properties. The Committee agreed that there is no harm in sending the letter and seeing if GP7 will reciprocate.

Walking Paths – Mr. Krumpfer commented that he is waiting to hear back from past Committeewoman Gene Crawford regarding the Walking Path and the Grant that she was working on before the end of her term. AARP is also offering a Grant and Tasha DeGeorge also filled Mr. Krumpfer in on a Grant that another Sussex County town submitted for and received just last year. Mayor Innella said that the Grant that Ms. Crawford was working on through the County last year required a cost estimate as well as a site plan of the location, which were not available by the deadline. Mr. Krumpfer added that he has also met with some playground people to find out if there are any Grants available and the costs that are associated with them. Mr. LeDonne mentioned that he believes Sandyston Township received a grant for either a walking path or a playground last year. Clerk DeFabiis will reach out to the Clerk in Sandyston to see whom they used to write the grant and for a copy of the Grant Application.

REPORTS

Sussex County Sheriff's Office – Supplemental Patrol Report 2021 – There were 128 patrol hours conducted for the year 2021, 143 total vehicle stops, and 31 summonses issued.

Clerk DeFabiis reminded the Committee members that each year she gets requests from companies to purchase the cell tower lease for a lump sum payment and if the Committee is interested, or may want to consider this, to let her know.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (limited to three minutes per person)

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

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

ADJOURN

Mr. Zitone made a motion to adjourn at 7:45 PM. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted:

**EILEEN DEFABIIS, RMC
MUNICIPAL CLERK**