

**WORKSHOP MEETING
OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS WAS
HELD THIS EVENING IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

Monday, December 4, 2023

Council President Anthony Sgobba called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Christine Hablitz, Michael Murphy, and Christopher Vancheri. Also present were Mayor James Damiano, Township Attorney Joseph Wenzel, Township Administrator Charles Cuccia, Assistant Administrator Vincent Quatrone, Municipal Clerk Cynthia Kraus, and Deputy Clerk Melissa DePiro.

Absent: Councilmember Jayna Patel.

Township Employees present: Police Chief Bryan Prall.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC NOTICE: Take notice that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-8 and N.J.S.A. 10:4-10 as follows: A notice of the meeting was prominently posted on the bulletin board at the Municipal Building, located at 225 Main Street, Little Falls, N.J. on January 5, 2023. A copy of the notice was mailed to the North Jersey Herald and News and The Record on the same date. Additionally, a copy of the notice was filed in the office of the Township Clerk on said date. **A link and a telephone number to join the meeting virtually can be accessed on the Township website at www.lfnj.com. Electronic provisions have been established for the public to participate during the public comment portion of the meeting.**

PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING WORLD AIDS DAY – At this time, Mayor Damiano read the Proclamation recognizing December 1, 2023 as World Aids Day in the Township of Little Falls.

The Mayor then recognized Cpl. Pinnola for spearheading the Police Department’s receipt of the AAA 2023 Community Traffic Safety Gold Award. Council President SGOBBA commented on the significant reduction of speeding concerns in the Township since 2016. Mayor Damiano added comments regarding how instrumental Cpl. Pinnola and the implementation of the complaint portal have been in addressing concerns.

PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL MATTERS AND AGENDA ITEMS

Anyone wishing to address the Township Council may do so through the Council President. It is preferred if you give your name and address for the record. Comments are to be limited to three minutes, however, if appropriate, you may be granted additional time in the sole discretion of the Council President.

Members of the public who have joined the meeting virtually and desire to provide comment shall raise their virtual hand in the Zoom application. The Meeting Moderator will queue the members of the public that wish to provide comment and the Council President will recognize them in order. Members of the public who have joined the meeting by calling in must press *6 to mute and unmute themselves and *9 to raise their hand. Members of the public who have joined the Meeting via the Zoom application must click the Reactions icon and then the Raise Hand icon. Once the process is complete, we will return to the regular order of business.

It was moved by Councilmember Murphy, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that the meeting be and it was opened to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri, and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

No one having come forward to be heard, it was moved by Councilmember Vancheri seconded by Councilmember Murphy, that the meeting be and it was closed to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri, and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:

MAYOR/ADMINISTRATOR:

1. RESOLUTION INSTITUTING A MORATORIUM OF THE ISSUANCE OF CLASS 5 RETAIL CANNABIS LOCAL LICENSES IN THE TOWNSHIP – Mayor Damiano explained that as there have been concerns regarding the number of licenses that would be permitted in the municipality, this resolution would limit the number of Class 5 licenses.
2. RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER 2023 YEAR END HOLIDAY CRACKDOWN - Mayor Damiano explained the Police Department’s initiative and that the Township has received a grant. Chief Prall then noted in comparison to last year, the Township has had close to 60 arrests compared to 40 last year. The State will fund 100 hours of additional patrols from December 1st to January 1st. In response to Council President SGOBBA, Chief Prall commented on demographic trends.

Meeting of December 4, 2023

ACTION ITEMS:

It was moved by Councilmember Murphy, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, to approve Resolutions A through C:

Moratorium of Issuance of Class 5 Retail Cannabis Local Licenses

**RESOLUTION [A] 23-12-04 - #1
TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS
RESOLUTION INSTITUTING A MORATORIUM OF THE ISSUANCE OF CLASS 5 RETAIL CANNABIS LOCAL LICENSES
IN THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS**

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls has authorized and issued one (1) Class 5 Retail Cannabis Licenses in the Township of Little Falls; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls finds that this action shall now create a new business venture never before operated in the Township in compliance with the laws and regulations of the State of New Jersey and the applicable Township Code; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls has determined that an appropriate amount of actual operational experience is needed to evaluate the impact of this business on Township as a whole:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the Township of Little Falls that it is necessary and appropriate to institute a moratorium for remainder of the 2023 year for the issuance of any additional Class 5 Retail Cannabis Local Licenses in the Township of Little Falls. By maintaining the status quo for issuance of such licenses, until such time as appropriate evaluation and consideration of the retail operation can be made by the Township Council to determine if amendments should be considered to the Code of the Township of Little Falls:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that during the period of the moratorium, the Township shall endeavor to review, and study the impact of this retail operation on the services and security of the Township, its residents and taxpayers. In the event that the Township determines to lift this moratorium, that action will be made by formal resolution of the Governing Body, at which time all matters related to the process of issuing a Class 5 Retail Cannabis License shall be transacted in accordance with the Township Code.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Governing Boody of the Township of Little Falls that to the extent that any law, ordinance, rule or regulation are in conflict with the provisions of the resolution, this resolution shall control.

Supporting Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Year End Crackdown

RESOLUTION [B] 23-12-04 - #2

Resolution Supporting the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over 2023 Year End Holiday Crackdown

WHEREAS, approximately one-third of all fatal traffic crashes in the United States involve impaired drivers; and

WHEREAS, impaired driving crashes killed 11,654 people in the United States in 2020; and

WHEREAS, impaired driving crashes cost the United States almost \$44 Billion a year; and

WHEREAS, during the past five years New Jersey’s roadways experienced 33,798 crashes and 662 fatalities involving impaired drivers; and

WHEREAS, an enforcement crackdown is planned to combat impaired driving; and

WHEREAS, the year-end holiday season is traditionally a time for social gatherings which include alcohol; and

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey, Division of Highway Traffic Safety, has asked law enforcement agencies throughout the state to participate in the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over 2023 Year End Holiday Crackdown*; and

WHEREAS, the project will involve increased impaired driving enforcement from December 1, 2023 through January 1, 2024; and

WHEREAS, an increase in impaired driving enforcement and a reduction in impaired driving will save lives on our roadways;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Township of Little Falls declares it’s support for the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over 2023 Year End Holiday Crackdown* from December 1, 2023 through January 1, 2024 and pledges to increase awareness of the dangers of drinking and driving.

Bill List

RESOLUTION [C] 23-12-04 - #3

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls the Council having received the Treasurer’s certification of the availability of funds for payment of all bills presented, that payment of all bills approved by the Finance Committee be and is hereby authorized, subject to the availability of funds and subject to the appropriate and available appropriation in the line item.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri, and Council President Sgobba
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Councilmember VANCHERI reported an update on adding pedestrian crosswalks, that Paterson Avenue concerns will be reviewed at a meeting with Passaic County engineers, and the status of speed humps on Houston Road continues to progress. Councilmember VANCHERI then commented on his request to Commissioners Bartlett and Lazzara to coordinate a meeting with Passaic County and Essex County administration to address concerns regarding the Peckman River.

Councilmember MURPHY provided status reports on cleaning shoals in the Peckman River and on the Township calendar. On behalf of Councilmember PATEL, Councilmember MURPHY read a report which indicated a home visit can be arranged to receive the COVID-19 or flu vaccine for individuals who are homebound and are on Medicare or are uninsured.

Councilmember HABLITZ highlighted upcoming Library events including a family gingerbread decorating workshop on December 9th and a Winter Wonderland Dance on December 16th. Additionally, the offices of Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill and the Passaic County Clerk will be at the Municipal Building on December 6th to assist with questions regarding Medicare, Veteran IDs, VA needs, Social Security, etc. Councilmember HABLITZ then thanked all those that helped with the tree lighting and commented on the success of the Peddlers Village. Lastly, Councilmember HABLITZ reminded residents to register for the Light Up Little Falls Holiday House Decorating contest.

Meeting of December 4, 2023

Council President SGOBBA reminded the Council a public hearing will be held at 5:30 P.M. prior to the December 18th Regular Council Meeting. Council President SGOBBA announced the Reorganization Meeting will convene on January 2, 2024, and noted he will be discussing Council appointments with Councilmembers. Lastly, Council President SGOBBA noted plans to address the transition for garbage collection from the front of Main Street buildings to the rear of the buildings in 2024.

PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

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It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that the meeting be and it was opened to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri, and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

No one having come forward to be heard, it was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that the meeting be and it was closed to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri, and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was moved by Councilmember Murphy, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that the meeting be and it was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Cynthia Kraus
Municipal Clerk