

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

Monday, May 8, 2023

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 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 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.**

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION – At this time, Mayor Damiano read the Proclamation recognizing May, 2023 as Mental Health Awareness Month in the Township of Little Falls.

LYME DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION – Mayor Damiano then read the Proclamation recognizing the month of May, 2023 as Lyme Disease Awareness Month in the Township of Little Falls.

MAYOR’S APPOINTMENT OF CAROL MILLER TO THE LITTLE FALLS LIBRARY BOARD FOR A FIVE-YEAR TERM EXPIRING 5/31/28 WITH ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE COUNCIL

It was moved by Councilmember Hablitz, seconded by Councilmember Murphy, to approve the Mayor’s appointment of Carol Miller to the Little Falls Library Board for a five-year term expiring 5/31/28:

Ms. Miller approached the podium and provided a brief history of her service on the Library Board.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Mayor Damiano then reviewed the new Complaint Portal available on the Township website, which will be used to monitor all concerns. The Mayor emphasized that in the case of true or medical emergencies, 9-1-1 should be called, and for non-emergency police related emergencies, the police non-emergency number should be utilized. Councilmember VANCHERI requested an email blast be sent to notify residents and consideration of a video tutorial as well. Mayor Damiano agreed and added that various forms of notification including email blasts and QR codes will be available to bring individuals directly to the web page.

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. Please give your name and address for the record. 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.

Anne Kahwaty – thanked the Mayor for supporting the Library, the appointment of Carol Miller, and the Proclamation for National Library Week.

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.

Meeting of May 8, 2023

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. AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER RESOLUTION FOR DOWNTOWN STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS NJDOT PHASE 4 (LF SECTION 2)- Mayor Damiano explained the change order for Section 2 which was due to the relocation of decorative light pole bases resulting in additional work.
2. AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER RESOLUTION FOR DOWNTOWN STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS (LF SECTION 4) – Mayor Damiano explained the composition of the change order which involved a credit, change in total amount of pipe and conduit used, and small changes to the entirety of the work which included removal of a tree and replacement of a tree.
3. RESOLUTION ALLOWING SALE AND POSSESSION OF ALCHOHOLIC BEVERAGES AT LITTLE FALLS FARMER’S MARKET – Mayor Damiano elaborated on the Resolution. Councilmember HABLITZ commented and requested clarification. Mr. Wenzel stated there is a special Statewide permit that is issued by the State ABC that is not a local ABC issued license, for distilleries, breweries, and vineyards to sell those alcoholic beverages at Farmers Markets and only to sell at Farmers markets. It does not allow consumption in any form and because it is a State permit, the local ABC Board cannot overrule it. Once a distillery, brewery or vineyard gets this State ABC permit to sell at a Farmers Market, all they need is approval from the Farmers Market to be there. Mr. Wenzel then summarized that the Township’s ordinance allows for the Council in this set of circumstances to pass a resolution to allow the sale of alcohol, not the consumption, on public property.
4. BOND ORDINANCE NO. 1459 – AUTHORIZING UNDERTAKING OF VARIOUS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND ACQUISITION OF NEW ADDITIONAL OR REPLACEMENT OF EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY - The Mayor provided the breakdown of the Ordinance which included authorization of \$350,000 for replacement of school security equipment for use by the Police Department, sanitary sewer improvements and improvements to municipal facilities.

ACTION ITEMS:

It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Murphy, to approve the following resolution A through D:

**RESOLUTION [A] 23-05-08 - #1
RESOLUTION AWARDDING CHANGE ORDER TO GRADE CONSTRUCTION FOR THE DOWNTOWN STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS NJDOT PHASE 4 (LF SECTION 2) PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the Township Council has received a recommendation from the Township Engineer, Alaimo Group, regarding the contract for the Downtown Streetscape Improvements NJDOT Phase 4 (LF Section 2) Project 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 Downtown Streetscape Improvements NJDOT Phase 4 (LF Section 2), 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 \$30,178.73, making the revised contract amount \$684,385.73.

**RESOLUTION [B] 23-05-08 - #2
RESOLUTION AWARDDING CHANGE ORDER TO GRADE CONSTRUCTION FOR THE DOWNTOWN STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS (LF SECTION 4) PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the Township Council has received a recommendation from the Township Engineer, Alaimo Group, regarding the contract for the Downtown Streetscape Improvements (LF Section 4) Project 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 Downtown Streetscape Improvements (LF Section 4), 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 \$20,154.05, making the revised contract amount \$409,754.45.

**RESOLUTION [C] 23-05-08 - #3
RESOLUTION TO ALLOW THE SALE AND POSSESSION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AT THE LITTLE FALLS FARMER’S MARKET FOR YEAR 2023**

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls sponsors a Famer’s Market on Sundays from May to October; and

WHEREAS, the Farmer’s Market takes place in the municipal parking lot adjacent to the Township Hall which area is a public space; and

WHEREAS, various merchants who attend the Farmer’s Market have expressed their interest in selling alcoholic beverages and to offer samples of same to customers; and

WHEREAS, these merchants have the appropriate State issued license to sell alcoholic beverages and offer samples to customers at farmer’s markets; and

WHEREAS, the Little Falls Municipal Code states that the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages are disallowed in public spaces under §11-22;

WHEREAS, the Municipal Council has the option pursuant to §11-23 to allow such sales and consumption on public property by way of resolution

WHEREAS, the Municipal Council of the Township of Little Falls, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey now sets forth the fee as follows;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls, County of Passaic, as follows:

1. The sale of alcoholic beverages shall be allowed to occur on the municipal parking lot area behind the Township Hall during the operating days and hours of the Little Falls Farmer’s Market for the year 2023, with the following restrictions:
 - a. Vendors who have valid and current state issued liquor licenses to sell at farmer’s markets are required to present those to the Municipal Clerk prior to operating at the farmer’s market

Meeting of May 8, 2023

- b. Samples of alcoholic beverages for consumption by adults on same premises shall be allowed if approved under the State issued permit
- 2. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage.

Bill List

RESOLUTION [D]23-05-08 - #4

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.1457 - The public hearing on Ordinance No. 1457, “**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. 1457 be and it was closed.

It was moved by Councilmember Murphy, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that Ordinance No. 1457 be and it was adopted.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Ordinance No.1458 - The public hearing on Ordinance No. 1458, “**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. 1458 be and it was closed.

It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Patel, that Ordinance No. 1458 be and it was adopted.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Ordinance No. 1459 - It was moved by Councilmember Hablitz, seconded by Councilmember Murphy, that there be introduced and the meeting of May 22, 2023 set as the date for the public hearing of the following:

BOND ORDINANCE 1459

BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE UNDERTAKING OF VARIOUS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND THE ACQUISITION OF NEW ADDITIONAL OR REPLACEMENT EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY IN, BY AND FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, IN THE COUNTY OF PASSAIC, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$350,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS.

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

Section 1. The Township of Little Falls, in the County of Passaic, State of New Jersey (the "Township") is hereby authorized to undertake various public improvements and to acquire new additional or replacement equipment and machinery in, by and for said Township, as more particularly described in Section 4 hereof. Said improvements shall include all work, materials and appurtenances necessary and suitable therefor.

Section 2. There is hereby appropriated to the payment of the cost of making the improvements described in Sections 1 and 4 hereof (hereinafter referred to as "purposes"), the respective amounts of money hereinafter stated as the appropriation for said respective purposes. Said appropriation shall be met from the proceeds of the sale of the bonds authorized and the down payment appropriated by this ordinance. Said improvements shall be made as general improvements and no part of the cost thereof shall be assessed against property specially benefited.

Section 3. It is hereby determined and stated that the making of such improvements is not a current expense of said Township.

Section 4. The several purposes hereby authorized for the financing of which said obligations are to be issued are set forth in the following "Schedule of Improvements, Purposes and Amounts" which schedule also shows (1) the amount of the appropriation and the estimated cost of each such purpose, and (2) the amount of each sum which is to be provided by the down payment hereinafter appropriated to finance such purposes, and (3) the estimated maximum amount of bonds and notes to be issued for each such purpose, and (4) the period of usefulness of each such purpose, according to its reasonable life, computed from the date of said bonds:

SCHEDULE OF IMPROVEMENTS, PURPOSES AND AMOUNTS

- A. Acquisition of new additional or replacement equipment and machinery consisting of school security equipment for the use of the Police Department.

Appropriation and Estimated Cost	\$100,000
Down Payment Appropriated	\$ 5,000
Bonds and Notes Authorized	\$ 95,000
Period of Usefulness	5 years

- B. Undertaking of sanitary sewer improvements at various locations.

Appropriation and Estimated Cost	\$150,000
Down Payment Appropriated	\$ 7,500
Bonds and Notes Authorized	\$142,500
Period of Usefulness	40 years

Meeting of May 8, 2023

- C. Undertaking of various improvements to municipal facilities and property. It is hereby determined and stated that the public facilities being improved are of "Class B" or equivalent construction as defined in Section 22 of the Local Bond Law (Chapter 2 of Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes Annotated, as amended; the "Local Bond Law").

Appropriation and Estimated Cost	\$100,000
Down Payment Appropriated	\$ 5,000
Bonds and Notes Authorized	\$ 95,000
Period of Usefulness	15 years

Aggregate Appropriation and Estimated Cost	\$350,000
Aggregate Down Payment Appropriated	\$ 17,500
Aggregate Amount of Bonds and Notes Authorized	\$332,500

Section 5. The cost of such purposes, as hereinbefore stated, includes the aggregate amount of \$17,500 which is estimated to be necessary to finance the cost of such purposes, 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 6. It is hereby determined and stated that moneys exceeding \$17,500, 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 purposes. The sum of \$17,500 is hereby appropriated from such moneys to the payment of the cost of said purposes.

Section 7. To finance said purposes, bonds of said Township of an aggregate principal amount not exceeding \$332,500 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 8. To finance said purposes, bond anticipation notes of said Township of an aggregate principal amount not exceeding \$332,500 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 9. 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 bond anticipation 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 10. It is hereby determined and declared that the average period of usefulness of said purposes, according to their reasonable lives, taking into consideration the respective amounts of bonds or notes authorized for said purposes, is a period of 22.85 years computed from the date of said bonds.

Section 11. 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 \$332,500 and that the issuance of the bonds and notes authorized by this ordinance will be within all debt limitations prescribed by said Local Bond Law. Section 12. 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 purposes, shall be applied to the payment of the cost of such purposes, or, if bond anticipation notes have been issued, to the payment of the bond anticipation notes, and the amount of bonds authorized for such purposes shall be reduced accordingly.

Section 13. 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 14. The Township intends to issue the bonds or notes to finance the cost of the improvements described in Sections 1 and 4 of this bond ordinance. 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 15. 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 16. This ordinance shall take effect twenty days after the first publication thereof after final passage.

At this time, Chief Prall announced the Utext UDrive UPay initiative has been completed and thereafter presented statistics relevant to the grant.

COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Councilmember PATEL reported the Clifton Health Department will hold an oral cancer screening at the Clifton Health Department on May 16th and the Health Fair will be held at the Civic Center on May 22nd. Councilmember PATEL then announced according to the US Department of Health, as of May 11th, the Covid-19 public emergency ends. Councilmember PATEL will continue to provide updates related to the announcement as information becomes available.

Councilmember VANCHERI provided a progress report on Memorial Day weekend events and noted the Transportation Committee will convene on May 10th.

Councilmember HABLITZ reported on the success of the Bike Rodeo and thanked all involved. Councilmember HABLITZ congratulated Carol Miller on her reappointment and announced Library events including a Writer's Café on May 10th, Yoga for Kids on May 12th, and a Mommy Dearest Mother's Day. Lastly, she noted the Farmers Market will commence in two weeks. At this time, Council President SGOBBA recommended the Mayor request the Township Planner explore the possibility of bike lanes in the Township.

Councilmember MURPHY discussed the second reading of Ordinance No. 1458 pertaining to the Township calendar and encouraged participation. Councilmember MURPHY announced the Domestic Violence Prevention Committee will hold a trivia night fundraiser with details to follow. Additionally, monthly email blasts will include a statistic of the month as well as upcoming events where Committee members will be present. Per Council President SGOBBA's query, Councilmember MURPHY stated at this time only Little Falls businesses will be included in the Township calendar.

Meeting of May 8, 2023

Council President SGOBBA reported the Senior Advisory Ice Cream Social will be held in June with details to follow.

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.

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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, 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 Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Murphy, 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.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was moved by Councilmember Murphy, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that the meeting be and it was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Cynthia Kraus
Municipal Clerk