

Approved: July 26, 2022

MONTAGUE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

JUNE 28, 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 Deputy Municipal Clerk Dana Klinger and Municipal Attorney Robert Rossmeissl

Absent: None

MINUTES

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of June 28, 2022. Mr. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

PROPOSALS

Mayor Innella stated that three proposals for tree trimming were received for Red Hill Road, Steenykill, Oak Ridge Road, Old Mashipacong Road and Reinhardt Road. The first was received from Sequoia Tree Service which totaled \$16,350. The second proposal was received from R&D Tree Services which totaled \$15,000. Lastly, the third proposal was received from Rich Tree Service which totaled \$21,875. Mr. Merusi made a motion to award the contract to Sequoia Tree Service. Mr. Zitone seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

ORDINANCES (First Reading)

None

ORDINANCES (Second Reading)

2022-10 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF MATERIALS FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT FIRE PIT. THE TOTAL COST OF THE MATERIALS IS \$8,506.52, APPROPRIATING A SUM OF \$8,506.52 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve this Ordinance. Mr. LeDonne seconded. Mr. Merusi made a motion to open to public for discussion regarding Ordinance 2022-10. 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 2022-10 carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2022-11 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, PROVIDING FOR THE RESURFACING OF NEW MASHIPACONG ROAD AND APPROPRIATING \$80,000 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND – IMPROVEMENTS TO ROADS IN THE GENERAL CAPITAL FUND FOR SUCH PURPOSE AND \$190,500 FROM A GRANT AWARDED BY THE NJ DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR SUCH PURPOSE

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Mr. Krumpfer made a motion to approve this Ordinance. Mr. Merusi seconded. Mr. Merusi made a motion to open to public for discussion regarding Ordinance 2022-11. Mr. LeDonne 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 2022-11 carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2022-12 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY, PROVIDING FOR ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES. THE TOTAL COST OF THESE SERVICES IS TO NOT EXCEED \$10,000, APPROPRIATING A SUM OF \$10,000 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve this Ordinance. Mr. LeDonne seconded. Mr. Merusi made a motion to open to public for discussion regarding Ordinance 2022-12. 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 2022-12 carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

RESOLUTIONS

2022-076 GOVERNING BODY CERTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL AUDIT

Mr. Zitone made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-076. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2022-078 APPROVE CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-078. Mr. Krumpfer 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.

Mayor Innella removed Resolution 2022-080. Attorney Rossmeissl further added that Resolution 2022-080 is being removed to reexamine the process in which the quote was received for a new Fire Chief's Vehicle.

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

RESOLUTIONS*

2022-072* APPROVAL TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION AND EXECUTE A GRANT CONTRACT WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE WEIDER ROAD PROJECT

2022-073* RECOMMENDATION TO NJDOT – AWARD TO TILCON NEW YORK, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$138,721.30 FOR NEW MASHIPACONG ROAD-SECTION III MILLING & PAVING

2022-074* RECOMMENDATION TO NJDOT – AWARD TO DENVILLE LINE PAINTING, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$4,221.32 FOR NEW MASHIPACONG ROAD-SECTION III LINE STRIPING

2022-075* RECOMMENDATION TO NJDOT – AWARD TO ROAD SAFETY SYSTEMS, LLC IN THE AMOUNT OF \$105,810.00 FOR NEW MASHIPACONG ROAD-SECTION III GUIDE RAIL

2022-077*	LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL (VILLAGE PIZZA LLC)
2022-079*	RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY ACCEPTING THE BIDS FOR THE SALE OF CERTAIN MUNICIPAL LANDS AND PROPERTIES FROM THE TOWNSHIP AUCTION OF JUNE 14, 2022
2022-081*	RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A CONTRACT TO EM ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS LLC OF SPARTA, NJ TO PROVIDE AND INSTALL SMOKE CARBON COMBO FIRE DETECTORS AT THE TOWNSHIP FIREHOUSE/COMMUNITY CENTER, WITH THE FUNDS TO COME FROM THE NET PROCEEDS OF THE SALE OF THE REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT BLOCK 18.42, LOT 5; 274 CLOVE ROAD IN THE TOWNSHIP

REPORTS

Mr. Merusi stated that this past weekend the Township held its Annual Montague Day Celebration and it was a great success. There was a great turn out this year and the weather was fantastic. The Committee also congratulated all the Miss Montague Contestants.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

NEW BUSINESS

Municipal – Mayor Innella explained that the Township Tax Collector was able to get some information on a service that would allow for online tax payments through the Township’s website. This service is at no cost to the Township, any fees that are charged to the user go directly to Municipal. Mr. Krumpfer made a motion to move forward with Municipal. Mr. Zitone seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Audit for Fire Department – Mayor Innella introduced Chief Financial Officer, Sharon Yarosz. Mayor Innella asked Ms. Yarosz for an update on where they stand for the Audit with the Fire Department since it has been a few years and nothing was ever completed. Ms. Yarosz replied that the Auditors have all the information that was requested, but they need trial balances in order to complete the audit. Ms. Yarosz further explained that in order to get trial balances the Fire Department books would need to be recreated, which she simply does not have time to complete. The Fire Department will have to hire an accountant to assist in this process. The Fire Department will be notified that the Auditors require a trial balance be created in order to complete the audit, and they would like this completed by the end of September of 2022.

Blue Ridge Rescue Squad – Mayor Innella stated that the Township Committee has been discussing how much money they would be willing to donate from the American Rescue Plan funding to the Blue Ridge Rescue Squad to purchase a new ambulance. Originally, Mayor Innella received a phone call from a Committee member from Frankford Township, which is also another town that is serviced by Blue Ridge Rescue Squad. That particular Committee member asked that the Township of Montague appropriate \$100,000 to donate to Blue Ridge Rescue Squad. At the time Mayor Innella felt that they would be agreeable with that number, but after some discussion over that last month or two it is looking closer to \$50,000. The Township simply has too many projects of their own that must take priority at this time. The kitchen in the Community Center still needs to be finished, and in order to do so they will also need to install a sprinkler system in the building and those estimates have been over \$150,000. The Fire Department also needs a new Chief Vehicle which is close to another \$50,000. Mayor Innella then introduced Carrie McKenzie, Second Lieutenant; Linda Larsen, Treasurer; and Richard Lyzenja, Captain of Blue Ridge Rescue Squad. Ms. McKenzie stated that Blue Ridge Rescue Squad has already covered 146 calls in Montague Township as of May 1, 2022. The current ambulance that is stationed at the Montague location is very old and needs replacing. They are in the process of getting specs for two different types of ambulance, a type 1 and a type 3. They are also looking into re-boxing one of the units. The specs will take about three-weeks to receive back. Mr. Krumpfer asked, where are the first responders located when a call comes in? Ms. McKenzie stated that there are some local Montague members and a few that are right on the

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Sandyston/Montague border; there are also members in Frankford and some that are outside of the immediate local area. Mr. Krumpfer added that he heard that there was an ambulance that was in this area that did not move for a few months in the winter. Ms. McKenzie replied saying that is correct, there was one ambulance that went out of service because it did not have four-wheel drive. Ms. McKenzie also discussed soft billing with the members of the committee. Mayor Innella stated that they will crunch the numbers and see where the Committee feels comfortable as far as an additional donation to Blue Ridge Rescue Squad for the purchase of a new ambulance.

Well for Zitone Ballfield – Mayor Innella stated that he was talking to the president of the Montague Little League, Mr. Anthony Mastroeni, and he mentioned that the Little League would be interested in getting a well drilled so that they would have water for the concession stand and be able to water the grass on the fields. The Committee estimates this could cost about \$30,000. Mr. LeDonne commented that now, with the American Rescue Plan Funds, seems to be the only chance to get something like this done.

OLD BUSINESS

Expenditure of American Rescue Plan Act Funds – Attorney Rossmeissl clarified that the American Rescue Plan funds have to be only encumbered by December 31, 2024. Ms. Yarosz, the Township CFO, did a very smart thing by claiming the standard allowance, so all funds that were given to the Township through the American Rescue Plan Act, up to 10 million dollars, are much less encumbered. This now opens the door for much more items/projects to be spent through the American Rescue Plan Act. The Committee then discussed various items including replacement/repair of the windows at the Municipal Building, finishing out the Kitchen in the Community Center, Municipal/Community Center Parking Lot Drainage, Phone System, sprinkler system at the Community Center and Construction of a Salt Shed. Mr. Zitone commented that there are many items that they would like to address with the American Rescue Plan funds, but they really need to prioritize what is most important. The Committee agreed that they would have to get solid estimates on pricing for many of these items before they can go further. They also agreed that the sprinkler system at the Community Center takes top priority at this time.

Attorney Rossmeissl commented that with the consent agenda tonight, the Committee passed a Resolution accepting all the bids received from the Land Sale Auction that was held on Tuesday, June 14, 2022. Attorney Rossmeissl's office will now send out a letter to all the successful bidders to organize a date for signing of the deed and conveying the property, this must take place within 30-days of tonight's meeting.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (limited to three minutes per person)

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

Sandra Kohler – River Road – Ms. Kohler asked if there was any update to the issue she brought forth at the last meeting regarding Short-Term Rentals. Ms. Kohler also added that she understands that this is a public meeting, but did not appreciate the phone call she received from the person that she has had complaints about regarding this issue within 45-minutes of leaving the meeting; she felt that it was very inappropriate because she never mentioned his name. Ms. Kohler stated that she is looking for a change in the Short-Term Rental Ordinance in general for anyone in town who has a shared driveway, a right-of-way or an easement because she is certain that she is not going to be the only one with a problem; this will continue if someone else decides to start running a business of Airbnb's and they are accessing through other people's yards. Mr. Krumpfer stated that he thought that they concluded that the Ordinance is good as is; it simply just needs to be enforced. Attorney Rossmeissl added that after looking into this a little further, and in speaking with Ms. Kohler, it seems that in this instance the Township Committee would have to take action because the driveway in question is permitted to be used for the property that is hosting Airbnb's. Therefore, technically, the Short-Term Rental Ordinance does permit that use for that zone. After some further discussion Attorney Rossmeissl then suggested, if the issue cannot be solved amicably then a simple Ordinance could be written stating that any property hosting a short-term rental that has more than one access point, if one of the access points is shared with a neighboring property they must use the main single access point. Mayor Innella stated that they will have Attorney Rossmeissl contact the property owner or they will have to come up with something to change this.

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

ADJOURN

Mr. Merusi made a motion to adjourn at 8:24 PM. Mr. LeDonne seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted:

**EILEEN DEFABIIS, RMC
MUNICIPAL CLERK**