

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

**Monday, July 13, 2020**

Council President Sgobba called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Maria Cordonnier, Albert Kahwaty, Tanya Seber, and Christopher Vancheri. Also present were Mayor James Damiano, Township Attorney Joseph Wenzel, Township Engineer Tom Lemanowicz, Township Administrator Charles Cuccia, and Township Clerk Cynthia Kraus.

Absent: None.

Township Employees present: Police Chief Steve Post.

**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 9, 2020. 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. **This meeting is being conducted under the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 health situation. No public will be allowed to attend the meeting in person. A Youtube link to view this meeting can be accessed on the Township website at [www.lfnj.com](http://www.lfnj.com). Electronic provisions have been established for the public to participate during the public comment portion of the meeting.**

**ROLL CALL** – Council President Sgobba, Mayor Damiano and Township Administrator Charles Cuccia were present in person. Councilmember Maria Cordonnier, Councilmember Albert Kahwaty, Councilmember Tanya Seber, Councilmember Christopher Vancheri, Attorney Joseph Wenzel, Municipal Clerk Cynthia Kraus, and Police Chief Steve Post and Tom Lemanowicz attended the meeting remotely.

**PUBLIC COMMENT – ALL MATTERS**

Anyone wishing to address the Township Council may do so by sending an email to [CKRAUS@LFNJ.COM](mailto:CKRAUS@LFNJ.COM). The email must provide your name and address for the record. At this time there will be a ten-minute recess, which will allow the public to send comments and questions via email. At the end of the recess, the Meeting will reconvene and all proper emails will be read into the record. The Council President will determine if a response is needed and if so, shall direct said response. Once the process is complete, we will return to the regular order of business.

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

Poll:           Ayes:   Cordonnier, Kahwaty, Seber, Vancheri, and Council President Sgobba  
              Nays:   None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

At this time, Council President SGOBBA announced there will be a ten-minute recess such that questions from the public can be emailed to the Clerk. The Council recessed at 7:03 PM and returned to session at 7:13 PM.

Renea Shapiro, Little Falls ABC, requested information on the home rehabilitation program. Mr. Cuccia described the program and how to get more information on the website and by phone.

Dr. Ellie Abdi – 105 Bergen Drive, submitted comments regarding defunding the police and thanked the Police for keeping the Town safe. Mayor Damiano stated his full support of the Police Department.

Luis Fernandez – 54 Harrison Street, questioned why Council Workshops are online. Mayor Damiano addressed Mr. Fernandez’s comments, crediting the precautions currently taken are to ensure the safety of the Township and keep COVID-19 positive cases low. The Mayor added that there has been no limiting of Public Comment and that comments were received by Mr. Fernandez even after the Public Comment period had ended.

Lorraine Pellegrine – Councilmember, Elmwood Park, submitted a comment commending the EMS services and staff whom she had summoned recently. The Mayor added his commendation to the EMS services and Fire Department for all the work they have done throughout this entire crisis.

As no further emails were received for comment, it was moved by Councilmember Cordonnier, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that the meeting be and it was closed to the public.

Poll:           Ayes:   Cordonnier, Kahwaty, Seber, Vancheri, and Council President Sgobba  
              Nays:   None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

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**ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:**

**MAYOR/ADMINISTRATOR:**

1. RESOLUTION CANCELLING TAXES ON THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS 110 EAST WOODCLIFFE AVENUE – Mr. Cuccia explained the property was acquired by the Township and is adjacent to the pump station. For the Township to make repairs to the pump station, the footprint needed to be expanded. As the Township is purchasing the property taxes are no longer required.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**RESOLUTIONS**

It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Kahwaty to approve the following:

Cancellation of Taxes for 110 East Woodcliffe Avenue

**RESOLUTION [A] 20-07-13 - #1**

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, IN THE COUNTY OF PASSAIC, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO AUTHORIZE THE CANCELLATION OF TAX BALANCES FOR NON-EXEMPT CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY SITUATED IN TAX BLOCK 82, LOT 6 LOCATED WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, COUNTY OF PASSAIC AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY, MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS 110 EAST WOODCLIFFE AVENUE, LITTLE FALLS, NEW JERSEY**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 54:4-99 and 54:4-100 provide that a governing body of a municipality may make such abatement, revision, alteration, adjustment and settlement of any past due taxes and other municipal charges, both of principal and interest and penalties as it shall deem equitable and just and in the best interest of the municipality; and

**WHEREAS**, Township Council by way of Ordinance authorized the condemnation of certain real property located at Block 82, Lot 6 (110 East Woodcliffe Avenue) for the purposes of construction of public improvements; and

**WHEREAS**, condemnation action was filed in the Superior Court of New Jersey and an Order was entered to allow the Township to issue a Declaration of Taking for the real property; and

**WHEREAS**, Declaration of Taking was filed with the Passaic County Clerk on June 19, 2020 which instrument transferred possession and ownership of the real property to the Township on same date; and

**WHEREAS**, condemnation action is still pending to determine the final value of the real property and for the adjustment of all costs and expenses, and the potential for a tax sale would be inimical to such proceedings; and

**WHEREAS**, as the Township is now in possession of the property and the litigation has not yet resolved, it is in the best interest of the Township to cancel outstanding 2020 tax balances owed through June 19, 2020 and to remove said real property from the list for potential tax sale; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, they being the Governing Body thereof as follows:

1. 2020 tax balances owed for Block 82, Lot 6 (110 East Woodcliffe Avenue) now owned and possessed by the Township are cancelled.
2. Said property and such outstanding 2020 taxes said be removed from any records or filings for tax sale purposes.
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Bill List

**RESOLUTION [B] 20-07-13 - #2**

**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.

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Poll: Ayes: Cordonnier, Kahwaty, Seber, Vancheri, and Council President Sgobba  
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

**COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

Councilmember VANCHERI reported the Transportation Committee would like to hold a meeting with residents of Jacobus Avenue and Van Pelt Place, respectively, to meet in an open area to gather input and discuss installation of speed humps. A letter has been drafted and forwarded to the Mayor for review. Four way stop signs will be addressed in a similar manner with residents on the proposed streets. The Recreation Department has sent out registration for fall programs for soccer and track and field. Councilmember VANCHERI thanked Councilmember SEBER and Christine Hablitz for their efforts running a successful Farmer’s Market.

Councilmember KAHWATY reported the Domestic Violence Prevention Committee was present at the Farmer’s Market to offer information. He reported the Town Clean Up has been continuing and thanked the Clean Communities Coordinator and the DPW. Lastly, Councilmember KAHWATY announced three movie nights are to be held on August 12, 19, and 26, respectively.

Councilmember CORDONNIER thanked Mayor Damiano for his support and defense of the State COVID-19 guidelines and echoed his comments. She stated to not forget that we did lose two souls who were firefighters who helped save peoples’ lives and properties. She reminded everyone to wear masks and to social distance themselves. Councilmember CORDONNIER provided an update on the 2020 Census and emphasized the need to increase reporting. She will update the Council with the new deadline which has not been determined yet. Councilmember CORDONNIER thanked Nadine Heinis who organized an event outside to keep the seniors active, adding that more activities are being planned.

Councilmember SEBER provided an updated on the Library which is now open at 25% capacity as of July 6<sup>th</sup>. Normal hours are resumed. All summer programs are offered virtually, and curbside pickup is available. Storytime at the Park will be offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays and it is also available on Facebook Live. The Municipal Alliance is on hiatus and will continue once September occurs. Councilmember SEBER attributed the support of the Mayor and Councilmembers, the collaborative efforts of many individuals, and the work of the CERT Team and

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DPW to the success of the Farmer's Market. The Farmer's Market continues to add new vendors and masks are required.

Council President SGOBBA stated his agreement with the Mayor's response to Mr. Fernandez's earlier comments regarding the operations of the Township. He also stated he was happy the Library was now open to offer services to the Township.

At this time, Mayor Damiano announced he received two emails at 7:29pm and at 7:34pm from Mr. Fernandez. Mayor Damiano stated Public Comment was technically closed, however, the Mayor affirmed that anyone who has questions or concerns during the Council Meeting will have them addressed. The Mayor combined both emails into one comment.

Luis Fernandez, 54 Harrison Street, requested a follow-up on garbage left at a residence on Harrison Street and requested the amount of the violation and whether it was prorated. Mayor Damiano stated a violation was issued and residents have ten days to address the garbage before a court summons is issued. He provided detail on the stipulations of the violation. Council President SGOBBA clarified there was no dollar amount issued with the violation because the resident addressed the litter. Per the Council President, Mayor Damiano explained how a new violation would be issued and that the individual would have ten days to address it or a court summons is issued.

Council President stated that although Public Comment was over, Mr. Fernandez's concern was addressed. The Council understands it may be difficult for the public to think of all their questions and hoped the Mayor's answer was satisfactory.

Per Council President SGOBBA, Mayor Damiano commented on the Summer Concerts. The Mayor reported that that announcements are made at the beginning to wear face masks when social distancing is not possible. He commented that while some concerns were raised early on, he noted the majority of residents, if they were not eating or drinking, had face coverings on. He reminded concerts start at 7pm at Wilmore Park and encouraged residents to attend.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was moved by Councilmember Seber, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that the meeting be and it was adjourned at approximately 8:04 p.m.

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Cynthia Kraus  
Municipal Clerk