

Approved: November 14, 2023

MONTAGUE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

OCTOBER 24, 2023

7:00 PM

OPENING STATEMENT

Mayor Zitone 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. Innella, Mr. Krumpfer, Mr. LeDonne, Mr. Merusi, and Mayor Zitone
Also present was Municipal Clerk Dana Klinger.

Absent: None

MINUTES

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 10, 2023.
Mr. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

ORDINANCES (First Reading)

2023-15 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT CHAPTER 76 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE, SUSSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY ENTITLED "ZONING", AMENDING ARTICLE II, DEFINITIONS, SECTION 76-7, DELETING THE DEFINITION OF "BUILDING HEIGHT" AND REPLACING THAT DEFINITION

Mayor Zitone stated that this Ordinance was proposed by the Montague Township Land Use Board to clarify building height relating to Zoning in Chapter 76 of the Township Code. The general definition currently states, "building height: the vertical distance measured from 6 feet out from the averaged finished grade of each corner of the building to the highest point of the roof". The proposed change in the definition would read as follows, "building height: no building shall exceed 35 feet in height measured from the lowest point of the finished grade to the highest point of the structure". Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-15 upon introduction. Mr. Innella seconded, and the motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

ORDINANCES (Second Reading)

None

RESOLUTIONS

2023-109 RESOLUTION APPROVING THE EXECUTION OF A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF NEWTON FOR THE TOWN OF NEWTON TO PROVIDE THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE WITH CERTIFIED TAX COLLECTION SERVICES FOR A PERIOD OF 3 YEARS FROM JANUARY 1, 2024, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2026

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-109. Mr. LeDonne seconded, and the motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2023-110 RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 5548 PROHIBITING THE STATE FROM IMPOSING A MILEAGE-BASED USER FEE

Mr. Krumpfer made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-110. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2023-111 RESOLUTION SEEKING LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY IN RESTORING THE MUNICIPAL COURT'S ABILITY TO IMPOSE COURT COSTS ON DISMISSED CASES

Mr. Innella made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-111. Mr. LeDonne seconded, and the motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

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2023-112 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SANDYSTON/MONTAGUE/WALPACK MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE GRANT FOR 2025 FISCAL YEAR

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-112. Mr. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2023-113 EXEMPT VETERAN EXEMPTION/CANCEL TAXES (BL 18, LT 191.08)

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-113. Mr. Innella seconded, and the motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2023-114 AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE TO ENTER INTO A SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF VERNON FOR ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF N.J.S.A. 40A:65-1 ET SEQ. AND N.J.S.A. 40A:11-10 ET SEQ.

Mr. Merusi made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-114. Mr. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion was carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

CORRESPONDENCE

Montague Volunteer Fire Department – Request for approval for Membership for Barbara Lozier – Mr. LeDonne made a motion to approve the Membership request for Barbara Lozier. Mr. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion then carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Chief Financial Officer, Sharon Yarosz – Best Practices Inventory and Governing Body Acknowledgement Certification - The Township Committee made acknowledgement of receipt and review of the Best Practices Inventory.

NEW BUSINESS

P/T Seasonal Snowplow Operator – Municipal Clerk Klinger stated the Township received several applications for the position. The DPW Foreman, Dave Coss, Committeeman Innella, and herself conducted a few interviews and recommend hiring David Corbett for the position. Mr. Corbett is a local resident who has experience with the equipment and snowplow operations. Mr. Innella made a motion to hire Mr. Corbett for the position of Part-Time Seasonal Snowplow Operator at a rate of \$20 per hour. Mr. LeDonne seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote. Municipal Clerk Klinger then issued this approval Resolution 2023-115.

OLD BUSINESS

Municibid Auction – Mayor Zitone stated that the Township held an online auction of surplus equipment on Municibid.com on October 18, 2023. The following bids were received.

2011 John Deere 310 SJ Backhoe	\$ 30,000.00
Swenson Sander	\$ 56.00
Gledhill Snowplow	\$ 28.00
Total Amount of Bids Received	\$30,084.00

The Committee members felt that the bid received for the Backhoe was fair, but the Sander and Snowplow bids were a bit too low. Mr. Merusi made a motion to accept the bid received for the Backhoe and reject the bids received for the Sander and the Snowplow. Mr. Krumpfer seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Junkyards – Mayor Zitone stated that the current Township Code regarding Junkyards is outdated and inadequate and requires amendment, specifically regarding setbacks, fencing requirements, hours of operation, and so on. The Committee then took time to review and discuss various Ordinances regarding Junkyards from other Sussex County Municipalities.

REPORTS

Recreation – Mr. Merusi spoke regarding the Fall Festival, which took place this past Saturday. The event was very successful even with a few mishaps due to wind. They had activities and crafts set up in the Community Center, a Trunk or Treat, a Juggler, hayrides, a pumpkin decorating competition, and much more.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (limited to three minutes per person)

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

Jody Case-Merusi – River Road and Shore Drive – Ms. Case-Merusi took a moment to commend Vernon Township Animal Control for their wonderful services, saying they have been excellent

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to work with. Ms. Case-Merusi added that on November 2, 2023, from 5 PM to 7 PM the Township will be hosting the Free Rabies Clinic at the lower level of the Municipal Building.

Darren Ponce – Millville Road – Mr. Ponce appreciates that the Township Committee is working on tightening up the Junkyard Ordinance but feels that if the Committee decides to go with a rear and side set back of say 100 feet then the current Junkyard would have to be shifted because currently the Junkyard on River Road mainly is on the south side of the property, which would cause more of an eyesore for those neighboring the property. Attorney Rossmeissl explained that the Committee must see this from a “general” perspective, for any existing Junkyards and/or any Junkyards that may come to the area in the future, but he and the committee understand Mr. Ponce’s concerns.

Joe Barbagallo – River Road - Mr. Barbagallo stated that he has been talking with the owner of the River Road Junkyard and it seems that he is willing to somewhat work with Mr. Ponce and Mr. Barbagallo to come to a solution regarding the concerns they are having with the expansion of the Junkyard. Mr. Barbagallo further added that they do not want to hinder the owners' business, but they feel that the least impact would be for the owner to stay within the footprint that is shown on the property survey as a preexisting use and try to define that area.

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

ADJOURN

Mr. Innella made a motion to adjourn at 7:57 p.m. Mr. Merusi seconded, and the motion was carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted:

**DANA KLINGER, RMC
MUNICIPAL CLERK**