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

### Monday, March 9, 2015

Council President Louis Fontana called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. with the following members present: Pamela Porter, Joseph Maceri, and William Liess. Also present were Mayor Darlene Conti, Township Attorney William Northgrave, Township Administrator Charles Cuccia, and Municipal Clerk Cynthia Kraus.

Absent: Councilmember James Damiano

Township Employees present: DPW Superintendent Phillip Simone, Police Chief John Dmuchowski, Recreation Director John Pace, Fire Chief Jack Sweezy, and Tax Collector Denise Whiteside

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 6, 2015; 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 COMMENT**

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

Poll: Ayes: Porter, Maceri, Liess, and Council President Fontana

Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

<u>Rosemarie Bello-Truland</u>, High Court, commended the DPW for their hard work this winter as well as the Police for their help in a situation when she was stuck during a snowstorm.

Maria Cordonnier, 648 Upper Mountain Avenue, questioned why public comment is not at the end of the meeting, and requested a second public comment be reinstated. She stated she had written an article two meetings ago about the federal program for the Passaic River and Passaic Valley. At the last meeting, Councilmember Liess and Dorothy O'Haire announced the Army Corps excluded Little Falls from the program. She questioned what the rationale for exclusion was and if this could be rectified.

<u>Arnold Korotkin</u>, Long Hill Road, thanked Mr. Cuccia for the power point presentation handout on the budget. He queried who oversees the health inspection process and how inspections are conducted. He notified the Council an establishment within MSU has a certificate from the Board of Health that has been expired for two years.

Renea Shapiro, Little Falls ABC, agreed with Ms. Cordonnier's comments on placement of public comment and addition of a second public comment. She raised the issue of installing a divider in the Civic Center to enable simultaneous events. She noted 35 Stevens Avenue is the only one building in town with a 100 year history and hopes this building is preserved.

Reverend Ed Hawkins, 28 Ridge Avenue, informed the Council he has been in contact with the Mayor, the Council, and Administration, with regard to insufficient parking at the First Reform Church. He requested a designee be assigned to the concerns he highlighted in relation to pending ordinances. He recommended street parking be permitted on both sides of the street and that parking permits for overnight street parking be made available. He noted that in the event of a snowfall, the necessity of snow removal may be affected and appropriate accommodations made.

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

Poll: Ayes: Porter, Maceri, Liess and Council President Fontana

Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Council President FONTANA thanked Mr. Simone and Chief Dmuchowski for their hard work during the snow storms.

Council President FONTANA stated there is ample time to ask questions during the first public comment. Also, everyone is welcome to ask questions at any time outside of a meeting.

In response to Ms. Cordonnier, Mr. Cuccia stated his understanding was that a proposal that has not been funded, and the Township has not received any further information. Council President FONTANA recommended Mr. Cuccia attempt to ascertain additional information on this issue. Councilmember LIESS added a report at the last Regional Flood Board meeting indicated funding was going to be suspended which means they know they can proceed in a different way. He welcomed everyone to attend the monthly meetings of the Flood Board.

Mr. Cuccia stated he would follow-up with the Health Inspector regarding the outstanding health certificate at MSU University Café.

Council President FONTANA stated the Council would consider wall dividers at the civic center.

Council President FONTANA announced a report on the old police station building will be provided tonight.

Council President FONTANA noted a parking proposal is slated for review this evening and can be discussed further at that point.

#### ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

<u>2015 Municipal Budget Power Point Presentation</u>-Mr. Cuccia gave a power point presentation on the 2015 Municipal Budget.

Renea Shapiro, Walnut Street, commended the informational value of the report and thanked Mr. Cuccia.

<u>Louis Fernandez</u>, Harrison Street, questioned how much homeowners' taxes would increase. Mr. Cuccia explained it is based on the home's assessed value. Mr. Fernandez also requested further explanation of the SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) program, which Mr. Cuccia provided.

<u>Maria Cordonnier</u>, Upper Mountain Avenue, also commended Mr. Cuccia on an excellent presentation. She identified the school budget largely contributing to tax increases, and questioned if there was a method to liaison with the Board of Education to maintain a balance. Mr. Cuccia responded that the development program the Mayor and Council are collaborating on to replace ratables is very important and will gain some revenue back.

John Veteri, 133 Prospect Street, said there was an effort to assess a fee against students about ten years ago by the South Orange Mayor. They discussed this with the Township based on the loss of the land values. This would be a great thing for the Mayor and Council to pursue and possibly collaborate with another town. A modest fee would help out. Council President FONTANA remembers the effort to assess fees noting it died in the legislature.

Arnold Korotkin, Long Hill Road, referenced an article in the Record from 2010 regarding the fees for college students. He will send a copy of this to the Council. He informed the Council that every March the NJ State Budget Committee has a meeting regarding this, and he urged a representative from the Council attend and raise our concerns. He hoped the Council would consider testifying on March 18, 2015.

Rosemarie Bello-Truland, High Court, thanked Mr. Cuccia for the presentation. She suggested the Council collaborate with other towns with colleges in the area and start a coalition to obtain relief. In terms of the ambulances, she questioned if outside funding was available. Council President FONTANA responded the Council has considered grants in the past, which Chief Sweezy also confirmed.

<u>John Lockwood</u>, Shade Tree Commission, asked if being a Township entity, they can accept donations from Shop Rite or Masonic Temple. Mr. Northgrave responded that this should not be a problem.

Bill Organisciak, Yolanda Drive, raised a question of what constitutes the acquisition of \$25,000 under "Administration." Mr. Cuccia responded the acquisition is hardware and software, which the Council must approve before specifications are presented. Mr. Cuccia further explained that the two current servers are being replaced with one server. Mr. Cuccia requested the budget be approved for introduction at the next regular meeting. Council President FONTANA to apprise Administration.

## Re-Introduction of Bond Ordinance No. 1208

Mr. Cuccia announced the Bond Counsel and Financial Advisor discovered two additional bond ordinances that would prove money-saving to the Council.

It was moved by Councilmember Maceri, seconded by Councilmember Porter, that re-introduction of Bond Ordinance No. 1208 be and it will be re-introduced

Poll: Ayes: Porter, Maceri, Liess, Damiano and Council President Fontana

Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

## **Proposed Tax Court Settlement Resolutions**

Mr. Cuccia presented several tax court resolutions recommended by the Tax Appeal Counsel for consideration at the next Council meeting.

### Right of Way Agreement

Mr. Cuccia explained Light Tower Fiber Networks will place poles in the right of way and may be used by individual utilities other than PSE&G and Verizon.

### **MUNICIPAL CLERK's REPORT**

<u>Resolution(s) for Person-to-Person Transfers of Plenary Retail Consumption Licenses-</u> Mrs. Kraus presented two resolutions for person-to-person liquor license transfers for consideration at the next meeting. One transfer is from the bankruptcy issue voted on at the February 23, 2015 meeting which is now being sold, and the other is a liquor license that was sold.

#### **DPW SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Replacement of Sanitary Manhole Frames and Covers in the Singac Section of the Township -Mr. Simone reported approximately 85 new watertight manholes are planned to be replaced at price of about \$500 a piece. Bids are to be sought and a recommendation for an award will be brought forward at the next meeting. Additionally, in the Singac Section, PSE&G is slated to restore the roads half way, which will intersect with the sanitary sewers. Council President FONTANA queried whether the storm drains must be replaced with eco-friendly grates, adding that there is funding in the storm water program. Mr. Simone stated this can be done at the same time.

**Basketball Hoop Ordinance-** The language of the ordinance was clarified with the Mr. Northgrave, indicating that new ordinance requirements will be posted on residents' doors, and that they will have 48 hours to move their basketball hoops out of the roadway.

<u>Stormwater Regulations-</u> Mr. Simone informed the Council Stormwater Permits have expired as of last year. The DEP is in the process of adopting new regulations which involve completion of a questionnaire, some pertaining to the Planning Board, to be submitted annually. The new requirements also require annual inspection from the Township as well as provision of maps. The Council to be apprised as more information becomes available.

No Parking Ordinances for Remaining Areas of the Township— Mr. Simone requested Council permission to obtain measurements for parking to develop recommendations in compliance with the Township standards. Mr. Lindsay elaborated on the differences in the regulations with regard to road width. Councilmember MACERI requested clarification on the numbers on certain streets. Mr. Lindsay to follow-up. Upon acceptance of the recommendations, an ordinance is to be drafted. Signs, which cost roughly \$50 each, are to be erected in conformance with the municipal traffic code to inform residents of parking changes. Residents in the immediate area will also be notified.

**Recreation Center Bathroom Improvements-** Mr. Simone announced the proposals received and the lowest bidder for bathroom improvements at the Recreation Center. He recommended an award to the lowest bidder be made at the next meeting.

<u>Recreation Center HVAC Improvements-</u> Mr. Simone announced proposals for the bathroom improvements at the Recreation Center and recommended an award to the lowest bidder be made at the next meeting. Mr. Simone explained that these improvements would be funded by a bond ordinance. Proposals for window improvements will also be accepted.

#### **ENGINEER's REPORT**

<u>Transit Village</u>- Mr. Lindsay distributed a draft map to the Council, highlighting that the long linear zone from Main Street to the laundry area be broken up. He relayed Mr. Janota's recommendations to have three distinct areas which would contain a higher density and height. A draft zoning ordinance was reviewed with Mr. Janota and Mr. Cuccia. A final presentation is planned for the April 2015 Workshop meeting.

## **William Street Pump Station**

Mr. Lindsay reported three bids were accepted for this project, with CMS Construction as the lowest bid. A full report was provided to the Council and included a new generator and electrical work. Documents were reviewed for technical and legal sufficiency. A recommendation for award to be made at the next meeting.

### **OLD POLICE STATION COMMITTEE**

35 Stevens Avenue Building - Mr. Veteri distributed a document to the Mayor and Council detailing the Committee members, mission statement, and proposals put forth by the Committee upon evaluating potential future uses of the old Police station. Mr. Veteri cited recommendations from the Committee propose using the first floor as a business center and the second floor as office space. A funding source was identified through the County Open Space Coordinator and would require applying for historic designation, the process of which would cost between \$15-\$20,000. The application is due March 13, 2015. A lengthy discussion ensued with regard to implication of affecting other grants, the possibility of selling the building, experiences of other towns with similar projects, and the short timeframe to consider this. Some concern was expressed as to whether the Township is obliged to designate the building as historic. Mr. Northgrave requested review of the grant application as he had reservations regarding the language. Mr. Veteri explained his understanding through discussions with the Open Space Coordinator that since this is a non-profit requesting a grant, the Township is not the applicant, and does not have to prioritize grants. Therefore, other pending grants should not be jeopardized. He further noted that if the Council does not approve, the next application period would be next year. Mr. Veteri asked for the Council's approval for a letter of support specifying the Township is not bound to designate the building, but supports conducting an evaluation to designate the building. A consensus was taken and a recommendation put forth for Mr. Veteri to forward the grant application to Mr. Northgrave's office for review.

# COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Councilmember LIESS reported on literature he received requiring government to function on transparency. He declared this is how our government operates.

There being no further business to come before the meeting it was moved by Councilmember Porter, seconded by Councilmember Maceri, that the meeting be and it was adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Cynthia Kraus		
Municipal Clerk		