

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

Monday, September 18, 2017

Council President Anthony Sgobba called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Marc Benitez, Maria Cordonnier, William Liess, and Chris Vancheri. Also present were Mayor James Damiano, Township Engineer Dennis Lindsay, Township Attorney Joe Wenzel, Township Administrator Charles Cuccia, and Municipal Clerk Cynthia Kraus.

Absent: Police Chief Post.

Township Employees present: DPW Superintendent Philip Simone.

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 3, 2017; 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.

PROCLAMATION HONORING THE LFAC 7th/8th GRADE GIRLS' SOFTBALL TEAM – After reading the Proclamation, Mayor Damiano invited each team member to receive the Proclamation honoring the team's win in the 2017 Passaic Valley Softball Association Championship.

OVARIAN CANCER AWARENESS PROCLAMATION – At this time, Mayor Damiano read the Proclamation to proclaim September Ovarian Cancer Month. Mayor Damiano recognized Helene Swank, a Little Falls resident who was in attendance and facilitated bringing this issue to light.

At this time, Mr. Wenzel explained that he participated in the St. Baldwick's Foundation shave fundraiser which raises funds for children with cancer.

PRESENTATION BY LITTLE FALLS SUPERINTENDENT TRACY MARINELLI – Councilmember CORDONNIER welcomed and introduced all the Little Falls educators in attendance.

Superintendent Tracy Marinelli then presented the educational components of the school district. Throughout her detailed presentation, she referred to the six areas of the strategic plan devised in 2014 to span through 2019 which included: 1) student achievement, 2) curriculum, 3) technology, 4) facilities, finance, safety, and security, 5) culture and climate, and 6) communication and public relations.

Council President SGOBBA invited the public to comment at this time.

Marilyn Anthony, 181 Long Hill Road, stated she was very impressed with the presentation and that the Township is fortunate to have Ms. Marinelli as Superintendent.

PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL MATTERS

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

Poll: Ayes: Benitez, Cordonnier, Liess, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Al Attianese, 27 Dewey Avenue, stated he was impressed by Superintendent Marinelli's presentation. He addressed the Mayor and questioned the extent of Council involvement regarding recent allegations of misappropriation of funds involving School Boards from Schools No. 2 and No. 3. Mr. Attianese noted a Local School Board meeting is convening tonight at 7pm and urged the Council to follow up on the results of that meeting.

Mayor Damiano stated he currently has little comment, however, as information becomes available it will be made available the public. The Mayor indicated the Township will stay on top of the situation.

Roger McNeil, 6 Fourth Avenue, praised the DPW and the quality work done the fields, parks, and vacant lots. Mr. McNeil also thanked whomever was involved in the rumble strip project and was glad it was put aside.

Marilynn Anthony, 181 Long Hill Road, Unit B4, questioned the safety of the traffic configuration near Notch Road and whether any lighting has been considered.

The Mayor expressed his belief that there is one light at the location in reference. With respect to the increased traffic, Mayor Damiano summarized that there are two conflicting improvements going on simultaneously. However, as the same contractor is involved with both projects, the Township has asked the contractor to coordinate the projects in a better manner. Mayor Damiano identified the two projects as the six year Route 3/Route 46 project responsible for the Notch Bridge closure, and the PSE&G upgrade of infrastructure and electric from the substation located near the entrance across from the Notch bridge. Part of the latter project includes digging up the road on Notch Road. Once PSEG upgrades are done, the Mayor hoped for a more coordinated closure, stating that vehicles

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will be able to travel onto Route 46 eastbound on Notch Road. Mayor Damiano indicated that he will check to make sure the light is on in the area of concern.

Renea Shapiro, Walnut Street, thanked the Mayor and Council, Mr. Simone and the DPW, and Chief Post and the Police Department, for their support of the ABC Concerts this summer which were bigger and better than ever. Ms. Shapiro asked the Council’s approval for the ABC to adopt a park in the flooded area, if even on a trial basis. She requested the concept be considered for a future Workshop Agenda.

Council President SGOBBA stated he will schedule a meeting with the Mayor and staff to discuss whether it would be possible to have the issue on the next Workshop Agenda.

Helene Swank, 34 Pleasant Avenue, thanked Mayor Damiano for inviting her tonight. She has been a resident for 34 years and thanked the Mayor for his support and prompt response to her email to raise awareness of ovarian cancer. She asked the Council’s permission to place information cards and ribbons in Town Hall and signs where appropriate.

Council President SGOBBA directed Ms. Swank to provide Mr. Cuccia with the items to be displayed.

Mike Schiff, 100 Long Hill Road, explained the (Little Falls Education Fund) LFEF is proud to support the schools where budgets fall short. He announced a big fundraiser will be an Oktoberfest at the Russian Hall on October 27, 2017.

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

Poll: Ayes: Benitez, Cordonnier, Liess, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

ACTION ITEMS:

It was moved by Councilmember Benitez, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that the following be approved:

RESOLUTIONS

Indemnification Agreement

**RESOLUTION [A] 17-09-18 - #1
RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, COUNTY OF PASSAIC,
AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AN INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT
WITH RESPECT TO A RESIDENTIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

WHEREAS, Oakwood Estates at Great Notch, LLC (“Indemnitor”) is the owner and developer of a twenty-four (24) lot single family subdivision known as Mountaintop Terrace located within the Township and a Developer’s Agreement was entered into by and between Oakwood and Little Falls on or about May 31, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Oakwood has constructed the road known as Mountaintop Terrace; however, the road has not yet been dedicated to the Township; and

WHEREAS, several of the new homeowners on Mountaintop Terrace are in need of garbage and recycling pickup in front of their homes;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls, in the County of Passaic and State of New Jersey, that the Township as follows:

1. The Township will permit its contractor to pick up garbage and recycling at Mountaintop Terrace in accordance with the terms included in the Indemnification Agreement.
2. The Mayor is hereby authorized to execute the Agreement substantially in the form as attached hereto as Exhibit A, subject to such additions, deletions, modifications or amendments deemed necessary by the Mayor in his discretion in consultation with counsel, which additions, deletions, modifications or amendments do not alter the substantive rights and obligations of the parties thereto, and to take all other necessary and appropriate action to effectuate the Agreement.
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Poll: Ayes: Benitez, Cordonnier, Liess, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

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

Payment of Bills

**RESOLUTION [B] 17-09-18- #2
PAYMENT OF BILLS**

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: Benitez, Cordonnier, Liess, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:

ADMINISTRATOR:

1. TAX REFUND RESOLUTION – Mr. Cuccia informed the Council approval will be sought at the next Regular Meeting for tax refunds for overpayments.

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2. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING IN REM TAX FORECLOSURES – Mr. Cuccia instructed this ordinance pertains to tax title liens the Township has obtained for properties delinquent on taxes. Mr. Cuccia explained the Township provides property owners every opportunity to redeem those liens. For the properties that have not, it is appropriate to go through the foreclosure process, and get the properties back on the tax rolls. Council President SGOBBA questioned whether foreclosure rates have increased, to which Mr. Cuccia replied that he has not seen a large number at this point.
3. MEMORIAL PARK LIGHTING IMPROVEMENTS – Mr. Cuccia announced a Resolution will be presented to Council for approval at the next Regular Meeting from the Open Space fund in the amount of \$50,000. The monies will support lights improvements and the pertinences related thereto at Wilmore Park to enhance safety. After the \$50,000 is appropriated, approximately \$383,000 in the Open Space Fund should remain for use by the Township.
4. REPORT ON VIEW OBSTRUCTIONS DUE TO OVERGROWN LANDSCAPING – Mr. Cuccia provided a follow up report. He noted that an email from the inspector was included in Councilmember packets. Mr. Cuccia stated that most of the locations have been addressed, and follow-up continues in order to obtain a resolution with the remaining properties.
5. ORDINANCE CREATING CHAPTER 164 IN THE TOWNSHIP CODE TITLED, “REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PROPERTIES PENDING FORECLOSURE.” – Mr. Cuccia announced this ordinance will be presented for approval at the next Regular Meeting. Mr. Wenzel elaborated that the ordinance that would require a lender, at the initiation of the foreclosure procedure, to identify that they are foreclosing on the property and register that with the Township. In essence, this ordinance enables the Township to have a contact to be responsible for the upkeep of the property.

DPW SUPERINTENDENT:

1. PURCHASE OF NEW LAWN MOWER THROUGH BERGEN COUNTY CO-OP – Mr. Simone explained the current lawnmower is 18 years old. A new mower could be purchased under the Bergen County Co-Op and would save approximately \$7,500. Next year if the Township bought the attachments, two mowers would be available to maintain the ballfields. Mr. Simone requested Council approval to purchase the lawnmower and to join the Bergen County Co-Op. In response to Council President SGOBBA, Mr. Simone informed him that the attachment will be about \$5,000-6,000 for the ballfields. The total cost of the mower and canopy without attachment is \$26,737.
2. DISCUSSION OF PARKING PERMIT FEES –Mr. Simone recalled that Ordinance No. 1206 encompassed the parking lots in the municipality including School No. 1, the Civic Center, 35 Stevens Avenue, the Municipal Building, and Paterson Avenue. Mr. Simone requested clarification regarding the parking fee and questioned if the Council continued to be in agreement with the parking fee set at \$300. Councilmember CORDONNIER recalled her previous conversations with Chief Post and the Mayor regarding the area near School No. 1. She expressed that this might be a good way for the teachers to have parking and deter parking near the Old Police Station. She recollected the consideration of not charging for the permit for teachers for the school year. The area near the Civic Center and Old Police Station was not discussed. She requested identification as to whether the issue is to deter overnight parking or collect a fee. Council President SGOBBA requested Mr. Simone provide the information on the areas of concern to him. Council President SGOBBA will poll the Councilmembers individually and report back at a future meeting.

COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Councilmember BENITEZ announced the Prevention of Domestic Violence Committee will hold an annual vigil at the Municipal Building on October 19, 2017. A program with speakers is being organized. October is Breast Cancer Awareness month and Domestic Violence Awareness month.

Councilmember VANCHERI thanked everyone who attended the 9-11 ceremony, specifically thanking all those who supported the event. The Technology Committee is aiming to finish the website at the end of this month. The Wildlife Committee convened last week to discuss development of a feedback survey. The Committee will collaborate with Mr. Cuccia and the web developer to create an online survey, the results of which will help form the Committee's next step. Councilmember VANCHERI had spoken to County representatives to request additional deer crossing signs for County roads. The Passaic River Flood Advisory Board met last week and discussed the possibility of hosting a panel discussion for residents to provide an update on FEMA and flood procedures.

Councilmember CORDONNIER thanked Councilmember Benitez for organizing the Domestic Violence vigil. She called attention to five poems displayed in the Municipal Building rotunda. The poems were written by Little Falls students and were winners of the 9-11 contest, and will be displayed for the next month. Councilmember CORDONNIER stated she and Mr. Cuccia, the Mayor, and a Regional Director for Community Relations for NJ Transit convened to address quality of life issues pertaining to the train station. As a result, the volume has been turned down on the speakers and machinery has been removed at the stations. A meeting with the County to review initiatives for safe streets and crosswalks is also planned. Finally, Councilmember CORDONNIER reported Memorial Park will have eight lights installed which will be funded by Open Space funds.

Councilmember LIESS reiterated the Senior Advisory Board will host a free pizza party on September 27, 2017 and will include a presentation on foot and ankle health. The Annual Harvest Moon dinner dance will be held on October 27, 2017. Those interested should contact the Civic Center prior to October 16, 2017.

As the Mayor's representative on the Library Board, Council President SGOBBA announced the Library received a \$500 check from the Rotary at the last Library Board meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

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

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Poll: Ayes: Benitez, Cordonnier, Liess, Vancheri, and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

June Swank, 39 Pleasant Avenue, requested the Council address an abandoned home on 29 Pleasant Avenue. She stated animals have been sighted in and around the home and the building is in disrepair. She expressed concern this is a health and safety issue. Council President SGOBBA requested Ms. Swank provide the information on the home to Mr. Cuccia to have the zoning official address.

Renea Shapiro, Walnut Street, in reference to parking permit fees, questioned whether residents who live in proposed areas would be required to pay for permits. She also queried whether there could be a designated area for residents who live near businesses to park, as to facilitate maintenance and operation of the lots, especially in snow conditions.

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

Poll: Ayes: Cordonnier, Liess, 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 Cordonnier, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that the meeting be and it was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Cynthia Kraus
Municipal Clerk