

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

Monday, February 8, 2016

Council President Louis Fontana called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. with the following members present: James Damiano, Pamela Porter, Joseph Maceri and William Liess. Also present were Mayor Darlene Conti, Township Attorney William Northgrave, Township Planner Jeff Janota, Township Engineer Dennis Lindsay, and Township Administrator Charles Cuccia.

Absent: Municipal Clerk Cynthia Kraus and Deputy Registrar Marlene Simone

Township Employees present: DPW Superintendent Phillip Simone, Lieutenant Steven Post, Fire Chief Jack Sweezy, and EMS Coordinator Joe Murray

Following the Salute to the Flag, the Statement of Public Notice was read.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC NOTICE: Take notice that adequate notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with 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 8, 2016; a copy of the notice was faxed 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.

PUBLIC PORTION – GENERAL MATTERS

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

Poll: Ayes: Porter, Damiano, Liess, Maceri, and Council President Fontana
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Renea Shapiro, ABC, announced the ABC is planning a Town Tasting on April 5, 2016 and a Theatre Dinner on Mother's Day weekend. She requested a public comment after a guest speaker presents, and that the speaker present at the beginning of the meeting. She queried whether the solar energy ordinance would address new construction and whether public spaces could be utilized for wind and solar systems. She also requested discussion on zoning as it pertains to industrial zones.

Bob Dombrowski, 49 Parkway, expressed his concern of a potentially dangerous walkway due to high mounds of snow at the railroad crossing near Main Street. He reported his complaints about rodents and birds near Rainbow Caterers, which he has brought to the attention of the Clifton Health Department. He questioned whether an ordinance exists for utility work specifying time limits on cut offs.

It was moved by Councilmember Liess, seconded by Councilmember Porter, that the meeting be and it was closed to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Porter, Damiano, Liess, Maceri, and Council President Fontana
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Council President FONTANA encouraged everyone to support the upcoming ABC events.

Council President FONTANA announced Jeff Janota was unable to attend the Workshop, otherwise he would have been available for discussion. Council President FONTANA declared his flexibility as to when a guest speaker presents.

Mr. Janota clarified the ordinances for solar and wind systems pertain to guidance of proper installation, not mandating specific zones. An energy audit may prove useful in considering systems in public spaces. Council President FONTANA commented that using public spaces may be advantageous when appropriate.

Councilmember DAMIANO questioned if solar or wind systems could be placed on acquired FEMA properties. Mr. Northgrave and Mr. Janota indicated the significant infrastructure required for these systems may be prohibitive. Additionally FEMA would have to approve.

Mr. Simone clarified that it was not the County that created the snow mounds near the railroad tracks, but individuals from Rare Steakhouse. Enforcement is the responsibility of Code Enforcement. Mr. Cuccia to contact NJ Transit to encourage a more expeditious clean up in the future.

Mr. Cuccia stated the Health Department has visited Rainbow Caterers and found them to be compliant. Mr. Cuccia will contact John Biegel to investigate further.

Mr. Simone confirmed the Township has an ordinance with regard to utility work. A minimum of three months is required for settling, and permanent repairs are not done during the winter. Therefore, in Mr. Dombrowski's case, the permanent repair will be completed in the spring.

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ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:

ADMINISTRATOR:

1. INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMS COORDINATOR – Mayor Conti introduced Joe Murray, who commenced his position as EMS Coordinator February 1, 2016. Mr. Murray provided a summary of his background and experience. He highlighted several projects that have been initiated. Council President FONTANA welcomed Mr. Murray.
Mr. Cuccia touched upon the following aspects of the EMS program that required follow-up: a Medical Director has been procured at no cost to the Township, interviews for EMTs are in progress, physicals for new employees have been established, policies and procedures are being developed, an RFP and specifications for a third party billing company have gone out for advertising, and state registration is in process.
2. MAYOR’S 2016 BUDGET PRESENTATION – Mayor Conti presented the budget which is due no later than February 12, 2016. Mr. Cuccia provided highlights of the budget, noting the detailed presentation will be provided after the Council reviews the Mayor’s presentation. He anticipated compliance with the State requirement for budget introduction and adoption dates which are March 14, 2016, with public hearing and adoption by April 11, 2016. He requested review of the budget workbook and offered his availability for comments or questions.
3. COAH DISCUSSIONS WITH PLANNER- Mr. Janota provided a background of COAH and a status report on the plan submitted to the courts by the Township. Mr. Janota described in copious detail, the contrasting projections, Court Master comments, and plan of action. A revised final plan must be submitted to the courts by April 15, 2016, at which time the Court Master will review and respond with comments by May 9, 2016. Comments are to be considered into the final plan, which if approved, will provide immunity until 2025.
Discussion ensued with regard to payment in lieu and the significance of immunity. Mr. Janota explained the application of payment in lieu as well as other funding source applications. Mr. Northgrave advised that without immunity the Township would be vulnerable to a builder’s remedy suit.
4. HIGHWAY FUND GRANT FOR 2015/2016 FUNDING – Mr. Cuccia relayed the Police Department’s request to approve funding at the next meeting. The Township has received this grant every year, however, this year the grant is less due to a reduced pool of funds.
5. REQUESTING COUNCIL ACTION FOR THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE PROGRAM FUNDING FISCAL YEAR 2017 – Mr. Cuccia presented a request from the Municipal Alliance program to approve a resolution authorizing the program. The program provides the Township with approximately \$22,000 on an ongoing basis. Mr. Cuccia confirmed this request is presented every year.

Municipal Alliance Program Funding- It was moved by Councilmember Porter, seconded by Councilmember Maceri, that the Council approve the following:

**RESOLUTION [A] 16-02-08 - #1
GOVERNOR’S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
FISCAL GRANT CYCLE JULY 2014 – JUNE 2019
FORM 1B**

WHEREAS, the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse established the Municipal Alliances for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in 1989 to educate and engage residents, local government and law enforcement officials, schools, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, parents, youth and other allies in efforts to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse in communities throughout New Jersey.

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, recognizes that the abuse of alcohol and drugs is a serious problem in our society amongst persons of all ages; and therefore, has an established Municipal Alliance Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls Council further recognizes that it is incumbent upon not only public officials, but upon the entire community to take action to prevent such abuses in our community; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls Council has applied for funding to the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse through the County of Passaic;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township of Little Falls, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, hereby recognizes the following:

1. The Township of Little Falls Council does hereby authorize submission of a strategic plan for the Little Falls Municipal Alliance Grant for Fiscal Year 2017 in the amount of:

DEDR	\$22,440.00
Cash Match	\$5610.00
In-Kind	\$16,830.00

The Township of Little Falls Council acknowledges the terms and conditions for administering the Municipal Alliance Grant, including the administrative compliance and audit requirements.

Poll: Ayes: Porter, Damiano, Liess, Maceri, and Council President Fontana
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

DPW SUPERINTENDENT:

1. DISCUSSION OF THE LAW PERTAINING TO SNOW REMOVAL BY FIRE HYDRANTS – In response to the issue raised by Mr. Korotkin, Mr. Simone distributed a copy of the relevant law for review and comment. The Council determines if the law should be enacted, however, it is not enforceable unless the Township passes an ordinance to do so. Mr. Northgrave added to get the value of the law, an ordinance would be approved that puts the onus on the property owner, defining fines and penalties for noncompliance. Councilmember PORTER questioned whether the language could be changed. Mr. Northgrave stated the statute sets forth what can be done and advised exercised caution when using exemptions. Chief Sweezy discussed how the Fire Department manages snow removal and prepares for emergency situations in coordination with EOM. Chief Sweezy responded to Councilmember

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DAMIANO’s question about hydrant markers, stating that over the past four years about 150 markers have been purchased.

ENGINEER:

Mr. Lindsay provided an update on Morningside Circle. NJ American Water has provided a value of the contribution they will provide, which may be used as seed money for work planned. There will be an additional cost to the Township. Mr. Lindsay also recommended Belgian block curbing. He will distribute information to the Council for review. Mr. Lindsay to collaborate with Mr. Simone and follow-up with NJ American Water to determine if more funds can be negotiated.

COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Councilmember DAMIANO questioned whether consideration might be given to rezoning the area where Walgreens was located. Mr. Janota noted his awareness of that location and that it is being reviewed. Councilmember DAMIANO requested the status of the billboard and when revenue is expected. Mr Cuccia explained that test borings have been conducted, and progress has most likely has been delayed due to weather. Construction is expected to commence in the spring. Councilmember DAMIANO also relayed a complaint regarding the light timing at Rose Street and Browertown Road. Mr. Simone instructed that timing of that light is a State issue. Mr. Cuccia will contact the State to seek a remedy.

PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

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

Poll: Ayes: Porter, Damiano, Liess, Maceri, and Council President Fontana
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Louis Ferndandez- Harrison Street, requested clarification on the EMS Coordinator salary, the distinction between low income and affordable houses, and what sites within the Township might be considered for such housing.

Arnold Korotkin – Long Hill Road, requested the budget presentation be placed on-line, and queried whether other types of employee pensions could be explored to allow savings to the Township. He appreciated discussion of a fire hydrant ordinance and suggested comparison with models from other municipalities. He questioned whether a factor in hiring EMT employees could include the ability to speak languages other than English.

John Veteri- 133 Prospect Street, questioned whether zoning violations could be addressed by the new hire.

Renea Shapiro- Requested how many police officers will be staffed in the Police Department once the opening is filled. She questioned whether the issues with COAH will delay the Transit Village application. She requested clarification regarding several points related to COAH.

It was moved by Councilmember Liess, seconded by Councilmember Maceri, that the meeting be and it was closed to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Porter, Damiano, Liess, Maceri, and Council President Fontana
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Mr. Cuccia announced the salary of the part-time EMS Coordinator is \$28,000. The budget presentation will be available on-line tomorrow.

Mr. Janota explained low income and affordable housing are the same and how such determinations are made. Mr. Janota and the Court Master, Joe Burgess, toured light industrial zones, vacant properties, and acquired properties, and referred to the Master Plan on the website. In response to Councilmember MACERI’s question on how the FEMA acquisition of homes impacts the projections, Janota described these acquisitions have been considered. Council President FONTANA questioned how multi-family dwelling impact the numbers and whether COAH will delay the Transit Village application. Mr. Janota replied multi-family dwellings do not impact the projections, and the Transit Village application should not be delayed. He confirmed the Lackawanna section is a viable possibility for affordable housing.

Mr. Cuccia provided an explanation of the DCRP and PERS pension programs. If a job title is not qualified for PERS the individual can go into DCRP program, however, the Township has not hired any individuals under that program. Part time employees are not eligible for the programs.

Mr. Cuccia stated the EMTs training includes a basic understanding of languages other than English relevant to their duties. The Mr. Murray added many applicants speak more than one language.

Mr. Cuccia confirmed the new official hired is slotted for a inspector and zoning review officer, not a code enforcement officer. Zoning problems would be under the new hire’s purview.

Mr. Cuccia stated there are currently 28 officers, with one officer anticipated with this budget. Lieutenant Post described the method used to determine the number of staff in the Police Department. Mr. Cuccia added in addition to a formula, staffing also considers such factors as how to provide a certain service to residents, how to run the detective bureau, and provision of 12 hour shifts.

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PAYMENT OF BILLS

It was moved by Councilmember Porter, seconded by Councilmember Liess, that the Council approve the following:

RESOLUTION [BL]

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: Porter, Damiano, Liess, Maceri, and Council President Fontana
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was moved by Councilmember Liess, seconded by Councilmember Damiano, that the meeting be and it was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Cynthia Kraus
Municipal Clerk