

Township of Vernon

TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING

May 8, 2017

The Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was convened at 6:30 p.m. on Monday May 8, 2017 in the Vernon Municipal Center, 21 Church Street, Vernon, New Jersey with Council President Jean Murphy presiding.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to the public and the press on January 5, 2017 and was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-7.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Present were Council Members Dan Kadish, Sandra Ooms, Patrick Rizzuto and Council President Jean Murphy. Also present were Mayor Harry Shortway, Administrator Charles Voelker, Township Attorney Joshua Zielinski.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Township Attorney Zielinski read the following resolution for Executive Session:

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 permits the exclusion of the public in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Vernon as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the hereinafter specified subject matter.
2. The general nature of the subject matters to be discussed are:
 - a. Pending Litigation –Paladini v. Township of Vernon; Beverly Budz, et. al. v. Township of Vernon; Township of Vernon v. Stonehill et. al.; Legends Fire Code Violations (N.J.S.A.10:4-12 (b) 7)
 - b. Contract Negotiations- MUA N.J.S.A.10:4-12 (b) 7
(Anticipated Time of Disclosure December 2017)
 - c. Property Sale-Acquisition (N.J.S.A.10:4-12 (b) 5)
(Anticipated Time of Disclosure August 2017)
3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to go into executive session.

Motion: Dan Kadish

Second: Sandra Ooms

All members were in favor.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to Close the executive session and reconvene the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Motion: Patrick Rizzuto

Second: Dan Kadish

All members were in favor.

The Council returned to open session at 7:30 p.m..

The Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was convened at 7:30 p.m. on Monday May 8, 2017 in the Vernon Municipal Center, 21 Church Street, Vernon, New Jersey with Council President Jean Murphy presiding.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to the public and the press on January 5, 2017 and was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-7.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Present were Council Members Dan Kadish, Sandra Ooms, Patrick Rizzuto Dick Wetzel and Council President Jean Murphy. Also present were Mayor Harry Shortway, CFO Elke Yetter, Administrator Charles Voelker, Township Attorney Joshua Zielinski.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Council Member Murphy asked the members of the VFW and Vietnam Veterans come forward to lead the assemblage in the salute of the flag.

PRESENTATION

Vernon Township High School Hack-a-thon

Dr. McKay of Vernon Township High School came forward and explained the Hack-a-thon, was held overnight on March 31st. Dr. McKay explained it was a high school student think tank made up of future business leaders, technicians, engineers who were given the task of solving local current problems posed by Mayor Shortway. Students were divided into two teams to strategize solutions about local issues including Redevelopment, Town Center Buildout, Sewer System Repair and Expansion. The students who participated in the Hack-a-thon were Hannah Van Blarcom, Josie Stolzenberg, Brendan O'Connell, San Wolthoff, Juliana Schlichting, Brain Hill, Andrew Wiik, Matt Thienel, Daniel McKeon, David Rusnak, and Shane Brennan.

Dr. McKay explained that Team Inferior defined their vision for the Town Center to see the most immediate affects and the renovation of sewer and water piping to achieve high capacity water upgrades and to attract new businesses. The Team was invited to come forward and they suggested bus transportation and shuttle services for easier accessibility to Town Center businesses and amenities with the cost of bussing paying for itself over time. The Team described infrastructure improvements to the water and sewer system utilizing NJEIT and federal grants so the existing debt will not be increased. Council Member Wetzel praised the hard work and fantastic ideas presented by the High School students.

Dr. McKay introduced Team Four Seasons who described their 3-Step Plan to revitalize Vernon Township including a new Water & Sewer plant, a greenway community plan and a small business initiative plan. The Team acknowledged additional funds are needed which they plan to apply for State, Federal and NJEIT grants and provide tax incentives to new businesses. The team proposes a water tank for needed increased water supply which is less of an eyesore and less expensive than a tower. The Team explains they want to keep the rustic charm of Vernon and create a Greenway and sidewalks to connect various parts of Vernon. Team Four Seasons proposes a bus system around Vernon with stops at the Appalachian Trail, Mountain Creek or the Town Center and offer day passes and discounts for residents. The long-term goals the Team felt for Vernon include implantation of solar cells and wind turbines but keep Vernon beautiful, diverse with continual stream of revenue. Council Member Rizzuto praised the students by working together and coming up with great ideas. Council Member Ooms asked the Team what kinds of stores would they propose and the Team offered specialty stores like the Candy Apple Shoppe, farm to table restaurants or touristy stores. Dr. McKay expressed thanks to the Mayor and Council for letting the students present their ideas and looks forward to working with the township in the future.

PROCLAMATIONS:

Mayor Shortway read the Proclamation for Police Week

Police Week 2017

WHEREAS: The Congress and President of the United States have designated the week of Monday, May 15, 2017 through Sunday, May 21, 2017 as National Police Week; and

WHEREAS: The members of the Township of Vernon Police Department play an essential role in safeguarding the rights and freedoms of the Township of Vernon; and

WHEREAS, It is important that all citizens know and understand the duties, responsibilities, hazards and sacrifices of their law enforcement agency, and that members of our law enforcement agency recognize their duty to serve the people by safeguarding life and property, by protecting them against violence and disorder, and by protecting the innocent against deception and the weak against oppression; and

WHEREAS, the men and women of the Vernon Township Police Department unceasingly provide a vital service.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Council President Jean Murphy, Mayor Shortway and the Vernon Township Council do hereby proclaim that the week of May 15, 2017 through May 21, 2017 is designated as Police Week in the Township of Vernon and call upon all citizens and patriotic civic and educational organizations to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and observances in which all of our community may join in commemorating law enforcement officers, past and present, who, by their faithful and loyal devotion to their responsibilities, have rendered a dedicated service to their communities and, in so doing, have established for themselves an enviable and enduring reputation for preserving the rights and security of all citizens.

Given under my hand in these free United States in the Township of Vernon, State of New Jersey on this 8th day of May, two thousand seventeen, and to which I have caused the Seal of the Township of Vernon to be affixed and have made this proclamation public.

Council Member Rizzuto read the Proclamation for Older Americans Month

Older Americans Month

May 2017

WHEREAS, Vernon Township is committed to valuing all individuals and recognizing their ongoing life achievements; and

WHEREAS, Older adults in Vernon Township play an important role by continuing to contribute experience, knowledge, wisdom and accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, Older adults are active community members involved in volunteering, mentorship, arts and culture, and civic engagement; and

WHEREAS, Our community can provide opportunities to allow older citizens to continue to flourish by emphasizing the importance of elders and their leadership; by presenting opportunities for older Americans to share their wisdom, experience and skills; and recognizing older adults as a valuable asset in strengthening American communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Council President Jean Murphy, Mayor Shortway and the Vernon Township Council do hereby proclaim **May 2017 to be Older Americans Month** in Vernon Township. We urge every citizen to take the time this month to recognize older adults and the people who serve and support them as powerful and vital citizens who greatly contribute to the community.

Given under my hand in these free United States in the Township of Vernon, on this 8th day of May, two thousand seventeen, and to which I have caused the Seal of the Township of Vernon to be affixed and have made this proclamation public.

Council President Murphy read the Proclamation for Buddy Poppy Month

Buddy Poppy Month

May 2017

WHEREAS: The annual distribution of Buddy Poppies by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States has been officially recognized and endorsed by governmental leaders since 1922; and

WHEREAS: Buddy Poppies are assembled by disabled veterans, and the proceeds of this worthy fund-raising campaign are used exclusively for the benefit of disabled and needy veterans, and the widows and orphans of deceased veterans; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the sale of Buddy Poppies by the Veterans of Foreign Wars is eloquently reflected in the desire to “honor the dead by helping the living.” The 2017 Buddy Poppy Drive is being held during the month of May; and

WHEREAS, The Walkkill Valley VFW 8441 and its Ladies Auxiliary promote the sale of the Buddy Poppy throughout the Township; and

WHEREAS, We urge all patriotic citizens to wear a Buddy Poppy as a symbol of gratitude to the men and women of this country who have risked their lives in defense of the freedoms which we continue to enjoy as American citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Council President Jean Murphy, Mayor Shortway and the Vernon Township Council do hereby proclaim that May 2017 is **Buddy Poppy Month** in Vernon Township. We hereby urge the citizens of this community to recognize the merits of this cause by contributing generously to this invaluable program.

Given under my hand in these free United States in the Township of Vernon, State of New Jersey on this 8th day of May, two thousand seventeen, and to which I have caused the Seal of the Township of Vernon to be affixed and have made this proclamation public.

Council Member Ooms read the Proclamation for Memorial Day

MEMORIAL DAY 2017

WHEREAS, Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, while it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of **Memorial Day**, President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, proclaimed that Waterloo, NY was officially the birthplace of Memorial Day; and

WHEREAS, regardless of the exact date or location of its origins, one thing is clear – Memorial Day was borne out of the Civil War and a desire to honor our dead. It was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his [General Order No. 11](#). “The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land,” he proclaimed; and

WHEREAS, on the first Decoration Day, at Arlington National Cemetery, 5,000 participants decorated the graves of the 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried there; and

WHEREAS, after World War I the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war; and

WHEREAS, it is now observed in almost every state on the last Monday in May with Congressional passage of the National Holiday Act of 1971.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Council President Jean Murphy, Mayor Shortway and the Vernon Township Council do hereby honor our service men and women, from every branch of the service, who have served in all the nation's wars for their enduring dedication to the preservation of America and our way of life.

Given under my hand in these free United States in the Township of Vernon, State of New Jersey on this 8th day of May, two thousand seventeen, and to which I have caused the Seal of the Township of Vernon to be affixed and have made this proclamation public.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to open the meeting to Public Comments.

MOVED: Sandra Ooms

SECOND: Dan Kadish

All members voted in favor.

Jessi Paladini, [REDACTED] expressed support for residents that live in the neighborhoods by the Appalachian Trail. She advised the Council that although it is not legally required she felt that ordinances should be provided to the public before they are even introduced. Ms. Paladini admonished that the Township should not use the law to justify its action. Ms. Paladini claimed that denying the public is not good government. Ms. Paladini stated the Historical Society is the 2nd largest organization to promote tourism and notes the first meeting to discuss the Scenic Byway Management Plan will be held on June 8th. She supports agri-eco tourism but not at the expense of the quality of life

of our residents. Ms. Paladini commended Chief Mills for informing the residents with the plan and hopes the Council supports it.

Danielle Longo, Great Gorge, lived in Vernon for 14 years and has hiked the entire Appalachian Trail. Ms. Longo stated that as a taxpayer and member of the Appalachian Trail community she feels the trail isn't enough to sustain Vernon but could be avenue to attract new businesses. Ms. Longo stressed that residents need to come first but offered the idea of visitors creating memories here so they come back and visit our businesses.

Jamie Rickey, enjoyed the presentation by the students and reminded the public that while running for office he proposed a Youth council to research current issues and present possible solutions. Mr. Rickey supported the need for bus shuttle system in near future for agri-eco tourism and to preserve the environment. He added a main hub at base of stairway where there is 10 acres of flat space would be good and maybe a parking lot will still be needed on RT 517. He added Vernon must put the responsibility on the State and Federal Government to solve our problem and added the 10-acre parcel describer earlier is state and federal owned land.

Sally Rinker, stated she agreed with Jessi Paladini and has repeatedly asked for full text on introduced ordinances especially including the budget. Ms. Rinker is delighted to see how bright the students are and asks how to keep them here after graduation, when they have families and need to buy their first home and hopes they stay. Ms. Rinker explained she comes to meetings to be informed because she cares about the town she lives in and belongs to a group of many who want to see Vernon prosper, quality of life remains high, investments do well, and is desirable for young, retired and businesses. Ms. Rinker opined the actions of this administration is quite frightening to her and feels you cannot be successful by operating with spite and ulterior motives. She questioned how the administration can be business friendly when they insult the largest taxpayers of this town with the Mayor calling some slumlord millionaires and the Council President accuses others of going bankrupt repeatedly and on the record. She asked if the administration's public call for members for the Economic Development Committee makes Vernon look business friendly.

Ms. Rinker commented that she had to quit her position on the Greenway Committee when hours devoted to the mission of the trail system were negated by interference, incompetence and disrespect.

Ms. Rinker states she has listened to the ongoing saga about the potential sale of the Faline Building. She added the sale of the Faline Building, which Ms. Rinker feels is favorable to encourage development and a return of the township asset to the tax rolls. Ms. Rinker expressed displeasure with the price the property was offered for sale.

Ms. Rinker questioned the sale of the building as well as the increase in legal fees that the township had incurred. Ms. Rinker said the Business Administrator stated the budget for legal fees for 2017 is \$311,000 due to lawsuits and desk audits which she explained is a 36% increase over 2016 and expressed displeasure over the increase.

Ed DeYoung, Vernon Heights, stated while visiting Maple Grange Park felt the grounds are way behind usual standards as grass was high and questioned if there was a cutback in services as he does not want to see the great asset deteriorate.

Seeing no one further coming forward, Council President Murphy asked for a motion to close the meeting to Public Comments.

MOVED: Patrick Rizzuto

SECOND: Sandra Ooms

All members voted in favor.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Shortway congratulated Nancy Adam for being named 2017 Vernon Township Senior of the Year. Mayor announced that EMS Chiefs Roger Kirchner from Vernon Ambulance Squad and Cheryl Swift of Glenwood Pochuck Squad both stepped down from their positions this week and expressed thanks for their dedicated years of service to Vernon residents.

Mayor Shortway stated he is working with the Administrator and Professionals on the third phase of the Suez agreement to bring water to the Town Center but notes that future development may create demand that exceeds Suez's allocation permit. Results from the Highlands Water Use study is required before Vernon can proceed. The Joint Legislative Task Force for drinking water infrastructure has received the Mayor's written testimony that the \$46 million debt was due to overestimated gallonage in the waste water collection system and includes the aged and failing system and advises that for the Town Center to be sustainable the sewer rates must be raised. Mayor Shortway added that \$5 million is required to update the 3 lift stations and pump station and replace 8600 linear ft. of pipe and notes funds are needed for the repairs but first the MUA is required to prepare an Asset Management Plan.

Mayor Shortway requested support from Council for Salary Ordinance for part time employees who are not eligible for union contracts or benefits. Mayor Shortway noted not having to pay benefits saves money.

Mayor Shortway stated the administration is working with the DCA and Fire Marshal regarding the continuing investigation of the horrendous conditions in Legends indicating some hazards have been abated but other violations still exist. Conditions including scorch marks on walls, umbrellas lodged into the ceiling which are open to prevent leakage from floor above, insect infestation, bunk beds in closets, cabinets blocking sprinkles, washing machines hooked up in bath tubs, illegal gas dryers and junction boxes. Mayor Shortway explained he will continue to follow up as the safety of the residents cannot be ignored as the landlord's attorney continues to file appeals to allegations.

Mayor Shortway further requested support of Council to approve the budget so the Township can begin process of upgrading equipment for DPW and Volunteer Fire Fighter's for better service to our residents.

Council Member Ooms stated she supported a policy to have full text of introduced ordinances available to public and on website for the residents. Council Member Rizzuto stated he agreed with Ms. Ooms to change the policy. Council President Murphy questioned Council Member Rizzuto if he is suggesting the Police Chief is being political about the ordinance. Council President Murphy explained the reporter found the information about the Ordinance on the Vernon Police Facebook page and residents called and asked why Ann Place was not included. Council Member Ooms stated for reason of transparency the Council should move forward and made a motion to show public the full text of all ordinances going forward.

Motion:Sandra Ooms

Second:Dan Kadish

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Dan Kadish, Sandra Ooms, Patrick Rizzuto, Dick Wetzel, Jean Murphy

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried to make public full text of all Ordinances prior to Introduction.

MINUTES

Council President Murphy asked for motion to approve the minutes of Regular Meeting of April 10, 2017 and Executive Meeting of April 10, 2017.

Regular Meeting Minutes April 10, 2017

Executive Session Minutes of April 10, 2017

Motion:Dan Kadish

Second:Dick Wetzel

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Dan Kadish, Sandra Ooms, Patrick Rizzuto, Dick Wetzel, Jean Murphy

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried to approve the minutes of Regular Meeting of April 10, 2017 and Executive Meeting of April 10, 2017.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council President Murphy gave a brief explanation of Resolutions #17-111 through #17-114.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to approve Resolutions #17-111 through #17-114

MOVED: Dick Wetzel

SECOND: Dan Kadish

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Dan Kadish, Sandra Ooms, Patrick Rizzuto, Dick Wetzel, Jean Murphy

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried to approve Resolutions #17-111 through #17-114.

RESOLUTION #17-111

AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR PROPOSED SEWER CONNECTION FOR THE VERNON TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING

WHEREAS, there is a need for the Proposed Sewer Connection for the Vernon Township Municipal Building;

WHEREAS, the Township has issued specifications and contract documents soliciting formal bids for the necessary work;

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon opened 1 bid(s) for the proposed Sewer Connection on April 27, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.; and

WHEREAS, One (1) bid was received and reviewed by the Township Engineer Cory Stoner for the specified bid requirements; and

WHEREAS, after review, the lowest bidder did fully meet the bid requirements and the Township Engineer recommends the contract to be awarded to Earth-Tec Associates, Inc, P.O. Box 941, Vernon, NJ 07462, in an amount not to exceed \$56,560.00; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Finance Officer has certified funds available for this purpose in Account #3095701 and #3095702 Ord. #14-12.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, to award the bid to Earth-Tec Associates, Inc, for the Sewer Connection for the Vernon Township Municipal Building at a cost not to exceed \$56,560.00

This Resolution shall take effect immediately according to law.

RESOLUTION #17-112

REFUND HOMESTEAD BENEFIT CREDIT TO TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN

WHEREAS THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS deemed certain property owners totally disabled veterans in 2016

WHEREAS, certain property owners were issued Homestead Benefit credits on their tax accounts in 2016.

WHEREAS, the law exempts said property from taxation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Council of the Township of Vernon authorizes the Tax Collector to refund the Homestead Benefit credit in the amount of \$529.50 for Block 90.05 Lot 14 also known as [REDACTED]

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Township Treasurer and Tax Collector.

RESOLUTION #17-113

AUTHORIZING THE VERNON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL TO APPROVE A PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSFER OF LIQUOR LICENSE #1922-33-003-007

WHEREAS, an application has been filed for a person-to-person transfer of a Plenary Retail Consumption License #1922-33-003-007, for the purpose of changing the name of licensee wherein the sale, service and storage of alcoholic beverages are authorized; and

WHEREAS, the submitted application form is complete in all respects, the transfer fees have been paid, and the license has been properly renewed for the current license term.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of Vernon does hereby approve, effective as of May 8, 2017, person-to-person transfer of the Plenary Retail Consumption License #1922-33-003-007, located at 414 Route 517, Vernon Township, New Jersey to transfer from Great Gorge Country Club, Inc. to Great Gorge Entertainment, LLC, as delineated in the application form.

RESOLUTION #17-114

AUTHORIZING ALTERNATIVE PUBLIC DEFENDERS AND PROSECUTORS

WHEREAS, there is a need for Professional Services to the Township of Vernon for Prosecutor, Public Defender; and

WHEREAS, the Township has appointed a Prosecutor and Public Defender for the year 2017 however the Court has recognized they may have a need for an alternate under some circumstances.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Township of Vernon that they hereby authorize the following Alternate Prosecutors or Public Defenders:

1. Alternate Municipal Prosecutor –Peter Laemers, Esq.
2. Alternate Municipal Prosecutor –Jarrod Confrancesco, Esq.
3. Alternate Public Defender – James D. Opfer, Jr. Esq.
4. Alternate Public Defender – James C. Zimmermann, Esq.

INTRODUCTION/1ST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCES

Council President Murphy read Ordinance#17-07 by title only.

Ordinance #17-07: An Ordinance of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey Amending § 99-25 of the Vernon Township Code and Allowing only Resident Permit Parking on Carol Drive, Old Glenwood Circle, Meadowlark Drive, Cove Court, Vlietstra Drive, Thistle Ave and Ivy Place and designating parking areas along CR517

Mr. Zielinski explained he spoke to the Police Chief regarding the details of the Ordinance being introduced about parking restrictions and recommends not adding Ann Place as there are no known issues but noted it can be amended if the council chooses.

Police Chief Mills came forward and explained after meeting with the residents he stated he would keep them informed about any progress and said there was no political agenda when he put detail of proposed ordinance on Facebook. He added every weekend a written report is prepared by a Police supervisor on duty of all issues and notes that Ann Place has never been an issue and it is the Council's prerogative to add it if they choose. Mr. Zielinski advised the Council that the change to add Ann Place should be done at introduction because if done at Second reading it may be subject to reintroduction.

Council President Murphy made a motion to add Ann Place to the Ordinance.

Council Member Wetzel agreed to do it now and Council Member Rizzuto feels the quality of life for the residents must be priority over benefits of tourism.

Mr. Bill Perkins, resident of Ann Place came forward and noted that once the new restrictions are added, visitors will eventually move to alternate roads to park which may include Ann Place.

Chief Mills questioned if decal system must also be added as ordinance states windshield hangtag permits must be visible on windshield which Mr. Zielinski stated the ordinance language is sufficient for both permits.

Ms. Kirkman questioned if individual notices are required to be mailed to residents in affected areas and Mr. Zielinski answered they are not required but suggested.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to introduce Ordinance #17-07 as amended to add Ann Place to the Ordinance with a public hearing to be held on May 22, 2017

MOVED: Patrick Rizzuto

SECOND: Dick Wetzel

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Sandra Ooms, Patrick Rizzuto, Dick Wetzel, Jean Murphy

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: Dan Kadish

ABSENT: None

Motion carried to Introduce Ordinance #17-07 as amended to add Ann Place to the title with a public hearing to be held on May 22, 2017

PUBLIC HEARING/2ND READING OF ORDINANCES

Council Member Murphy read the ordinance by title only.

Ordinance #17-06: Ordinance Establishing The Salary Ordinance For “Non-Union” Employees

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance#17-06.

MOVED: Dan Kadish

SECOND: Dick Wetzel

All members voted in favor.

There was no comment from the public on this ordinance.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to close the public hearing for Ordinance #17-06.

MOVED: Dan Kadish

SECOND: Dick Wetzel

All members voted in favor.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to adopt Ordinance#17-06.

MOVED: Sandra Ooms

SECOND: Dick Wetzel

Council Member Rizzuto stated it is a good idea to save money with part-timers but there are also downsides as employees are not as skilled or committed and explained that part-timers are different than floaters. Mayor Shortway opined that some of Vernon’s best employees started as part-time and worked hard to obtain a full-time position.

A roll call vote was taken:

Ayes: Dan Kadish, Sandra Ooms, Patrick Rizzuto, Dick Wetzel, Jean Murphy

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Motion carried to adopt Ordinance#17-06.

2017 MUNICIPAL BUDGET AMENDMENT PUBLIC HEARING/ADOPTION

Council President Murphy asked CFO Ms. Yetter to read Resolution #17-110 in full.

Resolution #17-110: Resolution to Amend Introduced Budget

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to open the public hearing for Resolution #17-110.

MOVED: Dan Kadish

SECOND: Sandra Ooms

All members voted in favor.

Sally Rinker, commented the \$150,000 removed from the budget was an easy deduction from the budget but that she disagreed with the increase of \$82,000 in legal budget from the 2016 budget. Also, she opined it is not good judgment with the foregoing of replacement skilled positions in the DPW and Police departments while hiring two unskilled part-timers for other offices. Ms. Rinker felt the new part-time positions should be based on data and research and offers statistics from other towns clerk’s offices.

Seeing no more public coming forward, Council President Murphy asked for a motion to close the public hearing for Resolution #17-110.

MOVED: Dan Kadish

SECOND: Sandra Ooms

All members voted in favor.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-110.

MOVED: Dan Kadish

SECOND: Sandra Ooms

A roll call vote was taken:

Ayes: Dan Kadish, Sandra Ooms, Patrick Rizzuto, Dick Wetzel, Jean Murphy

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Motion carried to adopt Resolution #17-110.

RESOLUTION #17-110
TO AMEND INTRODUCED BUDGET

Whereas, the local municipal budget for the year 2017 was approved on the 13th day of March, 2017, and Whereas, the public hearing on said budget has been held as advertised, and,

Whereas, it is desired to amend said approved budget,

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the Governing Body of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, that the following amendments to the approved budget of 2017 be made:

Recorded Vote (insert last names)	AYES	{ Kadish { Rizzuto { Murphy	Ooms Wetzel		
	NAYS { { None {	ABSTAINED	{ { None {		
				FROM	TO
GENERAL REVENUES:					
3. Miscellaneous Revenues:					
D) Special Items of General Revenue Anticipated					
with Prior Written Consent of Director of Local Government Services					
Shared Services Agreements					
Interlocal Service Agreement- DPW, Vernon MUA					
				48,000.00	80,000.00
Total Section D: Shared Service Agreements Offset With					
Appropriations					
				234,650.00	266,650.00
6. Amount To Be Raised By Taxes for Support of Municipal Budget:					
A) Local Tax for Municipal Purposes Including Reserve					
for Uncollected Taxes					
				16,500,295.00	16,238,352.00
Total Amount To Be Raised By Taxes for Support of					
Municipal Budget:					
				16,500,295.00	16,238,352.00
7. Total General Revenues					
				24,754,580.00	24,524,637.00
CURRENT FUND APPROPRIATIONS:					
8. GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS:					
"(a) Operations - Within "CAPS":					
Administrative and Executive					
Salary & Wages					
				158,700.00	153,500.00
Municipal Clerk					
Salary & Wages					
				137,430.00	131,780.00
Other Expenses					
				58,000.00	53,000.00
Arts Committee- Other Expenses					
				1,500.00	0.00
Police:					
Salary & Wages					
				3,579,863.00	3,539,863.00
Public Works Functions:					
Streets & Roads Maintenance					
Salary & Wages					
				1,124,200.00	1,087,200.00
Fleet Management					
Salary & Wages					
				219,000.00	215,000.00
Parks & Recreation Functions:					
Maintenance of Parks:					
Salary & Wages					
				150,000.00	155,000.00
State Uniform Construction Code					
Construction Official					
Salaries and Wages					
				392,250.00	381,250.00
Total Operations (Item 8(A)) within "CAPS"					
				15,130,376.00	15,026,026.00
Total Operations Including Contingent within "CAPS"					
				15,130,376.00	15,026,026.00
Detail:					
Salaries and Wages					
				7,380,286.00	7,282,436.00
Other Expenses (Including Contingent)					
				7,750,090.00	7,743,590.00
(H-1) Total General Appropriations for Municipal Purposes					
				17,054,376.00	16,950,026.00
(A) Operations- Excluded from "Caps"					
Interlocal Service Agreements:					
DPW Services					
				48,000.00	80,000.00
Total Shared Service Agreements					
				234,650.00	266,650.00
Total Operations: Excluded from "CAPS"					
				1,990,279.00	2,022,279.00
Detail:					
Salaries and Wages					
				294,650.00	326,650.00

(C) Capital Improvements - Excluded from "CAPS"		
Capital Improvement Fund	265,000.00	116,680.00
Total Capital Improvements Excluded from "CAPS"	265,000.00	116,680.00
(H-2) Total General Appropriations for Municipal Purposes Excluded From "CAPS"	5,247,979.00	5,131,659.00
(O) Total General Appropriations - Excluded from "CAPS"	5,247,979.00	5,131,659.00
(L) Subtotal General Appropriations (Items (H-1) and (O))	22,302,355.00	22,081,685.00
(M) Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	2,452,225.00	2,442,952.00
9. TOTAL GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS	24,754,580.00	24,524,637.00

Be It Further Resolved, that this complete amendment, in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-9, be published in the NJ Herald, in the issue of April 27, 2017, and that said publication contain notices of public hearing on said amendment to be held at the Vernon Municipal Building on May 8, 2017 at 7:30pm.

Be It Further Resolved, that three certified copies of this resolution be filed forthwith in the Office of the Director of Local Government Services for their certification of the local municipal budget so amended.

2017 MUNICIPAL BUDGET ADOPTION

Resolution #17-70 Adoption of the 2017 Municipal Budget as amended.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #17-70.

MOVED: Sandra Ooms

SECOND: Patrick Rizzuto

A roll call vote was taken:

Ayes: Dan Kadish, Sandra Ooms, Patrick Rizzuto, Dick Wetzel, Jean Murphy

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Motion carried to adopt Resolution #17-70.

PRESENTATION OF THE 2016 AUDIT

Council President Murphy asked the Township Auditor, Mr. Schroeder, to come forward.

Mr. Schroeder introduced Ms. Mon Lee to explain the 2016 Audit for Vernon Township. Ms. Lee provided balances in current fund, assets, liabilities and current reserve and explained the fund balance decreased by \$510,000 from 2015-2016 and Township debt totaled \$30 million with borrowing power of \$83 million. Ms. Lee detailed the three Recommendations for Vernon: 1) Subrogation of duties which can be eliminated only by hiring of additional staff; 2) Transition of tax software to new software created under billing which the Township already took steps to correct; and 3) Grant Amendments must all be approved by governing body.

Council Member Ooms asked what debt balance was and how much was paid down in 2016. Ms. Lee said balance was \$30 million and Vernon paid \$1.6 million in bonds and \$247,000 in bond anticipation notes in 2016. Ms. Ooms asked is there is state statute limiting amount of bond which Ms. Lee stated no and borrowing power to bond is \$83 million.

Mr. Schroeder expressed thanks to the Township employees while the Auditors are present in Vernon gathering the records and opines they are in the top 25% of all towns they service.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Kadish had no comment.

Council Member Ooms questioned why the trees around the recycling center are dying and Mr. Voelker explained they were improperly planted too close to each other and Mayor Shortway added they were over mulched and over watered.

Council Member Rizzuto asked about status of appraisal for Faline Building which Mr. Voelker explained there were issues for appraisal as it was done without going inside and not knowing about sewer infrastructure. Mayor Shortway added he just received information today but was unable to add to executive session agenda in time but will add to next meeting agenda under negotiations but agreed to distribute to council immediately.

Council Member Wetzel noted West Milford backed out of Gypsy Moth Suppression Program and what effect it would have on Vernon. Mayor Shortway was not aware they had decided not to spray but noted neither did Warwick and said he wanted to make sure Vernon continued to spray to eliminate the problem.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT COMMENTS

Council President Murphy stated she attended Earthfest on April 30th and noted the Beautification Committee is continuing working on improving the 'Welcome to Vernon' signs throughout the Township. She added the grounds at the Veteran's Memorial Park need attention from DPW. Council President Murphy stated that Sparta is attempting to end their shared service agreement with Sussex County for Health Department Services but Sussex County then tried to role the health tax into the general tax for all residents. Council President Murphy questioned how this affects Vernon's responsibilities for employees that were transferred there.

Council President Murphy explained the location of port-a-johns at the Appalachian Trail entrance will be moved so they are not an eyesore to our residents.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business to be conducted on the agenda, a motion for Adjournment was made by Council Member Kadish, seconded by Council Member Murphy with all members voting in favor.

The Regular Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Kirkman, RMC, CMR
Municipal Clerk

Jean Murphy,
Council President