

**VERNON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 13, 2024 7:00 PM**

This Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was convened at 7:00 p.m. on May 13, 2024 via Zoom Webinar and in the Vernon Municipal Center, 21 Church Street, Vernon, New Jersey with Council President Rizzuto presiding.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to the public and the press on January 17, 2024 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.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Council President Rizzuto led the assemblage in the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present were Council Members Natalie Buccieri, Jessica DeBenedetto, William Higgins, Badley Sparta and Council President Patrick Rizzuto. Also, present were Mayor Anthony Rossi, Business Administrator Tina Kraus, CFO Donelle Bright, Municipal Clerk Marcy Gianattasio, Township Attorney Matthew Moench.

PROCLAMATIONS

National Public Works Week

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

Zoom Meetings/Public Comment

The Council discussed continuing hybrid meetings versus live streaming meetings for the public to watch live.

MAYOR COMMENTS

Good evening. I just want to say Happy Mother's Day to my mother, whom I saw on Saturday, and also to all the mother in Vernon. I hope you had a great day.

We have had some great things happening in Vernon in the last few weeks.

On April 24th, I, Commissioner John Cosh, Chief Scott, and Jimmy picked up the fire tanker in Mahwah, NJ. We were greeted by Mayor James Wysocki and several members of the Mahwah Fire Department, who have loaned us their fire tanker at zero cost while we wait for our new one to be delivered. They even gave us a full tank of gas upon pickup. They have offered us this tanker for as long as we need it. We immediately brought the tanker to the DPW to do a FULL inspection. Everything checked out. We did a few maintenance items on the truck at little cost, but the FD's feedback has been overwhelmingly excellent. This tanker drives and performs flawlessly, and they couldn't be happier.

On April 25th, bring your child to work day; thank you, Tina, for organizing it. The children had a blast from early morning fun, visiting the Animal shelter, sitting in our large DPW trucks, and then we threw them all in jail.

On April 27th, we had our Blue Star memorial, which was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who came, Michele from our Rec department and former Mayor Howard Burrell, for initiating this memorial and joining us. Also, thank you to our DPW for getting the park ready for that special day when we honored the men and women of our armed services. I had the privilege to celebrate so many of our employees who also served, and some of them still serve. Thank you.

Oh, on April 25th, we had the re-grand opening of Hefs Hut. They have invested a lot of money in the interior and also redesigned their entire menu, which has been really good.

On April 28th, the grand opening of the Black Comb Barber Shop in Highland Lakes was opened. Cathy the owner has been cutting my hair for years and she also does facial shaving which is something you don't see very often these days. So, I wish her the best of luck.

On May 5th, we had our Annual 5k run, which benefits local families in need. This year, the money will benefit Darius Michael Ziabakhsh. Darius is a 6th grader at Glen Meadow who has gone through 12 major life-threatening surgeries in his life so far. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend this event, but if you would like to donate, please contact the PAL.

On May 8th, we finally broke ground for the 55-unit building for those 55 and older. This type of development is exactly what Vernon needed, not only for the tax ratable but also for the much-needed sewer EDUs. So many people would like to stay in Vernon after they retire without having to worry about trying to maintain their property. This is going to be a beautiful building. It has been a pleasure to work with the developers, and I look forward to working with them in the future. One Key has told me that this building should be done within 18 months. They are working on their website, so you can register to secure one of these units. I will post the website once it is completed. These developers will also be the ones to build out our main st, so we will have a DOWNTOWN.

Also note that Planet network is now accepting customers in Highland lakes and soon in Barry Lakes for high-speed internet via fiber. I know WVT is investing in our town as well, but I have not heard from them on their progress.

As you can see, Vernon is no longer sitting still. We are moving forward. We are all fired up here in Vernon, and we are very excited to see so many people looking to invest in Vernon and the feedback on our new business-friendly initiative, which is really our new mindset attitude and willingness to work with investors on top of having a business coordinator who can provide assistance when in need has been overwhelmingly positive. This has even sparked the surrounding towns to start asking about what's going on in Vernon. Last week, I was on the radio station#, and they were pretty excited to hear that Vernon has a whole new mindset on how we are doing things.

Another hot topic is Legends; I have said it from the beginning when I first told you that it sold. I have some updates for you. I have the actual purchaser agreement in my hand, which is both signed by the buyer and seller. I have set up a meeting in my office with the new owner and our attorney to talk about the sale. Our attorney has since contacted the buyer's attorney, who has confirmed that the sale was legal. I have also said that this deal will take some time to fully complete because there are over 600 tax lien titles they must clean up. The new owner has hired a title company who will be working on cleaning these up, and the big question is when we get our money and what it will be. Well, I can tell you that the ETA for when Vernon will receive its money will be the end of July. The other question is, what will Legends become? Unfortunately, the buyer wants a joint press release by the end of June. He will also discuss the 3 phases of construction and some other events.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (For Current Agenda Items Only, Limited to 3 Minutes Per Person)

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

MOVED: Buccieri

SECOND: DeBenedetto

All members were in favor.

Scott Cassell – expressed concern with not having hybrid Council meetings. Mr. Cassell feels that people should not be forced to pay to connect to the sewer.

Ann Larsen – expressed concern that people would be forced to pay to connect to the sewer.

Jessi Paladini – questioned the procedure for potentially live streaming meetings.

Seeing no other members from the public wishing to come forward, President Rizzuto asked for a motion to close the meeting to Public Comments.

MOVED: Higgins

SECOND: Sparta

All members were in favor.

REVIEW OF BILLS LIST

The Council reviewed the bills list.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 22, 2024 – Regular Meeting

President Rizzuto asked for a motion to approve the April 22, 2024 regular meeting minutes.

MOVED: Sparta
SECOND: DeBenedetto

A roll call vote was taken:
AYES: DeBenedetto, Higgins, Sparta, Rizzuto
NAYES:
ABSTAIN: Buccieri
ABSENT:

Motion carries to approve the April 22, 2024 regular meeting minutes.

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution #24-142: A Resolution Approving Participation with the State of New Jersey Federal Grant Program Administered by the New Jersey Department of Law & Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General

Resolution #24-143: Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Shared Services Agreement Between the Township of Vernon and the Vernon Township School District

Resolution #24-144: Approving a Charitable Solicitor’s Permit: Vernon Township Fire Department

Resolution #24-145: A Resolution of the Township of Vernon Requesting that First Energy Rapidly Increase Internal Funding for JCP&L to Quickly Rectify Long Delayed, Yet Necessary, Modernization Upgrades to Its Electrical Distribution Grid

Resolution #24-146: Approving a Charitable Solicitor’s Permit: Pochuck Valley Fire Department Inc.

Resolution #24-147: Authorize the Award of a Professional Services Contract with Chris L Mikolajczyk, CLM, of Princeton Hydro, LLC for Lake/Watershed Management Plan Phase II in a Required Disclosure Manner

President Rizzuto asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

MOVED: Buccieri
SECOND: DeBenedetto

A roll call vote was taken:
AYES: Buccieri, DeBenedetto, Higgins, Sparta, Rizzuto
NAYES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

Motion carries to approve the Consent Agenda.

RESOLUTION #24-142

A RESOLUTION APPROVING PARTICIPATION WITH THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY, OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon Police Department wishes to apply for funding of approximately \$45,150 with a match of \$128,368.14 in salary and fringe benefits for an approximate

project total cost of \$173,518.14 for a project under the State of New Jersey Safe and Secure Grant Program, Subaward Period: 2/7/24-2/6/25, Grant #24-1922; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the Township of Vernon has reviewed the accompanying application and has approved said request; and

WHEREAS, the project is a joint effort between the Department of Law and Public Safety and the Vernon Township Police Department for the purpose described in the application.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey that

1. As a matter of public policy the Vernon Township Police Department wishes to participate to the fullest extent possible with the Department of Law and Public Safety.
2. The Attorney General will receive funds on behalf of the applicant.
3. The New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General shall be responsible for the receipt and review of the applications for said funds.
4. The New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General shall initiate allocations to each applicant as authorized.
5. The Subrecipient's Unit of Government/Non-Profit Organization is "authorized to accept" and/or "does accept" the Subaward.

RESOLUTION #24-143

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF VERNON AND THE VERNON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon ("Township") and the Vernon Township Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") have determined that it is in their best interests to enter into a Shared Service Agreement for "Outdoor Services"; and

WHEREAS, such Outdoor Services would include, but not be limited to: groundskeeping; repair of paved areas such as parking lots and curbs, but excluding roads; snow removal; limited plumbing and electrical work and any other maintenance as needed; and

WHEREAS, both the Board and the Township have reviewed the advantages of sharing services and agree that such an arrangement would result in a mutual benefit to the Board and the Township; and

WHEREAS, such agreements are authorized pursuant to the Uniform Shared Services Consolidation Act, N.J.S.A. 40A:65-1 et. seq.; and

WHEREAS, a shared services agreement has been negotiated by and between the parties and which establishes the terms and conditions thereof.

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

1. The Mayor and City Clerk are authorized to execute the attached shared services agreement between the Township of Vernon and the Vernon Township School District to provide "Outdoor Services" as specified in Agreement.
2. A copy of said agreement will be attached to this resolution and held on file in the Office of the Municipal Clerk.
3. A certified copy this resolution shall be forwarded to the Vernon Township School District.

RESOLUTION #24-144

**APPROVING A CHARITABLE SOLICITOR'S PERMIT: VERNON TOWNSHIP
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

WHEREAS, Vernon Township Fire Department, has made application for a Charitable Roadside Solicitor's Permit for the purposes of soliciting funds on July 6-7, 2024 8 am to 4 pm, on Route 94; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Ordinance 18-12, the Vernon Township Police Department has reviewed the necessary application found that all documentation is in order.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Vernon that approval be granted for a Charitable Roadside Solicitor's Permit for Vernon Township Fire Department, P.O. Box 461 Vernon, NJ 07462, has made application for a Charitable Roadside Solicitor's Permit for the purposes of soliciting funds on July 6-7, 2024 8 am to 4 pm, on Route 94; subject to the approval of the County of Sussex and State of New Jersey as needed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Clerk is hereby authorized to issue a Charitable Roadside Solicitor's Permit to the aforesaid applicant in accordance with Chapter 428 of the Code of the Township of Vernon upon receipt of the approval from the County of Sussex.

RESOLUTION #24-145

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERNON REQUESTING THAT FIRST ENERGY RAPIDLY INCREASE INTERNAL FUNDING FOR JCP&L TO QUICKLY RECTIFY LONG DELAYED, YET NECESSARY, MODERNIZATION UPGRADES TO ITS ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTION GRID

WHEREAS, the delivery of electrical power through a reliable, resilient and modern electrical distribution grid to deliver electrical power is a vital need for Vernon Township residents and businesses, and;

WHEREAS, First Energy, through its subsidiary Jersey Central Power & Light (JCP&L) was granted a monopoly to serve the public by providing this service, and;

WHEREAS, Vernon Township has experienced excessive outages over the past years from pests, storm damage and infrastructure failures at JCP&L, and;

WHEREAS, JCP&L distributes critically needed electricity to Vernon Township through an old distribution grid badly in need of updating, and;

WHEREAS, JCP&L continually presents that long delayed and neglected tree maintenance is its source of problems without the same focus and priority on failing to continually upgrade ancient infrastructure, and;

WHEREAS, JCP&L's parent company, First Energy, had experienced financial hardship through large, unfortunate coal and nuclear power investments that have nothing to do with Vernon Township's service need and why First Energy holds its monopoly to serve the Vernon Township public, and;

WHEREAS, even when these expensive coal and nuclear production divisions were put into a bankruptcy process, First Energy still found ways to provide a robust dividend to shareholders at the expense of modernizing its JCP&L grid for Vernon Township ratepayers, and;

WHEREAS, updating JCP&L's grid would bring badly needed command, control and communication capability for JCP&L management to end repair crew confusion, bring added grid safety, and improve JCP&L's timely and effective response to power upsets, and;

WHEREAS, these added capabilities would provide JCP&L's customers faster, more accurate communication during critical times of power loss, and;

WHEREAS, the long-delayed addition of sensors, automated switchgear and fuse reclosers to JCP&L's distribution grid would allow JCP&L to quickly isolate faults and immediately re-route and re-establish power to many affected customers while also beneficially lowering JCP&L's repair crew workload, and **WHEREAS**, JCP&L conflated before Vernon Township's Mayor and Township Council the terms of a ratepayer special, additional "charge" and an "investment";

WHEREAS, First Energy has deprived Vernon Township residents, for decades, of this smarter grid the likes of which can be found elsewhere and throughout the United States.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Vernon Township's Mayor and Township Council requests that First Energy rapidly increase its **internal** funding for JCP&L to quickly rectify long delayed, yet necessary, modernization upgrades to the electrical distribution grid before asking anew for special ratepayer charges;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the copies of this resolution will be distributed to all Sussex County Clerks, Governing Bodies, Commissioners, BPU, JCP&L, Ratepayer Advocate, District Assembly and State Representatives.

RESOLUTION #24-146

APPROVING A CHARITABLE SOLICITOR'S PERMIT: POCHUCK VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT INC.

WHEREAS, Pochuck Valley Fire Department Inc., has made application for a Charitable Roadside Solicitor's Permit for the purposes of soliciting funds on May 25, 2024, July 6, 2024 and August 31, 2024 8 am to 5 pm, on Route 565 and Route 667; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Ordinance 18-12, the Vernon Township Police Department has reviewed the necessary application found that all documentation is in order.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Vernon that approval be granted for a Charitable Roadside Solicitor's Permit for Pochuck Valley Fire Department Inc., 13 Lake Walkkill Road, Sussex, NJ 07461, has made application for a Charitable Roadside Solicitor's Permit for the purposes of soliciting funds on May 25, 2024, July 6, 2024 and August 31, 2024 8 am to 5 pm; subject to the approval of the County of Sussex and State of New Jersey as needed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Clerk is hereby authorized to issue a Charitable Roadside Solicitor's Permit to the aforesaid applicant in accordance with Chapter 428 of the Code of the Township of Vernon upon receipt of the approval from the County of Sussex.

RESOLUTION #24-147

AUTHORIZE THE AWARD OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT WITH CHRIS L MIKOLAJCZYK, CLM, OF PRINCETON HYDRO, LLC FOR LAKE/WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN PHASE II IN A REQUIRED DISCLOSURE MANNER

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon has a need for development and completion of a Lake/Watershed Management Plan Phase II, in accord with Highlands Council grant requirements; and

WHEREAS, per Resolution# 22-235, the Township authorized Chris L. Mikolajczyk, CLM, from Princeton Hydro, LLC to prepare and submit a Scope of Work for Watershed Management Plan to the Highlands Council which was completed and approved; and

WHEREAS it is the desire of the Township of Vernon to award a contract for said purpose with Chris L. Mikolajczyk, CLM, Senior Project Manager, for Princeton Hydro, LLC, who qualifies as a professional service; and

WHEREAS, the procurement of professional services without public bidding is permitted under the New Jersey Local Public Contracts Law at N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5a; and

WHEREAS, the amount of said contract will not exceed \$202,000.00 and will be fully reimbursed by Highland Council per Plan Conformance Grant #09-033-011-1002 upon completion.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Township of Vernon authorizes the Mayor to enter into a contract with Chris L. Mikolajczyk, CLM, Senior Project Manager, for Princeton Hydro, for the cost of \$202,000.00, for the development and completion of a Lake /Watershed Management Plan Phase II in accord with Highlands Council grant requirements;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the award of contract shall be contingent upon the completion and receipt of the following:

- (a) A fully-executed professional services contract detailing the scope of services, established fees for said professional services, mandatory Equal Opportunity Language and Affirmative Action Certificate; and
- (b) Receipt of all statutorily mandated “pay to play” political contribution forms pursuant to N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq.; and
- (c) New Jersey Business Registration Certificate; and

Upon the aforementioned professional being a member in good standing in his respective profession.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #24-141: Calling for the Modernization of the Open Public Records Act (OPRA) and the Swift Passage of S-2930/A-4045

Council President Rizzuto asked for a motion to approve resolution #24-141

MOVED: Sparta

SECOND: Higgins

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Buccieri, DeBenedetto, Sparta, Rizzuto

NAYES: Higgins

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Motion carries to approve resolution #24-141.

RESOLUTION #24-141

CALLING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT (OPRA) AND THE SWIFT PASSAGE OF S-2930/A-4045

WHEREAS, in the 2002 “lame duck” session the Open Public Records Act (OPRA) was approved to make government records, “readily accessible for inspection, copying, or examination by the citizens of this State, with certain exceptions, for the protection of the public interest” while protecting “a citizen’s right to a reasonable expectation of privacy”; and

WHEREAS, as local leaders we reaffirm our support and commitment to open and transparent government and public access to records, at the same time, we strongly support necessary reforms; and

WHEREAS, in the twenty years since the enactment of OPRA and with the advent of new technologies, we have witnessed unintended consequences and, in some cases, abuses of OPRA that place an unfair burden on local governments and taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, municipal staff and budgets are increasingly utilized to accommodate the requestors and commercial entities who inundate municipalities with public records requests to the extent that in some instances, additional personnel are hired primarily to handle such requests; and

WHEREAS, OPRA has become broadly construed in favor of access and the requestor who prevails in any proceeding in appealing a denial of access of records is permitted to collect exorbitant attorney's fees, which impacts the taxpayers and municipalities who must pay these fees; and

WHEREAS, municipalities have seen outside businesses and interests who abuse OPRA for marketing and commercial gains while utilizing municipal employees paid by the taxpayers for this benefit; and

WHEREAS, due to court decisions over the years, reasonable expectations of privacy have been diminished when it comes to the balance of transparency and OPRA perpetuates for-profit data-mining, unsolicited marketing, and uncontrolled publications of records on internet search engines specifically designed to circumvent and bypass what few protective measures currently exist under OPRA, all while allowing the requestor to remain cloaked in anonymity, should they choose to exercise that option; and

WHEREAS, when commercial entities are constantly emailing OPRA requests looking for the latest lists of dogs licensed that month, inground pool permits issued, solar roof permits issued, etc., it causes our residents to not want to license their dogs, comply with permits, or interact with the municipality because they don't want to lose their privacy and/or have their information tracked and monetized for commercial purposes; and

WHEREAS, reforms to modernize OPRA are long overdue, among them: the need to address requests by commercial entities that utilize public records and the services of local government employees to generate profits, mandatory prevailing attorney fees, which created a cottage industry, and to add language so that such fees are based on facts and circumstances and not an automatic granting; and

WHEREAS, Senators Sarlo and Bucco and Assemblyman Danielsen and Assemblywoman Flynn have introduced S-2930/A-4045, which makes commonsense reforms that do not hinder residents or journalists from using OPRA to access public records, but will protect citizens' personal information from disclosure, addresses the burdensome commercial requests and provide discretion when awarding prevailing attorney fees;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the governing body of the Township of Vernon in the County of Sussex respectfully request the adoption of much-needed reforms to modernize and strengthen the legislative intent of the Open Public Records Act (OPRA) and urges the swift passage of S-2930/A-4045; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, as local leaders, we reaffirm our support and commitment to open and transparent government and public access to records but at the same time, we strongly support necessary reforms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Senate President Scutari, Assembly Speaker Coughlin, Senator Parker Space, Assemblyman Michael Inganamort, Assemblywomen Dawn Fantasia, Governor Murphy, and the New Jersey League of Municipalities.

Resolution #24-148: Self-Examination of the 2024 Budget Resolution (as required by DCA)

Council President Rizzuto asked for a motion to approve resolution #24-148

MOVED: Buccieri

SECOND: DeBenedetto

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Buccieri, DeBenedetto, Higgins, Sparta, Rizzuto

NAYES:

ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

Motion carries to approve resolution #24-148.

RESOLUTION #24-148

SELF-EXAMINATION OF 2024 BUDGET RESOLUTION *[as required by DCA]*

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-78b has authorized the Local Finance Board to adopt rules that permit municipalities in sound fiscal condition to assume the responsibility, normally granted to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services, of conducting the annual budget examination; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 5:30-7 was adopted by the Local Finance Board on February 11, 1997; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.2 through 7.5, the Township of Vernon has been declared eligible to participate in the program by the Division of Local Government Services, and the Chief Financial Officer has determined that the local government meets the necessary conditions to participate in the program for the 2023 budget year.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body of the Township of Vernon that in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.6a & 7.6b and based upon the Chief Financial Officer's certification, the governing body has found the budget has met the following requirements:

1. That with reference to the following items, the amounts have been calculated pursuant to law and appropriated as such in the budget:
 - a. Payment of interest and debt redemption charges
 - b. Deferred charges and statutory expenditures
 - c. Cash deficit of preceding year
 - d. Reserve for uncollected taxes
 - e. Other reserves and non-disbursement items
 - f. Any inclusions of amounts required for school purposes.
2. That the provisions relating to limitation on increases of appropriations pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.2 and appropriations for exceptions to limits on appropriations found at N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.3 et seq., are fully met (complies with CAP law).
3. That the budget is in such form, arrangement, and content as required by the Local Budget Law and N.J.A.C. 5:30-4 and 5:30-5.
4. That pursuant to the Local Budget Law:
 - a. All estimates of revenue are reasonable, accurate and correctly stated,
 - b. Items of appropriation are properly set forth
 - c. In itemization, form, arrangement and content, the budget will permit the exercise of the comptroller function within the municipality.
5. The budget and associated amendments have been introduced and publicly advertised in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Local Budget Law, except that failure to meet the deadlines of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-5 shall not prevent such certification.
6. That all other applicable statutory requirements have been fulfilled.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution will be forwarded to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services upon adoption.

2024 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

CFO Donelle Bright gave a Power Point presentation of the 2024 municipal budget.

PUBLIC HEARING 2024 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Council Member Buccieri made a motion to open the floor for the public hearing of the 2024 municipal budget. Seconded by Council Member Sparta.

All members were in favor.

Steve Dunlop – expressed concern with capital items in the 2024 municipal budget. Mr. Dunlop questioned certain lines in the budget.

Jessi Paladini – expressed concern with items in the 2024 municipal budget.

John Skol – commented that the Council is doing a good job.

Peg Distasi – expressed concern with the process of the budget.

Seeing no other members from the public wishing to come forward, President Rizzuto asked for a motion to close the public hearing for the 2024 municipal budget.

MOVED: Sparta

SECOND: DeBenedetto

All members were in favor.

Council Member Buccieri made a motion to amend Sheet 12 of the introduced 2024 municipal budget - Mayor and Council salaries and wages 20-110 from \$67,500.00 to \$45,000.00 reducing the line item by \$22,500.00.

Seconded by Council Member Sparta.

Council Member Buccieri made a motion to amend Sheet 28 of the introduced 2024 municipal budget - (N) Transferred to Board of Education for Use of Local Schools 29-405 from \$50,000 to \$00.00 reducing the line item to \$00.00

Seconded by Council Member Sparta.

Council Member Buccieri made a motion to amend her motion to amend the introduced 2024 municipal budget to include a decrease in using funds from the sale of property by \$72,500.00.

Seconded by Council Member Sparta.

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Buccieri, DeBenedetto, Higgins, Sparta, Rizzuto

NAYES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Motion carries to amend Sheet 12 of the 2024 municipal budget - Mayor and Council salaries and wages 20-110 from \$67,500.00 to \$45,000.00 reducing the line item by \$22,500.00.

To amend Sheet 28 of the 2024 municipal budget - (N) Transferred to Board of Education for Use of Local Schools 29-405 from \$50,000 to \$00.00 reducing the line item to \$00.00.

And also, to amend Council Member Buccieri's motion to amend the introduced 2024 municipal budget to include a decrease in using funds from the sale of property by \$72,500.00.

Council President Rizzuto asked for a motion to carry final action on the 2024 municipal budget to the May 30, 2024 Township Council meeting.

MOVED: Buccieri

SECOND: Higgins

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Buccieri, DeBenedetto, Higgins, Sparta, Rizzuto

NAYES:

ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

Motion carries to carry final action on the 2024 municipal budget to the May 30, 2024 Township Council meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limited to 5 Minutes Per Person)

MOVED: Buccieri
SECOND: DeBenedetto

All members were in favor.

Jessi Paladini – commented on Council President Rizzuto’s statement about comments that were made by members of the public regarding issues that were not germane to any issues on the agenda or related to township business.

Seeing no other members of the public wishing to speak, President Rizzuto asked for a motion to close the meeting for Public Comments.

MOVED: Sparta
SECOND: Higgins

All members were in favor.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Higgins feels that there were constraints on spending and he is happy with the zero percent increase in the municipal budget.

Council Member DeBenedetto had no comments.

Council Member Sparta asked if it the Council could get a review of the snow removal using contractors as opposed to billing the communities.

Council Member Buccieri had no comments.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT COMMENTS

Council President Rizzuto had no comments.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:22 pm Council Member Sparta made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Council Member Higgins.

All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcy Gianattasio, RMC, CMR
Municipal Clerk

Patrick Rizzuto
Council President

Minutes approved: May 30, 2024