

**Township of Vernon**

**TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING MINTUES**

**May 30, 2019**

The Regular Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was convened at 6:00 p.m. on May 30, 2019 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 had been provided to the public and the press on January 3, 2019 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**

Present were Council Members Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger and Council President Murphy, Mayor Harry Shortway, and Township Attorney Josh Zielinski. Council Member Ooms was absent.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Attorney Zielinski read the Resolution for the Council to enter Executive Session.

**RESOLUTION TO GO INTO 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. Litigation
  - b. Property Acquisition/Sale
3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to go into Executive Session at 6:03 p.m.

MOVED: Jean Murphy  
SECOND: John Auberger  
All members of the Council were in favor.

Motion carried to enter Executive Session.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to close the Executive Session at 7:00 p.m. and reconvene the Regular Meeting.

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Jean Murphy  
All members of the Council were in favor.

The Regular Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was convened at 7:00 p.m. on May 30, 2019 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 had been provided to the public and the press on January 3, 2019 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**

Present were Council Members Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger and Council President Murphy, Mayor Harry Shortway, CFO Donelle Bright DeCouto and Township Attorney Josh Zielinski. Council Member Ooms was absent.

## **SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

Council President Murphy led the assemblage in the salute of the flag.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### Recreation Board Presentation

Recreation Supervisor Mishelle Downtain and Recreation Board Chairperson Denise Urbaniak came forward to present an annual report of the Recreational Services and Events that Vernon Township provides. Ms. Urbaniak explained the goal of the Recreation Board is to promote the assets of Vernon with unique recreation to create a better community providing events at low or no cost for all ages of residents. She added the Recreation Board works with other volunteer organizations and welcomes the general public to provide input into services. Ms. Urbaniak summarized events from the previous year through a PowerPoint presentation.

- 1) 5 K Snowshoe – Mountain Creek generously provides location, manpower, lift tickets and snow patrol for event and noted number of attendees increases every year.
- 2) Earthfest – Recreation Board participates by offering arts & crafts to residents using only recycled materials.
- 3) Pavement to Pinwheel – new six week hiking program in 2019 showcasing six trails being progressively difficult
- 4) Couch to 5K Program – very successful program teaching individuals to train running in a 5K and give proceeds to a valuable local cause.
- 5) Memorial Day – Board volunteers to hand out flags to spectators of the annual parade
- 6) Vernon Day – Board volunteers offer the many vendors assistance the entire day setting up, during the event as well as cleaning up for the community to enjoy
- 7) Trails of Vernon Challenge – fourth year of running this program challenging the public to experience all the trails that Vernon has to offer.
- 8) Sidewalk Art Show – program for all ages of residents designing Art on walkways at Maple Grange Park and showcase for Artists to display their original work.
- 9) Movie Nights – plan to have three this summer at Maple Grange Park
- 10) Trunk or Treat – after many years, event has been so successful and grown too large to hold at Maple Grange Park, so event was moved to the High School.
- 11) Sussex County Day – Recreation Supervisor creates display board showcasing the many assets of Vernon
- 12) Turkey Trot – 5K held at Maple Grange Park on Thanksgiving morning which has grown tremendously over the last few years
- 13) Holiday Tree Lighting – 2018 theme was ‘Whoville’ and was a huge success with many dressing up for the occasion bringing the community together.

Ms. Urbaniak ended her presentation by adding that the Board is considering adding programs such as a trip to a Broadway show, a Butterfly Release Day and ‘Hike-Bike-Kite Day.

### Little League

Mr. Greg Carter on behalf of Vernon Little League came forward and thanked Mishelle Downtain and the Recreation Board to coordinate for the use of the Maple Grange Complex this year to prevent a major loss of games. Mr. Carter added the League runs fundraisers for funds to maintain fencing, pitcher’s mounds and bases which is also used by the High schools and softball teams. Mr. Carter explained the reasons why the Council needs to approve the repairs to Maple Grange as many sports organizations rely on the recreational facilities and residents view it as a valuable asset for all ages of the community especially the youth. As parents, coaches or volunteers, the main goal is to provide opportunities for kids through sports and Vernon needs to repair the existing assets that need attention.

Mr. Carter stated that Little League had 269 players registered this year on 34 teams in 8 divisions for a total of 408 games between March and June. He added that the senior division won their state tournament in 2018 with honor to host in 2019 bringing many visitors to Vernon, but was unable due

to lack of lighting, drainage issues and weather conditions. Mr. Carter explained the Vernon baseball fields include Bell, Senior and Snack Bar all at Veterans Park on the Crossing. Little League has made a five-year plan for repairs including infield clay, grass repair, safety netting, pitcher's mounds, lighting, bleachers, electricity services and dugout repairs. He stated the field lighting was only installed on two of the fields and was designed for football. Safety netting needs to be addressed to prevent foul balls from accessing the county roadway. Mr. Carter summarized by thanking the Council for their support in moving forward with these much needed repairs but also requests support for the replacement of the Maple Grange complex.

Council President Murphy requested a prioritized list of repairs. Mr. Carter explained difficulty in priority as all fields need clay to improve the drainage at \$6,000 each, the pitcher mounds are needed to play, lighting and netting are required to alleviate safety concerns. He added due to the current condition of the snack bar, the League has planned to rebuild it to increase fundraising abilities as well as looking for outside corporate and private sponsorships. Council President Murphy noted the Council removed the lighting upgrades, \$627,000, as well as the Band Shell, \$100,000, from the budget until major concerns of Mountain Creek litigation is settled for the overall survival of the town. She added tax increases from the town, County and schools are over \$300 this year on home assessed at \$215,000 and may be worse in 2020 and is concerned for residents.

Council President Murphy questioned if money was allocated into Recreation budget for clay for Baseball fields. Ms. Bright stated it was not specifically allocated in the budget. Council President Murphy questioned if funds from the Finance budget for a part-time position can be moved to Recreation to be earmarked for clay for the Baseball fields and noted her objection to hiring any more employees. The Township Auditor indicated this could be done through an amendment.

Council President Murphy made a motion to amend the budget to reallocate \$15,000 from the Finance Salary budget and move to the Recreation Capital Fund earmarked for ballfields.

MOVED: Jean Murphy  
SECOND: John Auberger

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy  
NAYES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Sandra Ooms

Motion carried to amend the budget to move \$15,000 from finance salaries to the recreation capital fund.

Mr. Carter stated an architect is working on plans for a snack bar, and that local landscapers have donated services for landscaping. Mr. Carter noted that DPW is handling minor fencing repairs and advertising banners are being offered for fundraising. Council Member Curreri expressed concern of liability if netting is not secure by roadway. Mr. Carter explained netting repairs are ongoing and goal is to add to 2020 budget is possible.

### **PROCLAMATION**

Council President Murphy noted that Council Member Dan Kadish had been made the Vernon Township Senior of the Year at the Senior Luncheon and read their proclamation.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Current Agenda Items Only)**

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

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel  
All members voted in favor.

Jennifer Hamilton, Vernon Youth Soccer Board Member, came forward on behalf of all sports groups, Football, Soccer, Lacrosse, Softball & Baseball who utilize Maple Grange fields and noted the many benefits of turf fields. She explained turf is readily available and suitable at any time and is safe place for practice, training and games. Visitors are in awe of the facility that Vernon Township offers, and Vernon groups or residents are proud and appreciate what we have in Maple Grange Park. Ms. Hamilton explained people present supporting the replacement of the turf fields are not interested in

politics, social media, and back-door discussions which seem to surround every issue that Vernon deals with. She added parents, coaches, volunteers spend countless hours with Board Members discussing how to improve programs to provide more facilities, time, equipment, training and games for less money, less burden and less aggravation.

Ms. Hamilton explained Vernon's population is changing and it is imperative to make Vernon a desirable location to raise a family, be an active member of the community and Maple Grange is the major factor for organized sports for children. She questioned how it is acceptable that the fields will be taped off to fall into further disarray similar to the abandoned Camp Sussex and urged all taxpayers to get involved and vote. Ms. Hamilton asked for the Bond for the replacement of the fields at Maple Grange be introduced and approved so the children of Vernon have a safe place to play organized sports.

Rick Devota, Highland Lakes, stated he has been involved with Vernon Girls Lacrosse for 10 years but noted the 2019 season almost did not happen. He noted that the two turf fields have outlived their life span and it is not sensible to lay blame. Mr. Devota thanked Mayor Shortway and Recreation Supervisor Ms. Downtain who reworked the field schedules of all the sports groups to give them the opportunity to compete and complete their 2019 seasons.

Mr. Devota explained Maple Grange includes not just fields for games but a park for people to socialize, be active, experience nature on any given day or night of any season. The fields are a proud display to all visitors, providing a sense of community and not maintaining them would be a huge loss for Vernon. Mr. Devota noted he rarely uses social media, but comments seen show not one good argument why the fields should not be replaced. He added that some public members don't use the park so they shouldn't need to support it, but that reasoning many wouldn't support the senior center or the schools but do to provide the needed services of the whole community. Mr. Devota stated that those present tonight may not be the loudest voices who are constantly at meetings, but we are a large representation of the community voters who rely on the fields and urge Council to replace the fields.

Bret Leuthner, Radio and TV announcer for Sussex County Miners and ten year resident of Vernon stated he proudly supports all Vernon sports programs. Mr. Lussner stated many Vernon teams proudly attend the Miners games and he is proud to be a Vernon resident providing support to the recreation programs to improve the fields.

Paul Negrin, Vernon Business owner, stated he has been involved in Little League for ten years and noted the importance of recreational sports in Vernon Township. He added that many residents and visitors support our local businesses for food, hoodies, and as taxpayers urged Township Council to reconsider the importance of Maple Grange fields and approve their replacement.

Zoe Heath, [REDACTED] stated that while she never played on the fields, she sees the value of children in our community. She stated it would be detrimental to close the fields as Vernon could not be a town without children staying here with their families. Ms. Heath urged the Council to keep the fields open no matter what our financial situation.

Marty Puzio, 30 year resident of Highland Lakes, stated he has three grown children and attended many practices, games in Vernon and noted the excitement when the Maple Grange Complex was built. Mr. Puzio explained he would gladly pay the extra needed for the replacement because of the importance it means to the children of this community.

Heather Labance read a letter written by daughter Madeline (Maddie) Labance who could not attend to support the fields due to attending the senior prom and will be attending college in the fall on a Division 1 Soccer scholarship. Madeline Labance is honored to advocate this important cause as she has played soccer her entire life on Vernon teams. Vernon youth travel team 'Blue Lightning' gave Madeline the opportunity to grow exponentially as a player. The turf field was a consistent, even, and fast surface to easily develop one's skills as grass is slow, vulnerable to weather conditions and costly to safely maintain. Madeline recognizes the importance and value of this facility as a breathing heart of a great town which creates a bridge between young children and high schoolers.

Toni Cilli, as a Vernon parent whose older children did not get the benefit of playing at Maple Grange, stated she does not understand why the need to get votes to maintain it is an issue. Ms. Cilli addressed Council President Murphy as a Realtor and explained the importance of spending money to make money and the advantage of the park raises Vernon property values. She opined if Council cannot see the importance to approve the fields for Vernon Township, they do not belong in office in November.

Cara Davies stated she had the privilege of playing on Maple Grange fields from third to eight grades playing softball, soccer and lacrosse and how they made a dramatic change in her life. She added the fields provided a place to socialize outside of school, play as a team, and relax and asked the Township to continue to provide this opportunity and privilege to all children.

Kaylin White read a letter from her sister Brianna White who could not attend meeting. Brianna wrote that she began her lacrosse career in fifth grade at Maple Grange Park and is now attending University in Pennsylvania playing Division 2 Lacrosse. Brianna spent countless hours in practices and games with amazing teammates and coaches creating friendships and memories at Maple Grange; the park was a catalyst in becoming young adults. After suffering a traumatic injury hindering her career, the support of her team and coach motivated her to continue to work hard and Maple Grange and Vernon provided the opportunity. Brianna, as well as many alumni, return to Maple Grange frequently to use the fields and urged Council to consider the children and help take part in their futures.

Amanda Waters, 11 year old, expressed her love of Maple Grange Park as a year round athlete and mentioned she could not imagine if Vernon did not have fields at Maple Grange.

Cora Brennan and Sammy Coolik, as players on the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Vernon Lacrosse team, teammates are always encouraged to try our best, play hard, play as a team and care for others on and off the field. They noted it would be very upsetting to lose the Maple Grange Fields.

Harry Shortway as business owner and taxpayer stated he has coached for 40 years on dirt, grass and is aware of the severity of concussions and safety considerations for athletes. He noted that turf fields see ten times more use than natural grass and even though population in Vernon has decreased, sports programs keep increasing. He added report from the Concussion Legacy Foundation show link between head injuries and poorly maintained fields which degrade with more use

Mr. Shortway noted that Vernon fields received \$61,000 in rental fees in last five years of which Mad Dawg Lacrosse (MDL), he and wife's business, paid \$39,000. Players of MDL include many non-residents who frequently patronize our local shops but unfortunately the 2019 summer season had to be moved out of town, causing local businesses to be hurt. Mr. Shortway expressed his support to raise the rental fees to raise the funds needed to replace the turf fields. He added the Township Council should approve a Short Term Rental Ordinance to raise funds of which a percentage could be used for recreational tourism to put towards maintenance of Township assets.

Mr. Shortway proclaimed that Maple Grange Park is not just a recreation area, but a Field of Dreams and athletic success can open many doors. He added that parents of Vernon alumni informed former Coach Shortway of son's collegiate academic progress as Company Commander of Massachusetts Maritime, Dean's List with Post Season Honors and named 2020 Men's Lacrosse Team Captain. Mr. Shortway urged the Council to go the distance and rebuild the Field of Dreams for the future success of our athletes.

Seeing no more members of the public wishing to come forward, Council President Murphy asked for a motion to close the meeting to Public Comments.

MOVED: Patrick Curreri

SECOND: John Auberger

All members voted in favor.

Council President Murphy stated her appreciation of the importance of the fields as her daughter participated on a Lacrosse Team. She noted she voted no on the budget to challenge administration to balance the many needs of the Township including fire departments, sports fields, road repairs but has yet to receive the Fire Department plans.

Secondly, Council President Murphy noted that should the turf field be replaced this year at cost of \$800,000, the Township should create a plan for the next replacement in ten years possibly by revising the rental fee ordinance. The rental fees trust account has \$80,000 which will be used as a down payment to the field replacement should the bond ordinance be approved.

Public: Where was the plan back then and why do we need one now to proceed?

Council President Murphy stated that although the Mountain Creek Bankruptcy may soon be settled, Vernon is required to meet the obligations of the 2004 sewer agreement in the meantime.

Public: There were bad decisions made by past Councils and politics which now will affect our kids having sports next year. Council has been discussing these fields for a year, it should have been done.

Council President Murphy requested any questions be addressed to Administration.

Council Member Auberger stated it is a fact that prior administrations may have used funds on items not specified, but Vernon needs to have plans to put funds in place and set aside for future purchases. He added there are openings for Mayor and two seats of the Governing Body, and we need concerned citizens not politicians to make changes happen. Council Member Auberger explained the need to balance our debt from prior councils and stick with plans made for future purchases.

Council President Murphy explained the decision is not about saying no to the fields, it is about being responsible and conscious of all residents including seniors who are on a fixed income and can't afford any increases.

Public: If closing the fields is responsible, there is nowhere to go.

Council President Murphy explained at the last meeting, documentation provided stated fields passed due to repairs done, then subsequent documentation from Township Risk Manager was provided with concerns. She noted all facts must be received before a decision can be made for such a large expenditure which will have to be brought up again in 2028.

Public: Why did the Council wait this long to ask for a Plan when they were aware of this situation years before?

Council President Murphy stated plans are handled by the Administration and explained that three votes are needed for the Introduction of the Ordinance to move forward and the second reading would be voted on June 24<sup>th</sup>.

Public: What is the cost per house for the fields?

Ms. Bright stated she could answer that question. It would be \$18.69 per house per year.

Council President Murphy noted the cost will be that amount as long as the Township does not change to permanent financing and suggested public to attend a Board of Education Meeting to help keep our taxes down.

Public: I will pay that amount as well as my neighbors to pay for the fields.

Council President Murphy stated the park will not close if we do not replace it and explained many items are needed but if the Fire Department plan is received by the June 24 meeting, she agreed to vote for the Bond Ordinance.

Public: We are waiting for you, the Council, to form the plan.

## **MINUTES**

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to approve the Executive Session Minutes of April 22, 2019, the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2019 and the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2019.

MOVED: John Auberger

SECOND: Jean Murphy

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: Mark Van Tassel (abstained from May 13, 2019 only)

ABSENT: Sandra Ooms

Motion carried to approve the Executive Session Minutes of April 22, 2019, the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2019 and the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2019.

Council President Murphy stated that the Items for Discussion will be moved to the end of the meeting agenda.

### **ADOPTION OF THE 2019 MUNICIPAL BUDGET**

Council President Murphy stated the amendment to the Capital Budget includes the removal of the Band Shell for \$100,000, moves funds from Finance Salary & Wages previously approved to the Recreation Field account and per the Auditor moves \$2,000 from the Debt Service account.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to open the public hearing on the budget.

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel  
All members voted in favor.

Seeing no one coming forward, Council President Murphy asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

MOVED: Mark Van Tassel  
SECOND: John Auberger  
All members voted in favor.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to approve Resolution #19-130 and Resolution #19-135.

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy  
NAYES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Sandra Ooms

Motion Passed to approve Resolution#19-130 and Resolution #19-135.

### **Resolution 19-130**

#### **RESOLUTION TO AMEND INTRODUCED CAPITAL BUDGET**

**WHEREAS**, the current year capital budget and capital improvement program for the year 2019 was introduced on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2019, and

**WHEREAS**, the public hearing on said budget was held as advertised on May 13, 2019, and

**WHEREAS**, it is desired to amend said introduced capital budget for current year 2019 and corresponding capital improvement program, and

**WHEREAS**, the amendments contained herein do not add a new appropriation in excess of 1% of total appropriations, and

**WHEREAS**, the amendments contained herein do not increase or decrease any item of appropriation by more than 10%, and

**WHEREAS**, the amendments contained herein do not increase the amount to be raised by taxation by more than 5%,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Governing Body of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, that the following amendments to the introduced current year capital budget and capital improvement program of 2019 be made:

#### **CAPITAL BUDGET and CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (Current Year Budget 2019)**

PROJECT TITLE	PROJECT #	AMENDED	INTRODUCED
Recreation Department (Planned Funding Services 5b Capital Improvement Fund)	7	0.00	100,000.00
		0.00	4,762.00

**NOW, THEREFORE, 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.

**Resolution 19-135**

**RESOLUTION TO AMEND INTRODUCED BUDGET**

**WHEREAS**, the local municipal budget for the year 2019 was introduced on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2019, and

**WHEREAS**, the public hearing on said budget was held as advertised on May 13, 2019, and

**WHEREAS**, it is required to amend said introduced budget as per the Division of Local Government Services, and

**WHEREAS**, the amendments contained herein do not add a new appropriation in excess of 1% of total appropriations, and

**WHEREAS**, the amendments contained herein do not increase or decrease any item of appropriation by more than 10%, and

**WHEREAS**, the amendments contained herein do not increase the amount to be raised by taxation by more than 5%,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Governing Body of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, that the following amendments to the introduced budget of 2019 be made:

	INTRODUCED	AMENDED
CURRENT FUND APPROPRIATIONS:		
8. “(A) Operations- Within “CAPS:”		
GENERAL GOVERNMENT:		
Financial Administration:		
Salaries & Wages (amended 4/22/19)	158,000.00	156,000.00
MUNICIPAL DEBT SERVICE:		
Interest on Notes:	437,337.09	439,337.09
TOTAL OPERATIONS (Item 8(A)) within “CAPS”	26,378,350.59	26,378,350.59

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that three certified copies of this resolution be field forthwith in the Office of the Director of Local Government Services for their certification of the local municipal budget so amended.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to approve Resolution #19-107.

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel

A roll call vote was taken:  
AYES: Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy  
NAYES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Sandra Ooms

Motion Passed to approve Resolution#19-107.

**Resolution #19-107:** 2019 Municipal Budget as Amended by Resolution #19-110 Adoption



## CONSENT AGENDA

Council President Murphy read the titles and gave a brief explanation of Resolutions #19-125 through #19-129, #19-131 and #19-132. Resolution #19-133 was removed from Consent Agenda.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to approve Resolutions #19-125 through #19-129, #19-131 and #19-132.

MOVED: Mark Van Tassel

SECOND: Patrick Curreri

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: John Auberger (from #19-129 only)

ABSENT: Sandra Ooms

Motion Passed.

## RESOLUTION 19-125

### **RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING TO LOCAL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES THAT THE MUNICIPALITY WILL NOT COLLECT NEW STORMWATER MANAGEMENT OR RAIN TAXES**

**WHEREAS**, bill S1073/A2694 authorizing municipalities and counties to establish stormwater utilities was signed into law by Governor Phil Murphy; and

**WHEREAS**, municipalities or counties that choose to establish a stormwater utility will be allowed to apply an undetermined tax on property and business owners based on the amount of impervious surface they have, often referred to as a rain tax; and

**WHEREAS**, there is no limit to the amount property owners and local businesses can be taxed as long as it can be justified as going towards improving stormwater management, however, 5 percent or \$50,000 of the revenue is required to be paid to the state and another 5 percent can be used for a locality's general fund; and

**WHEREAS**, sewage authorities must adhere to a two-percent cap on annual increases to property owners and businesses, but stormwater utilities will not have to adhere to the cap; and

**WHEREAS**, municipalities and counties already have stormwater systems in place that manage stormwater without the need of creating another level of bureaucracy; and

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey property taxpayers already pay the highest taxes in the nation, and the creation of any new tax is an impossible burden to put on their backs; and

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey's Business Tax Climate was named last in the nation by the nonpartisan Tax Foundation, and any new taxes to our business owners are not feasible; and

**WHEREAS**, State Senator Steve Oroho, Assemblyman Parker Space, and Assemblyman Hal Wirths are calling on municipalities and counties to come together and signal to their tax-paying residents and businesses that they're aware that New Jersey's tax burden is already too high by making their intentions known through this resolution; and now be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Council of the Township of Vernon already has a system in place to manage stormwater and will not create a stormwater utility that would impose new taxes on its residents; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Council of the Township of Vernon understands and sympathizes with the heavy tax burden already placed on New Jersey residents and businesses and, therefore, will not charge them an extra tax for having driveways, parking lots and other impervious surface

**RESOLVED**, that certified copies of this Resolution be forwarded to Governor Phil Murphy, Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver, New Jersey Senate President Steve Sweeney, New Jersey Senate Republican Leader Thomas Kean, Jr., New Jersey Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, New Jersey Assembly Republican Leader Jon Bramnick, State Senator Steve Oroho, Assemblyman Parker Space, and Assemblyman Hal Wirths.

**Resolution #19-126**

**AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR  
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR TOWNSHIP FINANCIAL ADVISOR**

**WHEREAS**, there is a need for Financial Advisory Services for the year 2019 for the Township of Vernon; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5 specifically exempts professional services from provisions of public bidding as provided in the Local Public Contracts Law; and

**WHEREAS**, said specified professional services are to be rendered or performed by a person or persons authorized by law to practice a recognized profession, and whose practice is regulated by law within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq., as amended; and

**WHEREAS**, the performance of said professional services requires knowledge of an advanced field of learning acquired by a prolonged formal course of specialized training and study as distinguished from general academic instruction or apprenticeship and training; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Vernon is desirous to appoint Bryan Morris of the financial advisory firm of Phoenix Advisors, LLC for Financial Advisory Services in 2019 as a non-fair and open contract pursuant to the provisions of the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq., ; and

**WHEREAS**, the Chief Finance Officer has determined and certified in writing that the value of the contract is available for these purposes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Local Public Contracts Law N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq., as amended, requires that this Resolution be publicly advertised.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the Township of Vernon that Vernon Township hereby authorizes and approves the award of contract of a Professional Service Contract to Bryan Morris from the financial advisory firm of Phoenix Advisors, LLC, for Financial Advisory Services in 2019, pursuant to a non-fair and open contract pursuant to the provisions of the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:20-1 et seq. to provide Financial Advisory Services in accordance with the attached Contract for Professional Services.

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

1. 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
2. Receipt of all statutorily mandated “pay to play” political contribution forms pursuant to N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq.;
3. New Jersey Business Registration Certificate; and
4. Upon the aforementioned professional being a member in good standing in his respective profession.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Mayor and Township Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute, seal and deliver the attached Contracts for Professional Services on behalf of and in the name of the Township of Vernon and that the Township Clerk shall publish the award of contract as required by law within ten (10) days of passage of this Resolution.

**Resolution #19-127**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT WITH THE STONE HILL PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC., THE ASPEN SECTION CONDOMINIUM COUNCIL OF STONE HILL, INC., AND THE GREAT GORGE VILLAGE SOUTH CONDOMINIUM COUNCIL, INC.**

**WHEREAS**, on January 30, 2017, the Township of Vernon filed a complaint against the Stone Hill Property Owners Association, Inc. (“SHPOA”), the Aspen Section Condominium Council Of Stone Hill, Inc. (“ASPEN”), and the defendant Great Gorge Village South Condominium Council, Inc. (“GREAT GORGE”) seeking declaratory judgment that these condominium associations were responsible for the maintenance of waste water lift stations located on their respective properties; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township has determined that is in the best interests of the Township to resolve this matter amicably and both parties have agreed to terms for an amicable resolution.

**WHEREAS**, a resolution has been made that the Township is responsible for maintenance of the aforementioned waste water lift stations; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the Township of Vernon that the Mayor and Township Clerk are authorized to execute a settlement agreement with the SHPOA, ASPEN, and GREAT GORGE in a form similar to the attached agreement. The Township Attorney may make applicable language changes deemed in the best interest of the Township.

**19-128**

**REFUND FOR TAX COURT JUDGMENT (L & R Equity)  
REVISED**

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Court of New Jersey has entered Judgments on appeals filed by taxpayers in the Township of Vernon; and

**WHEREAS**, the Judgments reduced assessments creating an overpayment of taxes for the year 2019 on certain properties:

<u>Block</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Property Owner</u>	<u>Refund Amount</u>
270	6.03 CT1	L&R Equity, LLC	\$129.26 *
270	6.03 CT2	L&R Equity, LLC	\$129.26
270	6.03 CT5	L&R Equity, LLC	\$161.59
270	6.03 CT6	L&R Equity, LLC	\$164.28
270	6.03 CT7	L&R Equity, LLC	\$235.64 *
270	6.03 CML8	L&R Equity, LLC	\$2,423.71
<b><u>Total</u></b>			<b>\$3,243.74</b>

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Council of the Township of Vernon be authorized to draw a warrant in the amount of \$3,334.15 made payable to Bruce J. Stavitsky, Esq. for the benefit of L&R Equity, LLC for the above mentioned properties.

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED**, that a certified copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Township Tax Collector.

**RESOLUTION # 19-129**

**AUTHORIZING APPROVAL OF SUSSEX COUNTY CONTRIBUTION TO THE VERNON AND GLENWOOD –POCHUCK AMBULANCE SQUADS**

**WHEREAS**, Vernon Township is in receipt of Request for Certification for Rescue Squad Contribution of \$2,800.00 per squad from the County of Sussex; and

**WHEREAS**, per a resolution approved by the Board of Chosen Freeholders on February 28, 2001, Sussex County established policy to appropriate aid to Emergency Rescue Squads for the benefit of the county residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the policy stated that prior to approval, the appropriate municipality must approve the Emergency Rescue Squad seeking financial assistance.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Council of the Township of Vernon that it hereby approves the Certification for Rescue Squad Contribution to the Vernon and Glenwood –Pochuck Ambulance Squads within Vernon Township and approves the receipt of financial assistance in the amount of \$2,800.00 per squad for the calendar year 2019; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that certified copies of this Resolution be forwarded to Sussex County Administrative Center, and the Vernon and Glenwood-Pochuck Ambulance Squads.

#### **RESOLUTION #19-131**

### **RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERNON AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF PAYROLL MANAGEMENT SERVICES AND SOFTWARE VENDOR THROUGH THE COMPETITIVE CONTRACTING PROCESS CC# 4-2019**

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Vernon has a desire to provide for provide for payroll management services and software offerings for the operation of its financial matters in accord with the New Jersey Local Fiscal Affairs Law; and

**WHEREAS**, such services are currently available to be provided through the competitive contracting process under the New Jersey Local Publics Contract Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4.1, and for a period of five (5) years under N.J.S.A 40A:11-4.1 et. Seq., and

**WHEREAS**, the Township received Competitive Contract proposals, CC# 4-2019 on May 21, 2019 at 11:00 A.M.; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township authorized the competitive contract process though council approved resolution, in accord with the prescripts of N.J.S.A.40A:11-4.1 through resolution #19-95; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township established a rating committee rating the proposals upon the standards of price and other factors, those factors being Technical, Managerial and Cost factors in accord with N.J.A.C.5:34-4; and

**WHEREAS**, Action Data Services Inc., 17 Sherwood Lane, Fairfield, N.J. 07004, has provided a proposal deemed responsive and responsible under the New Jersey Local Publics Contract Law (N.J.S.A.40A:11-1 et. Seq.); and

**WHEREAS**, the report produced by the committee, recommending Action Data Services Inc, was made available to the public and governing body at least 48 hours prior to the meeting of the governing body in accord with N.J.S.A 40A:11-4.1 and N.J.A.C 5:34-4; and

**WHEREAS**, subject to the yearly extension of contract for a maximum of five (5) years, and subject to any yearly increases in accord with N.J.S.A.40A:11-15(a) thru (d); and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Chief Financial Officer has certified that there is no charge to the Township Budget as the current Township bank, Lakeland Bank, pays in full for this service.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Governing Body of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

The Township Business Administrator is hereby authorized to enter into a contract with Action Data Services Inc., 17 Sherwood Lane, Fairfield, N.J. 07004. for one (1) year with renewals through resolution not to exceed five (5) years encompassing the scope of work and cost proposal as outlined within CC# 4-2019.

**RESOLUTION #19-132**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AWARD OF A REQUIRED DISCLOSURE CONTRACT WITH “APPLIED CONCEPTS INC.” FOR A POLICE TRAFFIC MESSAGING TRAILER**

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Vernon has a need for police traffic enforcement equipment for the public safety, health, and welfare through Applied Concepts Inc., 855 E. Collins Richardson, TX. 75081, as a required disclosure contract pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Sean Canning, Q.P.A., has determined and certified in writing that the value of the acquisition will exceed \$17,500; and,

**WHEREAS**, Applied Concepts Inc, in the aggregate is expected to be compensated at a level greater than the pay to play threshold of \$17,500.00; and

**WHEREAS**, Applied Concepts Inc., has completed and submitted a Business Entity Disclosure Certification and a Personal Contribution Disclosure form which certifies that Applied Concepts Inc. has not made any reportable contributions to a political or candidate committee in the *Township of Vernon* in the previous one year, and that the contract will prohibit Applied Concepts Inc. from making any reportable contributions through the term of the contract, and

**WHEREAS**, the Chief Financial Officer hereby certifies that funds NOT TO EXCEED \$18,500.00 are available as follows;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Mayor and Council of the Township of Vernon authorizes the Business Administrator to enter into a contract with Applied Concepts Inc, not to exceed \$18,500.00 for the 2019 budget year for traffic enforcement equipment; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Business Disclosure Entity Certification and Personal Contribution Disclosure form, Determination of Value be placed on file with this resolution.

Council Member Curreri read Resolution #19-133 in full.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to amend Resolution #19-133 to include Mike Hastry and Kerry Phlugh.

MOVED: Jean Murphy  
SECOND: John Auberger

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy  
NAYES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Sandra Ooms

Motion Passed.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to approve Resolution #19-133 as amended.

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy  
NAYES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Sandra Ooms

Motion carried.

**Resolution #19-133**

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE RESIGNATION OF KERRY PFLUGH, MICHAEL HASTRY and COMMISSIONER CATHERINE R. MCCABE FROM THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**WHEREAS**, the property located at 3 Silver Spruce Drive, Vernon, New Jersey (“Property”) was subject to an August 14, 2014 Stop Work Order by the Sussex County Soil Conservation District in connection with a soil disturbance in excess of 5,000 square feet in violation of the New Jersey Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Act, N.J.S.A. 4:24-39 et seq.; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 16, 2014, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (“NJDEP”) also received a complaint that the Property received several hundreds of truckloads of soil for disposal in violation of N.J.A.C. 7:26-2.8 (f), which prohibits the operation of a solid waste facility (“SWF”) without a SWF permit; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 23, 2014 and August 8, 2014, a representative from the NJDEP conducted a compliance evaluation at the Property. Based on the observations of the representatives, the NJDEP issued Wallace a Warning Letter dated January 14, 2015 indicating that the Property may not be in compliance with the Solid Waste Management Act; and

**WHEREAS**, during the calendar years 2017 and 2018 the Township of Vernon (“Township”) became aware of large scale dumping of soil and other materials at the Property. The Township was greatly concerned about the environmental impact of the materials being dumped and potential violations of local, state, and federal environmental laws; and

**WHEREAS**, while the NJDEP inspected the site on several occasions between 2017 and 2018, no action was taken to stop the dumping or to obtain information required from the Property owner concerning the materials being dumped on the Property; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 4, 2018, the Sussex County Soil Conservation District issued a second Stop Work Order to attempt to stop unauthorized dumping at the Property; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township, citizens of the Township, and other federal elected officials continued to make requests to the NJDEP to address the dumping at the Property and expressed concerns about the potential negative environmental impact of the dumping at the Property; and

**WHEREAS**, despite two years of complaints and requests for aid, the NJDEP did not seek to address potential violations of state environmental laws at the Property until March 1, 2019, when a Complaint and Order to Show Cause was filed by the NJDEP alleging violations of the Solid Waste Management Act and seeking to conduct testing at the Property; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 14, 2019, representatives from the NJDEP took samples from eight different locations at the Property; and

**WHEREAS**, by letter dated April 8, 2019, legal counsel for the NJDEP notified the New Jersey Superior Court that the laboratory results analyzing the samples taken on March 14, 2019, reveal “concentrations of semi-volatile organics, such as Benzo[a]pyrene and Benzo[a]anthracene, a pesticide, chlordane, and a PCB Arcolor1254, above residential standards” provided in state environmental regulations. Legal counsel for the NJDEP further informed the Court that “[b]ecause of the exceedances of the residential standards, the fill pile contains materials that are considered to be solid waste. Accordingly, because solid waste is imported and stored on the . . . Property, it is an unlicensed solid waste facility in violation of N.J.A.C. 7:26-2.8(f).”; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result of the NJDEP’s failure to act, there is a greater risk of contamination and environmental degradation at the Property; and

**WHEREAS**, based on the NJDEP’s failure to fulfill its mission, the Township requests that Catherine R. McCabe resign as Commissioner of the NJDEP.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Council of the Township of Vernon requests and supports the resignation of Kerry Pflugh, Michael Hasty, and Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe of the NJDEP.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that copies of this Resolution be forwarded to all municipalities in Sussex County, the Representatives in the 24<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, Governor Philip Murphy, Senator Steve Sweeney, Speaker Craig Coughlin, Congressman Joshua Gottheimer, the Star Ledger, the NJ Herald and NJ DEP.

**INTRODUCTION/1<sup>ST</sup> READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCES**

Council President Murphy read by title Ordinance #19-10.

**Ordinance #19-10:** Bond Ordinance Appropriating \$2,038,668, And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$1,549,527 Bonds Or Notes Of The Township, For Various Improvements Or Purposes Authorized To Be Undertaken By The Township Of Vernon, In The County Of Sussex, New Jersey

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to Introduce Ordinance#19-10 with a public hearing to be held on June 24, 2019.

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Mark VanTassel

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy  
NAYES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Sandra Ooms

Motion passed to introduce Ordinance #19-10 with a public hearing to be held on June 24,2019.

Council President Murphy stated she would like to have a plan as discussed earlier. Mayor Shortway explained the Fire Department Chiefs have been working on them since the Council voted down hiring an independent service to create the plan.

At 8:48 PM, Council President Murphy called for a short recess.

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Patrick Curreri  
All Members voted in Favor.

At 9:00 PM, Council President Murphy called meeting back to Order.

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel  
All Members voted in Favor.

**INTRODUCTION/1<sup>ST</sup> READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCES (continued)**

Council President Murphy read by title Ordinance #19-11.

**Ordinance #19-11:** Capital Ordinance providing for various improvements by the Township of Vernon, in the County of Sussex, New Jersey, appropriating therefore the sum of \$292,800.00 and providing that such sum so appropriated shall be raised from the Capital Improvement Fund and Capital Fund Balance of the Township

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to Introduce Ordinance#19-11 with a public hearing to be held on June 24, 2019.

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy  
NAYES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Sandra Ooms

Motion passed to adopt Ordinance #19-11 with a public hearing to be held on June 24, 2019.

Council President Murphy read by title Ordinance #19-12.

**Ordinance #19-12:** An Ordinance Of The Township Of Vernon, County Of Sussex, State Of New Jersey, Amending Ordinance #16-17 Authorizing Purchase Of Real Property Commonly Known As 9 Wisteria Court And Identified As Lot 2, Block 92 On The Tax Map Of The Township Of Vernon

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to Introduce Ordinance#19-12 with a public hearing to be held on June 24, 2019.

MOVED: Patrick Curreri  
SECOND: Jean Murphy

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy  
NAYES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Sandra Ooms

Motion passed to adopt Ordinance #19-12 with a public hearing to be held on June 24, 2019.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Current Agenda Items Only)**

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

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel  
All members voted in favor.

Zoe Heath, Hidden Valley, stated she had emailed the Council President and Mayor requesting a potential Proclamation be declared for June for LGBT Pride Month for their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and wanted it to be in the public record.

Seeing no more members of the public wishing to come forward, Council President Murphy asked for a motion to close the meeting to Public Comments.

MOVED: John Auberger  
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel  
All members voted in favor.

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**An Ordinance Of The Township Of Vernon, County Of Sussex, State Of New Jersey, Amending Chapter 509 Of The Municipal Code Of The Township Of Vernon Entitled "Taxation" To Include Transient Accommodations**

Council President Murphy questioned if AIR BNB has self-reporting if they have renters. Mayor Shortway assumes that payment is made when registered and then disbursed. Attorney Zielinski is not aware if AIR BNB self-reports, but they are aware of local ordinances and the regulation of fees pays to the municipality if set by ordinance. Mayor Shortway estimated there are between 100 and 147 in Vernon currently and a revised Ordinance can make the fee collected with the hotel tax directly to the company to eliminate extra work being done by the Township. Council President Murphy questioned if Ordinance can include that owners can self-report and if not done Fire Marshall can send violation to comply. Attorney Zielinski stated ordinance can be revised to incorporate mandatory fire



prevention inspections to address safety concerns. Mayor Shortway stated he wants voluntary compliance with written warning to provide time to rectify before summons issued. Council President Murphy questioned who will handle receipt of fees and enforcement as the township may not have manpower at this time. Mayor Shortway estimated the Township could bring in \$100,000 in fees annually which a percentage could be used for part-time administrative help. He added that time spent on illegal dumping and illegal houses will decrease leaving more time to be spent on enforcement.

An Ordinance Of The Township Council Of The Township Of Vernon, County Of Sussex And State Of New Jersey Amending Certain Portions Of Chapter 99 Entitled "Vehicles And Traffic," Section 50 Entitled "Hiring Of Off Duty Police Officers" Of The Township Code

Council President Murphy commented that Ordinance amends policy when outside jobs require use of police vehicles. The Council had no further discussion.

**MAYORS REPORT**

Mayor Shortway thanked the Van Blarcom family for the posting of 300 flags along the Memorial Day Parade. He thanked those who participated in beautifying the Municipal Building including the DPW personnel, Beautification Committee, Scouts, and donations of flowers from the Democratic Committee and Carol Kadish.

Mayor Shortway thanked Laura Dombrowski and Boy Scout Packs 183 & 212 for working to restore the Lost Trail giving a sense of ownership and providing the community for a beautiful garden.

Mayor Shortway thanked Mishelle Downtain and Denise Urbaniak for organizing and running the 6-week Pavement to Pinwheel hiking program which was a fantastic experience for 60 participants.

Mayor Shortway announced the next Farmer's Market is on June 15 and continues once a month throughout the summer.

Mayor Shortway commented the "Ice Cream with a Cop" event will be held on June 1<sup>st</sup> to bring the community together and will also unveil High School Artwork designed for the Police Department entrance.

Mayor Shortway announced that Vernon Day will be held on June 2 and the Caballeros will perform for the residents at no charge.

Mayor Shortway stated in 2018 on June 25<sup>th</sup> and July 19<sup>th</sup> requested Council to consider adopting urged Council to Introduce an Ordinance changing the Township Code to allow feather flags. He suggested following details in Ordinance:

- Flags cannot exceed 10' high
- Only one Flag allowed per business
- Flag must be placed 6 ft off of roadway
- Flag must adhere to Police requirement for traffic safety
- Business may have one feather flag or one sandwich board
- Flag must be removed if damaged
- Zoning Permit must be obtained for feather flag
- Feather Flag must be Vernon colors – blue or gold

Mayor Shortway offered to email a copy of proposed ordinance to Council for consideration. Council President Murphy questioned if ordinance must first be approved by the Land Use Board.

Mayor Shortway noted the Vernon experienced push back from the NJDEP with regards to Legends and Silver Spruce and getting the State to act on environmental issues has been a nightmare. Today the owner of the illegal landfill on Silver Spruce will be before the Attorney General Prosecutor today and Vernon Zoning Officer will be in Gillette tomorrow to testify for 95 summonses. Mayor Shortway opined that most state employees work hard but the NJDEP needs to self-evaluate its goals, regulations and policies and noted the Resolution approved earlier will address that from the top down.

Mayor Shortway stated that Vernon needs to show bureaucrats the pathway out of the swamp and continue to create environmentalism with a Can Do Attitude. This process may take years to declare the site and find federal or state funds to restore it. He noted the community has joined together to fight this illegal dumping.

Mayor Shortway stated he wants to continue proving the community can work together by building trails that are ADA compliant so all residents including seniors and disabled can enjoy the outdoors.

Mayor Shortway explained that Municipal government is a balancing act between services provided and property taxes. Municipal Officials are judged on how we serve and legislate for all sectors of the population in a financially responsible manner.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Council Member Auberger had no further comments

Council Member Van Tassel had no further comments.

Council Member Curreri explained that Resolution # 19-133 was important due to fact that the NJDEP demonstrated a lack of concern of the illegal dumping happening in Vernon. He added an independent investigation into what went wrong within the NJDEP should be completed as multiple cases in Sussex County are transpiring.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT COMMENTS**

Council President Murphy expressed thanks to Council Member Curreri for reading Resolution #19-133 in full as it is important for the public to hear all of the details.

Council President Murphy commented the Memorial Day Parade was a great turn out by residents with great weather and plenty of parking for the public.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The Regular Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lauren Kirkman, RMC, CMR  
Municipal Clerk

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Jean Murphy,  
Council President

Minutes approved: July 8, 2019