

**VERNON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 28, 2023 7:00 PM**

This Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was convened at 7:10 p.m. on August 28, 2023 via Zoom Webinar and in the Vernon Municipal Center, 21 Church Street, Vernon, New Jersey with Council President Buccieri presiding.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to the public and the press on January 6, 2023 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 Buccieri led the assemblage in the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present were Council Members Peg Distasi, Bradley Sparta, Joseph Tadrack and Council President Natalie Buccieri. Also present were Mayor Howard Burrell, Administrator Tina Kraus, CFO Donelle Bright, Municipal Clerk Marcy Gianattasio and Township Attorney Joshua Zielinski.

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

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

MOVED: Distasi

SECOND: Sparta

All members were in favor.

Council Member Rizzuto joined the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

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

MOVED: Sparta

SECOND: Distasi

All members were in favor.

REVIEW OF BILLS LIST

The Council reviewed the bills list.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 8, 2023 – Special Meeting

August 14, 2023 – Executive Session

August 14, 2023 – Regular Meeting

President Buccieri asked for a motion to approve the above meeting minutes meeting minutes.

MOVED: Sparta

SECOND: Tadrack

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Distasi (only August 8, 2023 Special), Rizzuto, Sparta, Tadrack, Buccieri

NAYES:

ABSTAIN: Distasi (only August 14, 2023 Executive and Regular)

ABSENT:

Motion carries to approve the approve the above meeting minutes.

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution #23-219: Resolution Rejecting Certain Responses to Competitive Contract CC #5-2023 for EMS Services Township of Vernon

Resolution #23-220: Resolution Awarding CC #5-2023 to Atlantic Ambulance Corporation in a

Fair and Open Award for EMS Services

Resolution #23-221: Authorizing Contracts with Certain Approved State Contract Vendors Northeast Communications, State Contracts 83898

Resolution #23-222: Authorizing the Cancellation of Outstanding Checks Over Six Months Old to Municipal Cash Balances

Resolution #23-223: Authorizing Contract with Certain Approved State Contract Vendor, Ricoh, Under NJ State Contract M2075

Resolution #23-225: Resolution Authorizing Leasing of Certain Vehicles for the Department of Police Through Sourcewell National Cooperative #060618-EFM Through Enterprise Fleet Management Services Inc. (Quote No. 7413445 – 1 x Agate Black)

Resolution #23-226: Resolution Authorizing Leasing of Certain Vehicles for the Department of Police Through Sourcewell National Cooperative #060618-EFM Through Enterprise Fleet Management Services Inc. (Quote No. 7413437 – 1 x Oxford White)

Resolution #23-227: Authorizing the Use of Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council for Proposed Improvements to Sand Hill Road

Resolution #23-228: Authorizing the Venon Township Council to Approve a Person-to-Person Transfer of Liquor License #1922-33-009-005

President Buccieri asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

MOVED: Distasi

SECOND: Sparta

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Distasi, Rizzuto, Sparta, Tadrick, Buccieri

NAYES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Motion carries to approve the consent agenda.

RESOLUTION #23-219

RESOLUTION REJECTING CERTAIN RESPONSES TO COMPETITIVE CONTRACT CC# 5-2023 FOR EMS SERVICES TOWNSHIP OF VERNON

WHEREAS the Township of Vernon received proposals for EMS services, CC# 5-2023 on August 15, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. in a fair and open manner (N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5) and in accord with the New Jersey Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4.1 et. Seq.); and

WHEREAS the Township received two (2) proposals, one (1) of which, failed to adequately disclose ownership disclosure statements, and not in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:25-24.2, which demands a non-corporate owner is disclosed of the company to wit:

St. Clares Health	
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;and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Local Public Contracts Law at N.J.S.A. 40A:11-23.2c, makes the lack of providing a valid statement of ownership, a fatal defect, and a mandatory rejection of responses; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, that the submittal in response to CC# 5-2023 EMS Services submitted by St. Clares Health, is hereby rejected under N.J.S.A. 40A:11-23.2c for failure to comply with N.J.S.A. 52:25-24.2.

RESOLUTION #23-220

**Resolution Awarding CC# 5-2023
To Atlantic Ambulance Corporation in a Fair and Open Award
for EMS Services**

WHEREAS, there is a need for EMS Services as per CC# 5-2023 in the Township of Vernon procured as a competitive contract, authorized by resolution R#23-156; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4.1et seq.) allows the use of competitive contracts and approved by council resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Township duly advertised for public receipt of competitive contracts providing the required 20 days prior to receipt for CC# 5-2023 in a fair and open manner, consistent with N.J.S.A.19:44A-20.5 et. Seq., and

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon received competitive contracts from two (2) firms on August 15, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the rating committee has reviewed the submittals and rated according to the direction under competitive contracts as required within N.J.A.C. 5:34-4 et. Seq., and

WHEREAS, Atlantic Ambulance Corporation, 475 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960, has provided the response most advantageous to the Township of Vernon under the demands of price and other factors found within statute; and

WHEREAS, the process was administered as require by law by the Qualified Purchasing Agent who has concurred with the legality of the purchase in accord with the New Jersey Local Publics Contract Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.); and

WHEREAS, the term of contract is allowable for up to five (5) years as authorized under N.J.S.A.40A:11-4.1 et. Seq.

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

1. The contract for CC# 5-2023 EMS Services is hereby awarded to Atlantic Ambulance Corporation, 475 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960 for a period of five (5) year as per the tenets contained within CC#5-2023.
2. The Mayor is authorized and directed to execute a contract with Atlantic Ambulance Corporation, 475 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960.

RESOLUTION #23-221

**AUTHORIZING CONTRACTS
WITH CERTAIN APPROVED STATE CONTRACT VENDORS
NORTHEAST COMMUNICATIONS, STATE CONTRACTS 83898**

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Local Publics Contract Law N.J.S.A.40A:11-12, authorizes the Township of Vernon by resolution, and without advertising for bids or obtaining quotations, purchase any goods or services under the State Contract; and

WHEREAS, the Township has the need on a timely basis to purchase goods and services utilizing State contracts; and

WHEREAS, the Township intends to enter into contracts with Northeast Communications under State Contract 83898, for fire department communications improvement in the amount of \$115,000.00; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer certifies that funding is available in the amount of \$115,000.00 from line items: C-04-20-012, C-04-21-012, C-04-22-010, and C-04-23-015.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council of the Township of Vernon, authorizes the Mayor to enter into a contract with Northeast Communications under State Contract 83898, for Fire Department emergency communications improvement in the amount of \$115,000.00.

RESOLUTION #23-222

AUTHORIZING THE CANCELLATION OF OUTSTANDING CHECKS OVER SIX MONTHS OLD TO MUNICIPAL CASH BALANCES

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has determined that the following Township checks have been outstanding for a period in excess of six months:

GENERAL ACCOUNT # 639403719:

3071	9/15/2021	Suhey Hidalgo Peguero	\$100.00
TOTAL			\$100.00

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the above outstanding checks be restored to the Township cash balances.

RESOLUTION #23-223

AUTHORIZING CONTRACT WITH CERTAIN APPROVED STATE CONTRACT VENDOR, RICOH, UNDER NJ STATE CONTRACT M2075

WHEREAS, as provided for within the New Jersey Local Publics Contract Law (N.J.S.A.40A:11-1 et. Seq.,) the Township of Vernon may by resolution, and without advertising for bids or obtaining quotations, purchase any goods or services under the State Contract; and

WHEREAS, the Township has the need on a timely basis to lease or purchase goods and services utilizing State contracts, to wit business copiers; and

WHEREAS, the Township intends to enter into a lease contract including full-service parts/labor agreement with Electronic Office Systems 330 Fairfield Rd., Fairfield, N.J. 07004 under New Jersey State Contract M2075, Ricoh Business Machines for a Ricoh MP W6700SP Wide Format Printer applicable to all the conditions to current State contracts.

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer certifies that funding is available in the amount of \$428.56/month from line-item 3-01-20-100-20 and subject to adoption of 2024-2028 budgets.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council of the Township of Vernon, authorizes the Qualified Purchasing Agent to lease certain goods and services from Electronic Office Systems 330 Fairfield Rd., Fairfield, N.J. 07004, New Jersey State Contract M2075, Ricoh Business Machines for Cooperative Purchasing Partners pursuant to all conditions of the individual State contracts.

RESOLUTION #23-225

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING LEASING OF CERTAIN VEHICLES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF POLICE THROUGH SOURCEWELL

NATIONAL COOPERATIVE #060618-EFM THROUGH ENTERPRISE

FLEET MANAGEMENT SERVICES INC.

(QUOTE NO. 7413445- 1 X AGATE BLACK)

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the Township of Vernon, Sussex County, State of New Jersey as follows:

WHEREAS, the governing body of Vernon Township approved in Resolution 19-164 authorizing leasing of certain vehicles through Sourcewell National Cooperative #060618-EFM through Enterprise Fleet Management Services, Inc., and this is an extension of that resolution; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Public Contract Law P.L. 2011, C.139 (the "Law" or "Chapter 139" and N.J.S.A.52:34-6.2 the regulations promulgated there under in Local Finance Notice LFN 2012-10, the following purchase without competitive bids from vendor with a National Cooperative Contract is hereby approved for municipalities, and;

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon has the need to procure certain vehicles through lease program for Township services in accord with the Local Publics Contract Law N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et. Seq., and;

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon has previously acted in accord with New Jersey public procurement statutes and regulations as promulgated by formally joining a recognized and compliant national cooperative, being the Sourcewell National Cooperative, and;

WHEREAS, the regulations as set forth within Local Finance Notice LFN 2012-10 have been fully complied with, and;

WHEREAS, the equipment and corresponding Sourcewell National Cooperative contract is #060618-EFM for Enterprise Fleet Management Services Inc.; and

WHEREAS, the cost savings determination as required under LFN 2012-10 is the cost of contract as there is currently no cooperative lease program in effect under the New Jersey Division of Purchase and Property; and

WHEREAS, the quoted cost under the Sourcewell National contract is \$50,275.68 (Quote No. 7413445); and

WHEREAS, that the governing body of Vernon Township pursuant to NJAC 5:30-5.5(b) (the certification of available funds), states that the Chief Finance Officer shall either certify the full maximum amount against the budget at the time the contract is awarded, or no contract amount shall be chargeable or certified until such time as the goods or services are ordered or otherwise called for prior to placing the order, and a certification of availability of funds is made by the Chief Finance Officer; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Business Administrator is hereby directed to effectuate the contract with Enterprise Fleet Management Services Inc. under Sourcewell contract #060618-EFM in accord with the provisions of the tenets as established within 40A:11-1 et. Seq.,

RESOLUTION #23-226

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING LEASING OF CERTAIN VEHICLES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF POLICE THROUGH SOURCEWELL NATIONAL COOPERATIVE #060618-EFM THROUGH ENTERPRISE FLEET MANAGEMENT SERVICES INC. (Quote No. 7413437- 1 x Oxford White)

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the Township of Vernon, Sussex County, State of New Jersey as follows:

WHEREAS, the governing body of Vernon Township approved in Resolution 19-164 authorizing leasing of certain vehicles through Sourcewell National Cooperative #060618-EFM through Enterprise Fleet Management Services, Inc., and this is an extension of that resolution; and

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WHEREAS, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Public Contract Law P.L. 2011, C.139 (the "Law" or "Chapter 139" and N.J.S.A.52:34-6.2 the regulations promulgated there under in Local Finance Notice LFN 2012-10, the following purchase without competitive bids from vendor with a National Cooperative Contract is hereby approved for municipalities, and;

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon has the need to procure certain vehicles through lease program for Township services in accord with the Local Publics Contract Law N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et. Seq., and;

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon has previously acted in accord with New Jersey public procurement statutes and regulations as promulgated by formally joining a recognized and compliant national cooperative, being the Sourcewell National Cooperative, and;

WHEREAS, the regulations as set forth within Local Finance Notice LFN 2012-10 have been fully complied with, and;

WHEREAS, the equipment and corresponding Sourcewell National Cooperative contract is #060618-EFM for Enterprise Fleet Management Services Inc.; and

WHEREAS, the cost savings determination as required under LFN 2012-10 is the cost of contract as there is currently no cooperative lease program in effect under the New Jersey Division of Purchase and Property; and

WHEREAS, the quoted cost under the Sourcewell National contract is \$50,275.68 (Quote No. 7413437); and

WHEREAS, that the governing body of Vernon Township pursuant to NJAC 5:30-5.5(b) (the certification of available funds), states that the Chief Finance Officer shall either certify the full maximum amount against the budget at the time the contract is awarded, or no contract amount shall be chargeable or certified until such time as the goods or services are ordered or otherwise called for prior to placing the order, and a certification of availability of funds is made by the Chief Finance Officer; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Business Administrator is hereby directed to effectuate the contract with Enterprise Fleet Management Services Inc. under Sourcewell contract #060618-EFM in accord with the provisions of the tenets as established within 40A:11-1 et. Seq.,

RESOLUTION #23-227

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF MORRIS COUNTY COOPERATIVE PRICING COUNCIL FOR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO SAND HILL ROAD

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon has a need for contracting services for Proposed Improvements to Sand Hill Road; and

WHEREAS, the Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council advertised and received bids for milling & paving, roadway guide rails, and line stripping; and

WHEREAS, the bids received allowed for vendors to extend their pricing to municipalities who are a member of the Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council, a State regulated County Contract Purchasing System; and

WHEREAS, the Vernon Township Engineer recommends the Township Council award contracts for milling & paving, guide rails, and line striping, (subject to final approvals from the New Jersey Department of Transportation) through the use of the Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council to the following contractors:

- 1) Milling & Paving: Schifano Construction Corp. (Contract # 6) in an amount of **\$230,511.15**;
- 2) Line Striping: Denville Line Painting, Inc. (Contract #36) in an amount of **\$12,181.57**;
- 3) Guide Rails: Road Safety Systems, LLC (Contract #26) in an amount of **\$89,292.00**.

WHEREAS, the Certified Municipal Finance Officer of the Township of Vernon has certified that the funds for these contracts are available in Account #C-04-23-015-01 Road Improvements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Vernon that the vendors Schifano Construction Corp., Denville Line Painting, Inc., and Road Safety Systems be utilized for the Improvements to Sand Hill Road through the respective Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council contracts at the amounts not to exceed listed herewith, subject to the final approval from the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately according to law.

RESOLUTION #23-228

AUTHORIZING THE VERNON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL TO APPROVE A PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSFER OF LIQUOR LICENSE #1922-33-009-005

WHEREAS, an application has been filed for a person-to-person transfer of a Plenary Retail Consumption License #1922-33-009-005, 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 August 28, 2023 person-to person transfer of the Plenary Retail Consumption License #1922-33-009-005, located at 340 State Hwy 94, Vernon, New Jersey to transfer from JD Vernon Lodge and Inn LLC, to 1833 House LTD as delineated in the application form.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #23-224: Resolution Authorizing Leasing of Certain Vehicles for the Department of Police Through Sourcewell National Cooperative #060618-EFM Through Enterprise Fleet Management Services Inc. (Quote No. 7403692 – 1 x Silver Zynith)

Council Member Buccieri asked for a motion to approve resolution #23-224.

MOVED: Rizzuto
SECOND: Sparta

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Distasi, Rizzuto, Sparta, Tadrick, Buccieri

NAYES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Motion carries to approve the resolution #23-224.

RESOLUTION #23-224

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING LEASING OF CERTAIN VEHICLES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF POLICE THROUGH SOURCEWELL NATIONAL COOPERATIVE #060618-EFM THROUGH ENTERPRISE FLEET MANAGEMENT SERVICES INC. (Quote No. 7403692- 1 x Silver Zynith)

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the Township of Vernon, Sussex County, State of New Jersey as follows:

WHEREAS, the governing body of Vernon Township approved in Resolution 19-164 authorizing leasing of certain vehicles through Sourcewell National Cooperative #060618-EFM through Enterprise Fleet Management Services, Inc., and this is an extension of that resolution; and

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WHEREAS, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Public Contract Law P.L. 2011, C.139 (the “Law” or “Chapter 139” and N.J.S.A.52:34-6.2 the regulations promulgated there under in Local Finance Notice LFN 2012-10, the following purchase without competitive bids from vendor with a National Cooperative Contract is hereby approved for municipalities, and;

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon has the need to procure certain vehicles through lease program for Township services in accord with the Local Publics Contract Law N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et. Seq., and;

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon has previously acted in accord with New Jersey public procurement statutes and regulations as promulgated by formally joining a recognized and compliant national cooperative, being the Sourcewell National Cooperative, and;

WHEREAS, the regulations as set forth within Local Finance Notice LFN 2012-10 have been fully complied with, and;

WHEREAS, the equipment and corresponding Sourcewell National Cooperative contract is #060618-EFM for Enterprise Fleet Management Services Inc.; and

WHEREAS, the cost savings determination as required under LFN 2012-10 is the cost of contract as there is currently no cooperative lease program in effect under the New Jersey Division of Purchase and Property; and

WHEREAS, the quoted cost under the Sourcewell National contract is \$47,568.00 (Quote No. 7403692); and

WHEREAS, that the governing body of Vernon Township pursuant to NJAC 5:30-5.5(b) (the certification of available funds), states that the Chief Finance Officer shall either certify the full maximum amount against the budget at the time the contract is awarded, or no contract amount shall be chargeable or certified until such time as the goods or services are ordered or otherwise called for prior to placing the order, and a certification of availability of funds is made by the Chief Finance Officer; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Business Administrator is hereby directed to effectuate the contract with Enterprise Fleet Management Services Inc. under Sourcewell contract #060618-EFM in accord with the provisions of the tenets as established within 40A:11-1 et. Seq.,

2022 ANNUAL AUDIT

Resolution #23-208 2022 Annual Audit

Council Member Buccieri asked for a motion to approve resolution #23-208.

MOVED: Tadrick

SECOND: Distasi

Man Lee of Nisivoccia, Vernon Township’s Auditor, presented the 2022 audit to the Council. Ms. Lee explained the audit process.

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Distasi, Rizzuto, Sparta, Tadrick, Buccieri

NAYES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Motion Carries to approve resolution #23-208.

RESOLUTION #23-208

2022 Annual Audit

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4 requires the governing body of every local unit to have made an annual audit of its books, accounts and financial transactions, and

WHEREAS, the Annual Report of Audit for the year 2022 has been filed by a Registered Municipal Accountant with the Municipal Clerk pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:5-6, and a copy has been received by each member of the governing body; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 52:27BB-34 authorizes the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey to prescribe reports pertaining to the local fiscal affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Local Finance Board has promulgated N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5, a regulation requiring that the governing body of each municipality shall, by resolution, certify to the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey that all members of the governing body have reviewed, as a minimum, the sections of the annual audit entitled “Comments and Recommendations”; and

WHEREAS, the members of the governing body have personally reviewed, as a minimum, the Annual Report of Audit, and specifically the sections of the Annual Audit entitled “Comments and Recommendations,” as evidenced by the group affidavit form of the governing body attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, such resolution of certification shall be adopted by the Governing Body no later than forty-five days after the receipt of the annual audit, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5; and

WHEREAS, all members of the governing body have received and have familiarized themselves with, at least, the minimum requirements of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey, as stated aforesaid and have subscribed to the affidavit, as provided by the Local Finance Board; and

WHEREAS, failure to comply with the regulations of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey may subject the members of the local governing body to the penalty provisions of R.S. 52:27BB-52, to wit:

R.S. 52:27BB-52: A local officer or member of a local governing body who, after date fixed for compliance, fails or refuses to obey an order of the director (Director of Local Government Services), under the provisions of this Article, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both, in addition shall forfeit his office.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council of the Township of Vernon, hereby states that it has complied with N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5 and does hereby submit a certified copy of this resolution and the required

Resolution #23-209 Corrective Action Plan 2022 Audit

Council Member Buccieri asked for a motion to approve resolution #23-209.

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Distasi, Rizzuto, Sparta, Tadrick, Buccieri

NAYES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Motion Carries to approve resolution #23-209.

RESOLUTION #23-209

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN 2022 AUDIT

WHEREAS, the 2022 Annual Audit Report was delivered in July 2023 and regulations promulgated by the Local Fiscal Affairs Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:5 requires that the Chief Financial Officer prepare a Corrective Action Plan covering all findings and recommendations in the audit report; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:5 further requires approval of the Corrective Action Plan within 60 days of audit receipt by the Township Council;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Vernon that the Corrective Action Plan for the 2022 Annual Audit Report prepared by the Township Chief Financial Officer and attached hereto as “Appendix A” be approved.

PUBLIC HEARING/2ND READING OF ORDINANCE

Ordinance #23-18: Ordinance of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, Amending Chapter 5 of the Code of the Township of Vernon Entitled “Administration of Government” to Update Reorganization and Term Start Dates

President Buccieri asked for a motion to open the floor for public hearing on ordinance #23-18.

MOVED: Tadrick
SECOND: Sparta

All members were in favor.

Seeing no one from the public wishing to come forward, President Buccieri asked for a motion to close the public hearing on ordinance #23-18.

MOVED: Tadrick
SECOND: Distasi

All members were in favor.

President Buccieri asked for a motion to adopt ordinance #23-18.

MOVED: Tadrick
SECOND: Distasi

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Distasi, Rizzuto, Sparta, Tadrick, Buccieri
NAYES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

Motion carries to adopt ordinance #23-18.

ORDINANCE #23-18

**ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERNON, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY,
AMENDING CHAPTER 5 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERNON ENTITLED
“ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT” TO UPDATE REORGANIZATION AND TERM START
DATES**

WHEREAS, on July 20, 2023, P.L. 2023, c. 124, was enacted which changed several election related timelines including reorganization dates and term start dates in municipalities with non-partisan elections; and

WHEREAS, a determination has been made that the Township of Vernon’s municipal code must be amended to comply with the aforementioned legislative changes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, and State of New Jersey that the Township Code shall be amended as follows:

SECTION 1

§ 5-3. Office of the Mayor.

G. Election; term of office. The Mayor shall be elected by the voters of the Township at a regular municipal election held on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November in the years in which municipal officers are to be elected and shall serve for a term of four (4) years beginning on January ~~1~~15 next following his or her election.

§ 5-4. Township Council.

C. Membership; term of office. The Township Council shall consist of five (5) members, elected at-large by the voters of the Township at a regular municipal election held on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November in the years in which municipal officers are to be elected. The terms of the members of the Council shall be four (4) years, beginning on January ~~1~~15 next following their election.

§ 5-6. Meetings of Council.

C. Regular meetings.

(1) The Council shall meet annually for organization within seven (7) days of January 4th 15th.

SECTION 2

Each section of this ordinance is an independent section, and the holding of any section or part thereof to be unconstitutional, void or ineffective for any cause shall not be deemed to affect the validity of constitutionality of any other sections or parts thereof.

SECTION 3

Any ordinances or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed as to their inconsistencies only.

SECTION 4

This Ordinance shall take effect immediately as provided by law.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limited to 5 Minutes Per Person)

President Buccieri asked for a motion to open the meeting for public comment.

MOVED: Distasi
SECOND: Tadrick

All members were in favor.

Debra Smorto – the owner of Fields of Green Montessori School on Sandhill Road. She is very concerned about the speed limit near the school. Ms. Smorto is requesting that the area is made a school zone and 25 miles per hour.

Jessica DeBenedetto – feels that there should be a police officer patrolling the area often by Fields of Green School.

Jan Messick – expressed concern about a dog sanctuary across the street from her home. She questioned if the animals need to be licensed.

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

MOVED: Distasi
SECOND: Sparta

All members were in favor.

MAYOR COMMENTS

In coordination with the Sussex County based Center for Prevention & Counseling, this year the Township of Vernon will actively participate in the international observance of OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY on August 31. In addition, I have made a decision to extend Vernon Township's participation to include the support of NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH, which promotes efforts to bring awareness of our county's life-saving addiction recovery resources and services. While there are a host of symbolic things that our town will work on in coordination with the Sussex County based Center for Prevention & Counseling, the most visual manifestation of the municipality's support will be wording on the Municipal Electronic Message Board in front of the Municipal Center, and the illumination of this Electronic Message Board in the NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH's color of purple. It is my hope that our municipality's efforts will contribute to letting those who suffer from the disease of addiction know that recovery is possible; and contribute to letting those who have lost a family member or friend to overdose know that we understand, and that we care.

Before I assumed the position of Mayor, our town had never had its own formal ceremony of observance to honor the memory of those who our country lost on that dreadful day of September 11, 2001. When I discovered this, I decided to change that; and, in 2020 I worked close with the Municipal Director of Community Affairs, Ms. MISHELLE DOWNTAIN, to plan and host Vernon Township's first ANNUAL 9/11 REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY. Additionally, it was my hope that before my 4-year term as Mayor was over, that I would be able to somehow establish a meaningful, significant foundation that would be viewed and accepted by the town as the start a permanent VERNON TOWNSHIP 9/11 REMEMBRANCE MEMORIAL. On tonight, I am extremely pleased to report to the Council and the public, that after three plus years of trying to make this hope a reality, with the help and focused efforts of Director of Community Affairs DOWNTAIN, along with the very valuable assistance of Ms. VEROY PALOINI, a Vernon resident, a retired Vernon School District educator, and a person who currently works at the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum - - with the help and focused efforts of these two outstanding individuals, Vernon has finally been successful in acquiring the key, special item that we wanted to obtain and use as the foundation for a permanent VERNON TOWNSHIP 9/11 REMEMBRANCE MEMORIAL! That key, special item is a seedling from the 9/11 Survivor Tree! The 9/11 Survivor Tree is a tree that was severely damaged, with snapped roots and burned branches, that was discovered at Ground Zero in October 2001. This tree was dug up and removed from the rubble of Ground Zero, and then placed in the care and treatment of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. After nine years of nursing this tree back to recovery and rehabilitation, in 2010 it was returned to and replanted at the site of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum. New, smooth limbs extended from the knotted and twisted stumps of the now recovered and surviving tree, creating a visible demarcation between the tree's past and present. Today, the tree stands as a living reminder of resilience, survival, and rebirth. Since 2010, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum has received thousands of requests for seedlings from this special tree. Each year, hundreds these requests are received from not just municipalities and organizations in our country, but also from countries and organizations throughout the world. However, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum grants only a small number of these requests each year. And, for 2023, Vernon Township was one of the fortunate recipients of a seedling from the 9/11 Survivor Tree! On Tuesday, August 22, I dispatched a Municipal Delegation to New York City to take possession of our 9/11 Survivor Tree Seedling, and to transport it with care to Vernon Township. Consistent with the 9/11 Memorial & Museum's requirements that this special tree be handled with and given the best possible care, our 9/11 Survivor Tree Seedling has been professionally planted in front of the Vernon Municipal Center by a Vernon located and New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association approved company, the NOTCHWOOD LANDSCAPE company. On behalf of the residents of Vernon Township, I thank NOTCHWOOD LANDSCAPE for providing this very valuable professional service at no charge to the Vernon Taxpayers. At this year's ANNUAL 9/11 REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY, we will be dedicating this Survivor Tree Seedling as Vernon's living memorial to the three Vernon residents that were killed during the 9/11 attack, as well as all of the other victims of 9/11 and their families. This Survivor Tree Seedling will also serve as Vernon's living reminder of the resilience and survival of our nation and the American spirit. This year, 9/11 comes on a regular workday; and, so as to give as many individuals as possible the opportunity to be a part of this historic Survivor Tree Seedling dedication, we will be hosting the Municipality's ANNUAL 9/11 REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY on Saturday morning, September 9, at 9am. I invite the Council and all other Vernon residents to join with me as a part of this historic event!

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Distasi had no comments.

Council Member Sparta will not be in attendance at the next Council meeting.

Council Member Tadrick had no comments.

Council Member Rizzuto had no comments.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT COMMENTS

Council President Buccieri reiterated that the issues that were spoken about in public comment are very important and she appreciates the issues being talked about and brought forward. She feels that quality of life and safety are very important issues for our community.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:22 pm Council Member Sparta made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Council Member Tadrick.

All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcy Gianattasio, RMC, CMR
Municipal Clerk

Natalie Buccieri
Council President

Minutes approved: September 11, 2023