

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

Monday, March 11, 2024

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

Absent: None.

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 4, 2024. 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.**

NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH PROCLAMATION – At this time, Mayor Damiano read the Proclamation recognizing the month of March 2024 as National Nutrition Month in the Township of Little Falls.

NATIONAL WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH – Mayor Damiano read the Proclamation recognizing March 2024 as National Women’s History Month in the Township of Little Falls.

PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING RAMADAN-Mayor Damiano read the Proclamation recognizing March 10, 2024 through April 10, 2024 as the month of Ramadan in the Township of Little Falls.

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY PROCLAMATION- Lastly, Mayor Damiano read the Proclamation recognizing March 21, 2024 as World Down Syndrome Day in the Township of Little Falls.

At this time, Mayor Damiano presented a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the highlights of the 2024 Municipal Budget, which included the addition of an Assistant Recreation Director position, and increases in the costs related to solid waste and recycling, fuel, pension contributions, and insurance. The Mayor noted that the flooding of late 2023 and early 2024 led to \$125,000 of expenditures which were able to be included in the 2024 budget. The Mayor further explained the municipal tax rate had a slight decrease, however, the total tax rate is expected to have a slight increase after receiving the school and county tax rates. The Capital Budget Plan was also presented with a breakdown of capital projects planned for 2024. The Budget hearing and adoption will be on April 8, 2024.

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, Patel, 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 Hablitz, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that the meeting be and it was closed to the public.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:

MAYOR/ADMINISTRATOR:

1. RESOLUTIONS AUTHORIZING INCREASE IN DEFERRED SCHOOL TAXES FOR LOCAL SCHOOL AND REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TAXES – Mayor Damiano noted the customary and annual nature of this Resolution.
2. RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR AN INCREASE IN RESERVE FOR UNCOLLECTED TAXES PERCENTAGE – Similar to the nature of the previous Resolution, the Mayor requested the Council approve this Resolution to increase the Reserve for Uncollected Taxes.
3. RESOLUTION TO INTRODUCE 2024 MUNICIPAL BUDGET – The Mayor requested the Council approve tonight’s introduction of the 2024 Municipal Budget.
4. TAX REFUND RESOLUTION DUE TO STATE TAX COURT JUDGEMENTS – Mayor Damiano explained the nature of this Resolution.
5. RESOLUTIONS AUTHORIZING AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE GRANT WITH RENTERS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS (RESOLUTIONS E-F)- The Mayor reviewed the routine nature of these resolutions to assist with affordable housing.
6. RESOLUTION AWARDDING A CONTRACT TO DLS CONTRACTING FOR STANLEY STREET PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS – Mayor Damiano explained the contract award and that work is scheduled to occur during the summer when school is not in session. In response to Council President SGOBBA, Mayor Damiano explained how the Stanley Street project came in higher than expected resulting in this Resolution. In response to Councilmember PATEL’s query, the Mayor responded that the demolition was a separate item.
7. RESOLUTION APPROVING CHANGE ORDER FOR DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS (LF SECTION 3) – INCREASE OF \$37,173.17 IN CONTRACT PRICE – The Mayor highlighted the change order which resulted in a increase in the project cost.
8. CAPITAL BUDGET AMENDMENT RESOLUTION – In response to Councilmember MURPHY, Mayor Damiano explained the amendment for supplemental funding for a prior capital ordinance for the Stanely Street parking lot.

ACTION ITEMS:

It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Patel, to approve Resolutions A through J:

Increase in Deferred School Taxes for Local & Regional High School Taxes

**RESOLUTION [A] 24-03-11 - #1
AUTHORIZING INCREASE IN DEFERRED SCHOOL TAXES
FOR LOCAL SCHOOL AND REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TAXES**

WHEREAS, the Division of Local Government Services requires that the Governing Body of any municipality which has Deferred School Taxes must authorize any increase in the deferral of any additional amounts, and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body has decided that an increase in Deferred School Taxes is in the best interest of the Township of Little Falls at this time,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body that the following Deferred School Taxes be hereby increased for the year ended December 31, 2023 as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| | Deferred Regional High <u>School Taxes</u> |
| Amount Deferred 12/31/2023 | \$4,134,821.00 |
| Amount Deferred 12/31/2022 | \$3,965,912.00 |

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Governing Body that a certified copy of this resolution be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

Increase in Reserve for Uncollected Taxes

**RESOLUTION [B] 24-03-11 - #2
RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR INCREASE IN RESERVE FOR UNCOLLECTED TAXES PERCENTAGE**

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls collected only 98.05% of the 2023 taxes due to an increase in taxpayers being delinquent as a result of unfavorable economic conditions in the local economy and real estate markets for 2023 and

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls’s average collection percentage for the prior 3 years is 98.54%, as calculated below, and

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| | Collection <u>Percentage</u> |
| 2023 | 98.05 |
| 2022 | 98.56 |
| 2021 | <u>99.03</u> |
| Total | <u>295.64</u> |
| 3-Year Average | 98.55% |

WHEREAS, the lower percentage collected in 2023 has an effect on the "Reserve for Uncollected Taxes" in 2024, and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body desires to anticipate 98.44% collection for 2024, to help reduce the "Reserve for Uncollected Taxes", with prior written consent of the Director of Local Government Services,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the Township of Little Falls, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, that the prior written consent of the Director of Local Government Services be requested to anticipate 98.44% collection of taxes in 2024 in figuring the "Reserve for Uncollected Taxes".

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Office of the Director of Local Government Services.

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Introduction of 2024 Budget

**RESOLUTION [C] 24-03-11 - #3
TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS
PASSAIC COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

Re: Introduction of 2024 Budget

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following statements of revenues and appropriations attached hereto constitute the local Budget of the Township of Little Falls, Passaic County, New Jersey for the year 2024

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the said budget be published in the Herald News in the issue of March 18, 2024, and that a hearing on the Budget will be held at the Municipal Building on April 8, 2024 at 7:00 o'clock (P.M.) or as soon thereafter as the matter may be reached.

Tax Refund Due to State Tax Court Judgements

RESOLUTION [D] 24-03-11 - #4

WHEREAS, the following property in the Township of Little Falls, New Jersey, known as Block 186 Lot 21.01, Quick Quality Restaurants a/k/a Burger King @655 Route 46 East, has overpaid real estate taxes in the Years 2021 and 2022 due to State Tax Court Judgements; and

WHEREAS, the Judgements were entered on January 18, 2024; and Stipulation of Settlement states no interest paid on the refunds if taxpayer and their attorney receive the refunds within **60 days from January 18, 2024 which would be on or before March 18, 2024**;

WHEREAS, the Year 2021 assessed value was \$1,731,200 and Judgement reduced the assessed value to \$1,506,800 with a difference of -\$224,400 with tax rate of \$3.212 totaling \$7,207.73 refund; and

WHEREAS, the Year 2022 assessed value was \$1,731,200 and the Judgement reduced the assessed value to \$1,453,000 with a difference of -\$278,200 with a tax rate of \$3.286 totaling \$9,141.65 refund; and

WHEREAS, the Year 2023 assessed value was reduced in the Year 2023 with an assessed value of \$1,640,000 and Year 2024 assessed value was reduced to \$1,107,200 both in Assessor's MOD IV system and the Tax Duplicates; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector is requesting that the Township Council direct the Treasurer to refund said amounts overpaid listed below,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey that the following listed tax refunds be made by the Treasurer:

| <u>Tax Year & Qtr.</u> | <u>Block Lot</u> | <u>Taxpayer/ Location</u> | <u>Pavee</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|----------------------------|------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| 2021/4 | 186/21.01 | Quick Quality Rest. 655 Route 46 East | Quick Quality Restaurants c/o Zipp & Tannenbaum, LLC 282 Raritan Center Parkway Edison, NJ 08837 | \$7,207.73 |
| 2022/4 | 186/21.01 | Quick Quality Rest. 655 Route 46 East | Quick Quality Restaurants c/o Zipp & Tannenbaum, LLC 282 Raritan Center Parkway Edison, NJ 08837 | <u>9,141.65</u> |
| Total Refunds = | | | | \$16,353.38 |

Affordability Assistance Grant – 405 Main St. Unit 241

RESOLUTION [E] 24-03-11 - #5

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE GRANT WITH THE RENTER OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT LOCATED 405 MAIN ST, UNIT 241, LITTLE FALLS, NJ 07424

WHEREAS, Linasia M Carlos [will rent/rents] property located at 405 Main St, Unit 241, Little Falls, NJ 07424, which property is governed by the statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations restricting ownership and use of the property as an Affordable Housing unit; and

WHEREAS, the tenant has requested an Affordability Assistance Program grant from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund; and

WHEREAS, the Township is willing to extend a grant to the tenant in the amount of \$578.00.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED on this 11th day of March, 2024, by the Township Council of Little Falls, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, that:

1. The Mayor, Administrator, Clerk and attorney are hereby authorized to execute an Affordability Assistance Program grant with the renter of an Affordable Housing unit at 405 Main St, Unit 241, Little Falls, NJ 07424.

Affordability Assistance Grant – 405 Main St. Unit 429

RESOLUTION [F] 24-03-11 - #6

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE GRANT WITH THE RENTER OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT LOCATED 405 MAIN ST, UNIT 429, LITTLE FALLS, NJ 07424

WHEREAS, dina G gharaibeh [will rent/rents] property located at 405 Main St, Unit 429, Little Falls, NJ 07424, which property is governed by the statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations restricting ownership and use of the property as an Affordable Housing unit; and

WHEREAS, the tenant has requested an Affordability Assistance Program grant from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund; and

WHEREAS, the Township is willing to extend a grant to the tenant in the amount of \$1,098.00.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED on this 11th day of March, 2024, by the Township Council of Little Falls, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, that:

1. The Mayor, Administrator, Clerk and attorney are hereby authorized to execute an Affordability Assistance Program grant with the renter of an Affordable Housing unit at 405 Main St, Unit 429, Little Falls, NJ 07424.

Award of Contract to DLS Contracting for Stanley Street Parking Lot Improvements

RESOLUTION [G] 24-03-11 - #7

ACCEPTING BID AND AWARDING CONTRACT FOR STANLEY STREET PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS

WHEREAS, pursuant to advertising duly made, bids were received by the Township of Little Falls on March 1, 2024 for the Stanley Street Parking Lot Improvements project, and the bids were opened and read publicly as follows:

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| DLS Contracting Bid: \$760,091.60 | 4 Clean-Up, Inc. Bid: \$823,098.40 | D.S. Meyer Enterprises, LLC Bid: \$846,496.77 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|

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and, **WHEREAS**, the Township Attorney has reviewed the bids for legal sufficiency; and **WHEREAS**, the award is subject to the Availability of Funds and certification of same in the 2024 budget; and **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls as follows:

- 1) That the bid of
DLS Contracting
36 Montesano Road
Fairfield, NJ 07004

in the amount of \$760,091.60

be and the same is hereby accepted; and
2) That the Mayor and Clerk be and they are hereby authorized to execute a Contract in a form approved by the Township Attorney for the designated services at the bid price hereinabove cited, subject to the successful Contractor’s filing the required form of Affirmative Action compliance and Payroll Certification for Public Works Projects; and
3) That the Clerk be and he is hereby authorized and directed to return to the unsuccessful bidder(s) any Certified checks and/or Bid Bonds received from them as surety, with the exception of the surety received from the second-lowest bidder, which shall be retained for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days or until a contract in a form satisfactory to the Township Attorney shall have been executed with the low bidder, whichever shall come first.

Change Order for Downtown Streetscape Improvements

**RESOLUTION [H] 24-03-11 - #8
RESOLUTION AWARDED CHANGE ORDER TO GRADE CONSTRUCTION
FOR THE FY2020 NJDOT DOWNTOWN STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT (LF SECTION 3)**

WHEREAS, the Township Council has received a recommendation from the Township Engineer, Alaimo Group Consulting Engineers, regarding the contract for the Downtown Streetscape Improvements Project (LF Section 3) to change contract items as listed in the original specification; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council has considered this recommendation in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-1 et seq. and the Local Public Contracts Law; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council has a contract with Grade Construction for FY2020 NJDOT Downtown Streetscape Improvements Project, which was awarded by public bidding under the Local Public Contracts Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council authorizes a change order to Grade Construction in the amount of \$34,173.17, making the revised contract amount \$1,051,182.04

Capital Budget Amendment

RESOLUTION [I] 24-03-11 - #9

Bill List

RESOLUTION [J] 24-03-11 - #10

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, Patel, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance No. 1477- The public hearing on Ordinance No. 1477, “**ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, IN THE COUNTY OF PASSAIC, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING THE TOWNSHIP CODE CHAPTER 71, FEES,**” be and it was opened.

As no comments from the public were received, the public hearing on Ordinance No. 1477 be and it was closed.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

It was moved by Councilmember Patel, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that Ordinance No. 1477 be and it was adopted.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance No. 1478 - It was moved by Councilmember Hablitz, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that there be introduced and the meeting of April 8, 2024 set as the date for the public hearing of the following:

BOND ORDINANCE NO. 1478

BOND ORDINANCE TO APPROPRIATE AN ADDITIONAL SUM OF \$320,000 FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MUNICIPAL PARKING LOT IN, BY AND FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, IN THE COUNTY OF PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS.

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WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls has heretofore authorized the construction of a municipal parking lot on Township-owned property located at the corner of Stanley Street and Stevens Avenue in, by and for said Township, and appropriated the sum of \$500,000 therefor pursuant to ordinance no. 1461 adopted by the Township Council of said Township on June 26, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council now finds and determines that the additional sum of \$320,000 is required for such improvement, **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls, in the County of Passaic, New Jersey (the "Township"), as follows:

Section 1. The additional sum of \$320,000 is hereby appropriated to the payment of the cost of the improvement authorized by ordinance no. 1461 adopted by the Township Council of the Township on June 26, 2023 (the "Prior Ordinance"). Said additional appropriation shall be met from the down payment appropriated and from the proceeds of the sale of the bonds authorized by this ordinance. Said improvement has been and shall be made as a general improvement and no part of the cost thereof has been nor shall be assessed against property specially benefited.

Section 2. It is hereby determined and stated that (1) the making of such improvement (hereinafter referred to as "purpose") is not a current expense of said Township, and (2) it is necessary to finance said purpose by the issuance of obligations of said Township pursuant to the Local Bond Law (Chapter 2 of Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes Annotated, as amended; the "Local Bond Law"), and (3) the estimated cost of said purpose authorized by the Prior Ordinance is \$820,000, including the sum of \$500,000 appropriated by the Prior Ordinance and the \$320,000 appropriated by this ordinance, and (4) \$41,000 of said sum is to be provided by the down payment, including the \$25,000 appropriated by the Prior Ordinance and the \$16,000 hereinafter appropriated to finance said purpose, and (5) the estimated maximum amount of bonds or notes necessary to be issued for said purpose is \$779,000, including the \$475,000 authorized by the Prior Ordinance and the \$304,000 hereinafter authorized, and (6) the cost of such purpose includes the aggregate amount of \$75,000, including the \$50,000 provided in the Prior Ordinance and the sum of \$25,000 hereby stated, which is estimated to be necessary to finance the cost of such purpose, including architect's fees, accounting, engineering and inspection costs, legal expenses and other expenses, including interest on such obligations to the extent permitted by Section 20 of the Local Bond Law.

Section 3. It is hereby determined and stated that moneys exceeding \$16,000, appropriated for down payments on capital improvements or for the capital improvement fund in budgets heretofore adopted for said Township, are now available to finance said purpose. The sum of \$16,000 is hereby appropriated from such moneys to the payment of the cost of said purpose.

Section 4. To finance said purpose, bonds of said Township of an aggregate principal amount not exceeding \$304,000 are hereby authorized to be issued pursuant to the Local Bond Law. Said bonds shall bear interest at a rate per annum as may be hereafter determined within the limitations prescribed by law. All matters with respect to said bonds not determined by this ordinance shall be determined by resolutions to be hereafter adopted.

Section 5. To finance said purpose, bond anticipation notes of said Township of an aggregate principal amount not exceeding \$304,000 are hereby authorized to be issued pursuant to the Local Bond Law in anticipation of the issuance of said bonds. In the event that bonds are issued pursuant to this ordinance, the aggregate amount of notes hereby authorized to be issued shall be reduced by an amount equal to the principal amount of the bonds so issued. If the aggregate amount of outstanding bonds and notes issued pursuant to this ordinance shall at any time exceed the sum first mentioned in this section, the moneys raised by the issuance of said bonds shall, to not less than the amount of such excess, be applied to the payment of such notes then outstanding.

Section 6. Each bond anticipation note issued pursuant to this ordinance shall be dated on or about the date of its issuance and shall be payable not more than one year from its date, shall bear interest at a rate per annum as may be hereafter determined within the limitations prescribed by law and may be renewed from time to time pursuant to and within limitations prescribed by the Local Bond Law. Each of said notes shall be signed by the Mayor and by a financial officer and shall be under the seal of said Township and attested by the Township Clerk or Deputy Township Clerk. Said officers are hereby authorized to execute said notes in such form as they may adopt in conformity with law. The power to determine any matters with respect to said notes not determined by this ordinance and also the power to sell said notes, is hereby delegated to the Chief Financial Officer who is hereby authorized to sell said notes either at one time or from time to time in the manner provided by law.

Section 7. It is hereby determined and declared that the period of usefulness of said purpose, according to its reasonable life, is a period of ten years computed from the date of said bonds.

Section 8. It is hereby determined and stated that the Supplemental Debt Statement required by the Local Bond Law has been duly made and filed in the office of the Township Clerk of said Township, and that such statement so filed shows that the gross debt of said Township, as defined in Section 43 of the Local Bond Law, is increased by this ordinance by \$304,000 and that the issuance of the bonds and notes authorized by this ordinance will be within all debt limitations prescribed by the Local Bond Law.

Section 9. Any funds received from private parties, the County of Passaic, the State of New Jersey or any of their agencies or any funds received from the United States of America or any of its agencies in aid of such purpose, shall be applied to the payment of the cost of such purpose, or, if bond anticipation notes have been issued, to the payment of the bond anticipation notes, and the amount of bonds authorized for such purpose shall be reduced accordingly.

Section 10. The Township intends to issue the bonds or notes to finance the cost of the improvement authorized by the Prior Ordinance and described herein. If the Township incurs such costs prior to the issuance of the bonds or notes, the Township hereby states its reasonable expectation to reimburse itself for such expenditures with the proceeds of such bonds or notes in the maximum principal amount of bonds or notes authorized by this bond ordinance.

Section 11. The full faith and credit of the Township are hereby pledged to the punctual payment of the principal of and the interest on the obligations authorized by this ordinance. Said obligations shall be direct, unlimited and general obligations of the Township, and the Township shall levy ad valorem taxes upon all the taxable real property within the Township for the payment of the principal of and interest on such bonds and notes, without limitation as to rate or amount.

Section 12. The capital budget is hereby amended to conform with the provisions of this ordinance to the extent of any inconsistency therewith and the resolutions promulgated by the Local Finance Board showing full detail of the amended capital budget and capital program as approved by the Director, Division of Local Government Services, is on file with the Township Clerk and is available for public inspection.

Section 13. This ordinance shall take effect twenty days after the first publication thereof after final passage.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Ordinance No. 1479 - It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Patel, that there be introduced and the meeting of April 8, 2024 set as the date for the public hearing of the following:

**ORDINANCE NO. 1479
CALENDAR YEAR 2024
ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK
(N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)**

WHEREAS, the Local Government Cap Law, N.J.S. 40A: 4-45.1 et seq., provides that in the preparation of its annual budget, a municipality shall limit any increase in said budget to 2.50% unless authorized by ordinance to increase it to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, subject to certain exceptions; and,

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.15a provides that a municipality may, when authorized by ordinance, appropriate the difference between the amount of its actual final appropriation and the 3.5% percentage rate as an exception to its final appropriations in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls in the County of Passaic finds it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2024 budget by up to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, in the interest of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and,

WHEREAS, the Township Council hereby determines that a 1.00% increase in the budget for said year, amounting to \$164,590.71 in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap Law, is advisable and necessary; and,

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WHEREAS the Township Council hereby determines that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls, in the County of Passaic, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2024 budget year, the final appropriations of the Township of Little Falls shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14, be increased by 3.5%, amounting to \$576,067.49 and that the CY 2024 municipal budget for the Township of Little Falls be approved and adopted in accordance with this ordinance; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that any that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance as introduced be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services within 5 days of introduction; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance upon adoption, with the recorded vote included thereon, be filed with said Director within 5 days after such adoption.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Chief Prall referred to previous discussion at the February 26, 2024 Meeting related to legislation regarding home invasions and stolen vehicles. Chief Prall reported statistics and methods that led to a reduction of these offenses in the Township.

COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Councilmember MURPHY commented on the Domestic Violence Prevention Committee Dine to Donate event at Bella Notte noting the proceeds will go towards the Passaic County Women’s Shelter. He announced that the next Dine to Donate is slated for March 27th at Maggie’s Town Tavern. The Committee will convene tomorrow and host a speaker from the Passaic County Prosecutor’s Office. Mr. Cuccia then clarified Councilmember MURPHY’s query as it related to Ordinance No. 1479 that the 2.5% related to appropriation cap not the tax levy.

Councilmember VANCHERI commented on the success of the Ramadan lighting ceremony. He announced plans for Autism Awareness month are in progress and will be reported when more information becomes available. Lastly, the Transportation Committee will convene this week.

Councilmember HABLITZ highlighted Library activities which included a Family Fun Night in collaboration with Little Falls Biz on March 22nd. Councilmember HABLITZ commented on the Ramadan book reading at the Library and the lighting ceremony at Wilmore Road Park. She then announced the Library will start a new monthly Facebook Live to let residents know what is going on in the Township. Lastly, on May 20th there will be an AARP Smart Driver Course hosted by the Library at the Civic Center.

Councilmember PATEL announced the monthly Health report will become a part of the Consent Agenda. Councilmember PATEL then reported the Infectious Disease team will be at the St. Patrick’s Day luncheon on March 15th with handouts on events and other information. Councilmember PATEL stated the Social Services team started classes on a mindfulness program with the 3rd grade students and will start with the 4th grade students soon. Lastly, the Rabies Clinic will be held on April 17th at the DPW.

Council President SGOBBA provided details on the additional banner for the Hometown Hero program. He then announced the St. Patrick’s Day event for seniors will be held at the Civic Center on March 15th and on March 27th, Dr. Zuckerman will discuss knee pain management.

PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

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 at 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 Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Patel, that the meeting be and it was opened to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Patel, 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 Murphy, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that the meeting be and it was closed to the public.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Meeting of March 11, 2024

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was moved by Councilmember Murphy, seconded by Councilmember Patel, that the meeting be and it was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Cynthia Kraus
Municipal Clerk