

Township of Vernon

TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 13, 2020

The Regular Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was convened at 7:00 p.m. on January 13, 2020 in the Vernon Municipal Center, 21 Church Street, Vernon, New Jersey with Council President Harry Shortway presiding.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Adequate notice of this meeting had been provided to the public and the press on January 7, 2020 and was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-7.

ROLL CALL

Present were Council Members John Auberger, Jean Murphy, Mark Van Tassel, Kelly Weller and Council President Shortway, Attorney Joshua Zielinski, Business Administrator Charles Voelker and Mayor Howard Burrell.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Council President Shortway led the assemblage for the salute to the flag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Current Agenda Items Only)

Council President Shortway asked for a motion to open the meeting to Public Comments.

MOVED: John Auberger
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel
All members present voted in favor.

Margaret DiStasi – Silver Spruce, questioned when the resolutions from tonight’s agenda would be available for public viewing. Ms. DiStasi could not find the resolutions on the Township’s website.

Seeing no one further wishing to come forward, Council President Shortway asked for a motion to close the meeting to Public Comments.

MOVED: John Auberger
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel
All members present voted in favor.

MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes December 9, 2019

Council President Shortway asked for a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 9, 2019.

MOVED: John Auberger
SECOND: Jean Murphy

A roll call vote was taken:
AYES: John Auberger, Jean Murphy, Mark Van Tassel
NAYES: None
ABSTAIN: Kelly, Weller, Harry Shortway
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Vernon Township MUA

Council President Shortway started the discussion saying he feels now is the time to dissolve the Vernon Township MUA to allow Mayor Burrell the opportunity to oversee the waste water system on a daily basis with. Vernon Township MUA Director. This would be moved into a part-time position. Council President Shortway said the current commission should work as an ad hoc committee to advise the administration. Council President Shortway stated that due to financial difficulties or mismanagement, the dissolution of the authority will be in the public interest and will serve the health, welfare or convenience inhabitants of the local unit or units. The dissolution will achieve a more efficient means for providing financing local and public facilities.

Council President Shortway proposed a committee. The committee would consist of Council President Shortway, another Council Member and the Council can decide who that would be, two of the MUA Commissioners, the MUA CFO, who is also the Township CFO, the MUA Director, a member of the Environmental Commission, and an independent water expert.

The Committee would explore the legal and financial ramifications by suggesting ordinances to create EDU's to reduce the deficit caused by the 250,000 gallons per day of unused sewer allocations and to recharge clean water into the aquifer to reduce the current water deficit. Council President Shortway said the sewer obligation is one of the largest challenges to Vernon Township. Just saying we are going to do something is not working and we need to actively look at doing this.

Council President Shortway would ask the committee to move forward with pump house 2, adopt an ordinance requiring that all septic systems be pumped every three to five years, an RFP for a vendor to pump out all septic systems within the Township's borders and wastewaters to be discharged to the new pump house and treated and injected into the aquifer. The committee would realize what the projected savings would be and have a report not later than stated that June 2020.

Council Member Murphy stated that during the Mountain Creek bankruptcy situation the Council was advised not to touch the MUA. Council Member Murphy said she is concerned with the legal ramifications of dissolving the MUA and would like a legal opinion in case the MUA is disbanded and Mountain Creek goes Chapter 11.

Township Attorney Zielinski feels there are two issues. The first is to form a committee to investigate whether the MUA should be disbanded or not. The second issue is if the MUA is disbanded what is the legal effect under the Mountain Creek Agreement.

Mayor Burrell commented saying that he has heard that the MUA was mismanaged. Mayor Burrell does know that Vernon has a significant sewer obligation and we need to take action. The Mayor says he likes the idea of a committee. He said we have a sewer system that is supposed to benefit the entire town, yet we have a very small group of citizens that are paying a lot of money related to this. We need to see if this can be changed. Mayor Burrell said if this is our resource, from the standpoint of the Mayor, he is not opposed to managing it with the right support and advice. He feels that putting together a committee is the right thing to do.

Council Member Murphy expressed interest to be on the committee.

Council President Shortway asked for a motion to move forward with the committee

Council Member Auberger made a motion to form the committee and was seconded by Council Member Van Tassel. All member voted in favor of the motion.
Motion is carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution #20-47: Total Disabled Veteran

Resolution #20-48: Resolution Accepting the Completion of Road Improvement Project to Warwick Turnpike

Resolution #20-49: Authorizing Change Order #1 of Contract for Proposed Improvements of Line Striping to Higgins Drive and Walsh Way with Denville Line Painting

- Resolution #20-50:** Authorizing Change Order #1 of Contract for Proposed Improvements of Line Striping to Lake Pochung Road with Denville Line Painting
- Resolution #20-51:** Resolution Authorizing Fireworks to be Displayed on February 3, 2020 Within the Township of Vernon
- Resolution #20-52:** Resolution Adopting a Domestic Violence Policy
- Resolution #20-53:** Resolution Authorizing Agreement with the Vernon Police Athletic League to Administer and Run Recreation Programs
- Resolution #20-54:** Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Shared Service Agreement Between the Township of Wantage and the Township of Wantage Fire Department and Township of Vernon
- Resolution #20-56:** Resolution Accepting the Completion of Road Improvement Project to Higgins Drive & Walsh Way
- Resolution #20-57:** Authorize the Award of a Required Disclosure Contract with SREC Resources for Purchase of Communications Backup Generator
- Resolution #20-58:** Transfer Resolution-Balance Transfers
- Resolution #20-59:** Authorizing Contracts with Certain Approved State Contract Vendors Under T0155 and T0142
- Resolution #20-60:** Authorizing Contracts with Certain Approved Sussex County Cooperative Contact Vendors
- Resolution #20-61:** Authorizing the Collective Bargaining Agreement with New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association Local #285, Vernon Township

Council President Shortway read the titles of the resolutions. Council President Shortway asked for a motion to approve Resolutions #20-47 through #20-61.

MOVED: John Auberger
 SECOND: Mark Van Tassel

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: John Auberger, Jean Murphy, Mark Van Tassel, Kelly Weller, Harry Shortway
 NAYES: None
 ABSTAIN: None
 ABSENT:

Motion carried to approve Resolutions #20-47 through #20-61.

RESOLUTION #20-47

TOTAL DISABLED VETERAN

WHEREAS, THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS on December 26, 2019 awarded Julio Maldonado a 100% permanent and totally disabled veteran: and,

WHEREAS, as of said date the law exempts said property from taxation,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Vernon hereby authorizes the Tax Collector to cancel the taxes for 2020 in the amount of \$4,142.46 for Block 46 Lot 8 also known as [REDACTED].

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Township Tax Collector.

RESOLUTION #20-48

**RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE COMPLETION OF
ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT TO WARWICK TURNPIKE**

WHEREAS, the Township awarded contracts for the Warwick Turnpike Road Improvement Project to Tilcon New York, Inc. and Denville Line Painting awarded by Resolution #19-169 awarded on August 12, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Warwick Turnpike Road Improvement Project has been completed, and inspected as per the plans and specifications; and

WHEREAS, the Township Engineer has submitted a letter dated December 10, 2019 which states that the said contracts have been completed in full and that it is recommended that the Warwick Turnpike Road Project be accepted by the Township Council.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Vernon Township Council accept this project identified as Warwick Turnpike Road Improvement Project as final and complete; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption according to law.

RESOLUTION # 20-49

**AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER #1 OF CONTRACT FOR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
OF LINE STRIPING
TO HIGGINS DRIVE AND WALSH WAY WITH DENVILLE LINE PAINTING**

WHEREAS, on October 17, 2019, by way of adoption of Resolution #19-202, the Council of the Township of Vernon awarded a contract to Denville Line Painting for Line Striping Higgins Drive & Walsh Way which contract provided for an expenditure of \$487.20; and

WHEREAS, in a memo dated December 2, 2019, the Township Engineer states that the contract requires a Change Order #1 by the addition of one item in total amount of \$20.64 resulting in an adjusted total contract amount of \$507.84; and

WHEREAS, the Township Engineer, in concurrence with the Mayor, recommends approving Change Order No. 1 which will increase the total contract amount by \$20.64 for an adjusted total contract amount of \$507.84.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the Township of Vernon that it hereby approves the Township Engineer's recommendations and authorizes the Mayor to execute said Change Order No. 1 for said project increasing the total contract amount with Denville Line Painting to \$507.84; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be forwarded to Denville Line Painting and the Township Engineer.

RESOLUTION # 20-50

**AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER #1 OF CONTRACT FOR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
OF LINE STRIPING
TO LAKE POCHUNG ROAD WITH DENVILLE LINE PAINTING**

WHEREAS, on October 17, 2019, by way of adoption of Resolution #19-200, the Council of the Township of Vernon awarded a contract to Denville Line Painting for Line Striping Lake Pochung Road which contract provided for an expenditure of \$8,410.00; and

WHEREAS, in a memo dated December 2, 2019, the Township Engineer states that the contract requires a Change Order #1 by the reduction of three items in total amount of \$821.84 resulting in an adjusted total contract amount of \$7,588.26; and

WHEREAS, the Township Engineer, in concurrence with the Mayor, recommends approving Change Order No. 1 which will decrease the total contract amount by \$821.84 for an adjusted total contract amount of \$7,588.26.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the Township of Vernon that it hereby approves the Township Engineer's recommendations and authorizes the Mayor to execute said Change Order No. 1 for said project decreasing the total contract amount with Denville Line Painting to \$7,588.26; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be forwarded to Denville Line Painting and the Township Engineer.

RESOLUTION #20-51

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING FIREWORKS TO BE DISPLAYED ON FEBRUARY 3, 2020 WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF VERNON

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A.21:3-1et seq. Explosive and Fireworks, provides that a Municipal Governing Body must authorize the display of fireworks within its boundaries as a pre-condition to such display in accordance with the New Jersey Fire Prevention Code; and

WHEREAS, Mountain Creek Resort has submitted an application to Vernon Township to conduct a fireworks display for Special Olympics on February 3, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the proposed fireworks display will take place at 200 Route 94, in the Waterpark area; and

WHEREAS, Mountain Creek Resort has engaged in a contract with Garden State Fireworks, Millington, NJ, to perform the public fireworks and special effects display and has provided the required certificate of liability insurance to the Township.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of Vernon, in the County of Sussex, hereby authorizes the fireworks display, performed by Garden State Fireworks Inc. on February 3, 2019, at Mountain Creek Resort, located at 200 Route 94, Vernon upon satisfaction of all statutory and departmental requirements.

RESOLUTION # 20-52

RESOLUTION ADOPTING A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY

WHEREAS, on or about October 15, 2019, the New Jersey Civil Service Commission issued a Domestic Violence Policy (DVP) for Public Employers, which is attached hereto: and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 11A:2-6a(b)(1), "The Civil Service Commission shall develop a uniform domestic violence policy, which all public employers shall adopt and distribute to their employees, regardless of whether a public employer is subject to the provisions of Title 11A, Civil Service, of the New Jersey Statutes," and

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon seeks to update its Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual to comply with N.J.S.A. 11A:2-6a (b)(1),

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Vernon, in the County of Sussex, that the Township of Vernon Policies and Procedures Manual be updated as follows:

1. The Statewide DVP (which is attached hereto) shall be reference and adopted in the Township of Vernon Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.
2. The Township of Vernon Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual shall designate Charles Voelker and Susan Pullis as primary and secondary Human Resources Officer (HRO) for purposes of the DVP.
3. The Table of Contents shall be updated to reflect the inclusion of Township of Vernon's adoption of the Statewide DVP.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the updated Township of Vernon Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual is on file with the Clerk's Office; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the New Jersey Civil Service Commission.

Resolution #20-53

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH THE VERNON POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE TO ADMINISTER AND RUN RECREATION PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon ("Township") and the Vernon Police Athletic League ("PAL") have contracted in prior years to enable PAL to run and administer recreation programs on behalf of the Township; and

WHEREAS, the agreement between the Township and PAL has expired; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that it is in the best interest of the Township to continue this relationship; and

WHEREAS, both the Township and PAL wish to enter into a new agreement enabling the PAL to continue to run and administer recreation programs on behalf of the Township; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Township of Vernon that the Mayor and Township Clerk are authorized to execute an agreement between the Township and PAL in a form similar the document attached hereto.

RESOLUTION # 20-54

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE AND THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND TOWNSHIP OF VERNON

WHEREAS, Vernon Township is the owner of real property and a communications tower built thereon at Lake Panorama within the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Wantage Fire Department and the Township of Wantage have determined that the tower is suitable for the location of antenna and ancillary equipment to permit communications by the Wantage Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40:8a-1 et seq. permits municipalities to enter into a service agreement for the sharing of services and expenses; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Wantage has approved a Shared Service Agreement with the Township of Vernon for said services by way of Resolution #127-2019.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor is authorized to execute a Shared Service Agreement between the Township of Vernon and the Township of Wantage for Antenna Location Agreement for three (3) years starting January 1, 2020 and ending December 31, 2022 at an annual amount of \$15,000.00 to be paid to the Township of Vernon quarterly; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the Mayor and Clerk of the Township of Wantage.

RESOLUTION #20-56

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE COMPLETION OF ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT TO HIGGINS DRIVE & WALSH WAY

WHEREAS, the Township awarded contracts for the Higgins Drive and Walsh Way Improvement Project to Tilcon New York, Inc. and Denville Line Painting awarded by Resolution #19-202 awarded on October 17, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Higgins Drive and Walsh Way Improvement Project has been completed, and inspected as per the plans and specifications; and

WHEREAS, the Township Engineer has submitted a letter dated January 8, 2020 which states that the said contracts have been completed in full and that it is recommended that the Higgins Drive and Walsh Way Project be accepted by the Township Council.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Vernon Township Council accept this project identified as Higgins Drive and Walsh Way Improvement Project as final and complete; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption according to law.

RESOLUTION #20-57

“Authorize the Award of a Required Disclosure Contract with SREC Resources for Purchase of Communications Backup Generator

WHEREAS, the Township has a need to purchase a Backup Generator for purpose of Emergency Communications for continuation of public safety, health and welfare of the Township; and

WHEREAS, SREC Resources can provide for installation of a replacement generator at the cost of \$35,458.00 per Quotation submitted; and

WHEREAS, the Sean Canning, Q.P.A., has determined and certified in writing that the value of the acquisition will exceed \$17,500; and,

WHEREAS, SREC Resources has completed and submitted a Business Entity Disclosure Certification and a Personal Contribution Disclosure form which certifies that SREC Resources has not made any reportable contributions to a political or candidate committee in the *Township of Vernon* in the previous one year, and that the contract will prohibit SREC Resources from making any reportable contributions through the term of the contract, and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer hereby certifies that funds NOT TO EXCEED \$35,458.00 are available as follows:

RESOLUTION #20-58

TRANSFER RESOLUTION- BALANCE TRANSFERS

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon Municipal Reserve Budget requires certain modifications to cover potential expenses that may occur in excess of the original budget;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Vernon that the following Transfer of Appropriation Reserves (Municipal Reserve Budget) in accordance with N.J.S.A 40A-58/59 are hereby approved.

ACCOUNT	TRANSFER OUT	TRANSFER IN
FROM: CURRENT FUND:		
POLICE DEPARTMENT S&W	16,000.00	
TO: CURRENT FUND		
FINANCE S&W		16,000.00
TOTAL TRANSFERS	16,000.00	16,000.00

RESOLUTION #20-59

AUTHORIZING CONTRACTS WITH CERTAIN APPROVED STATE CONTRACT VENDORS UNDER T0155 AND T0142

WHEREAS, as provided for within the New Jersey Local Publics Contract Law (N.J.S.A.40A:11-1 et. Seq.) the Township of Vernon may by resolution, and without advertising for bids or obtaining quotations, purchase any goods or services under the State Contract; and

WHEREAS, the Township has the need on a timely basis to purchase goods and services utilizing State contracts; and

WHEREAS, the Township intends to enter into contracts with Tilcon New York Inc. 9 Entin Road Parsippany, NJ 07054, New Jersey State Contract T0155 Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA) for Pick-Up and Delivery and T0142 Road and Highway Building Materials: Crushed Stone and Gravel applicable to all the conditions to current State contracts.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council of the Township of Vernon, authorizes the Qualified Purchasing Agent to purchase certain goods and services from Tilcon New York Inc. 9 Entin Road Parsippany, NJ 07054, through New Jersey State Contract T0155 and T0142 pursuant to all conditions of the individual State contracts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the governing body of Vernon Township pursuant to NJAC 5:30-5.5(b) (the certification of available funds), states that the Chief Finance Officer shall either certify the full maximum amount against the budget at the time the contract is awarded, or no contract amount shall be chargeable or certified until such time as the goods or services are ordered or otherwise called for prior to placing the order, and a certification of availability of funds is made by the Chief Finance Officer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the duration of the contracts between the Township of Vernon and the referenced state vendors shall be from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption according to law.

RESOLUTION #20-60

**AUTHORIZING CONTRACTS
WITH CERTAIN APPROVED SUSSEX COUNTY COOPERATIVE CONTRACT
VENDORS**

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon may by resolution, and without advertising for bids or obtaining quotations, purchase any goods or services under the Sussex County Cooperative; and

WHEREAS, the Township has the need on a timely basis to purchase goods and services utilizing Sussex County Cooperative Contracts, duly authorized under law to extend contract pricing to local units, per N.J.A.C. 5:34-7 et. Seq.; and

WHEREAS, the Township intends to enter into contract for Ice Control Materials authorized under Sussex County Cooperative Purchasing award, dated July 16, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the County of Sussex has extended pricing authorized under the cooperative for the following companies and prices units:

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Company</u>	<u>Unit Price</u>
Rock Salt	Morton Salt 123 North Wacker Dr. Chicago, Il. 60606	\$51.98/ ton
Snow Grit	North Church Gravel 216 North Church Rd Franklin, NJ 07416	\$9.09/ton

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of Vernon, authorizes the Qualified Purchasing Agent to purchase certain goods and services from those approved Sussex County Cooperative Contracts extended to municipal units, pursuant to all conditions of the individual State contracts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the governing body of Vernon Township pursuant to NJAC 5:30-5.5(b) (the certification of available funds), states that the Chief Finance Officer shall either certify the full maximum amount against the budget at the time the contract is awarded, or no contract amount shall be chargeable or certified until such time as the goods or services are ordered or otherwise

called for prior to placing the order, and a certification of availability of funds is made by the Chief Finance Officer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the duration of the contracts between the Township of Vernon and the referenced state vendors shall be from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption according to law.

RESOLUTION #20-61

AUTHORIZING THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH NEW JERSEY STATE POLICEMAN'S BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION LOCAL #285, VERNON TOWNSHIP

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon has agreed to enter into a Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Policeman's Benevolent Association, Local #285 ("PBA 285"), which shall govern the terms of employment and compensation for police officers for the calendar years 2020 through 2023: and

WHEREAS, PBA #285, has agreed to enter into a Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Township of Vernon and shall be adopting a resolution voted upon by its members adopting said Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The Township Council authorizes a Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Township and PBA Local #285.
2. The Mayor and Township Business Administrator are authorized to sign the Collective Bargaining Agreement on behalf of the Township.
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately according to law.

A copy of this resolution as well as the referenced Collective Bargaining Agreement shall be placed on file with the Clerk of the Township.

INTRODUCTION/1ST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCES

Ordinance #20-02: Ordinance Extending Lease Agreement Between the Vernon Township Board of Education and the Township of Vernon, and Sub-Lease Agreement Between the Township of Vernon and the Dog Owners Gathering Society of Vernon Township, for Certain Unimproved Real Property Identified on the Official Tax Maps of the Township of Vernon as Block 308 Lot 2 (Old Block 133, 2.05)

Council President Shortway read a brief explanation of Ordinance #20-02

Council President Shortway asked for a motion to approve Ordinance # 20-02 for introduction.

MOVED: Mark Van Tassel
SECOND: John Auberger

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: John Auberger, Jean Murphy, Mark Van Tassel, Kelly Weller, Harry Shortway
NAYES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Motion Carried to approve Ordinance #20-02 for introduction.

Ordinance #20-03: Ordinance Amending the Salary Ordinance for "Non-Union" Employee

Council President Shortway read a brief explanation of Ordinance #20-03

Council President Shortway asked for a motion to approve Ordinance # 20-03 for introduction.

MOVED: Kelly Weller
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Kelley Weller, Mark Van Tassel, Harry Shortway
NAYES: John Auberger, Jean Murphy
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Motion Carried to approve Ordinance #20-01 for introduction.

Ordinance #20-04: Ordinance of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, Creating Chapter 476 of the Municipal Code of the Township of Vernon Entitled “Short-Term Rentals”

Council President Shortway read a brief explanation of Ordinance #20-04

Council President Shortway asked for a motion to approve Ordinance # 20-04 for introduction.

MOVED: Kelly Weller
SECOND: John Auberger

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: John Auberger, Mark Van Tassel, Kelley Weller, Harry Shortway
NAYES: Jean Murphy
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Motion Carried to approve Ordinance #20-04 for introduction.

Ordinance #20-05: An Ordinance of the Township of Vernon, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey. Amending Chapter 509 of the Municipal Code of the Township of Vernon Entitled “Taxation” to Include Transient Accommodations

Council President Shortway read a brief explanation of Ordinance #20-05

Council President Shortway asked for a motion to approve Ordinance # 20-05 for introduction.

MOVED: Mark Van Tassel
SECOND: John Auberger

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: John Auberger, Mark van Tassel, Kelly Weller, Harry Shortway
NAYES: Jean M
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Motion Carried to approve Ordinance #20-05 for introduction.

PUBLIC COMMENT *(Limited to 3 minutes on any topic)*

Council President Shortway asked for a motion to open the meeting to Public Comments.

MOVED: John Auberger
SECOND: Kelly Weller
All members voted in favor.

Jessi Paladini – [REDACTED], commented that she feels that all of the minutes of any boards, commissions or committees of the Township, are the responsibility of the Municipal Clerk. Ms. Paladini also feels that advertising legal notices is also the responsibility of the Municipal Clerk.

William Ruffing – Highland Lakes, commented that he is lives next door to an unauthorized short term rental that allows groups of 10 to 15 people at one time. The owner on record of this property lives in Maryland and the management company is located in Colorado. Mr. Ruffing is very concerned that every few days there is a new group in this house. He feels he lives next door to a hotel. Mr.

Ruffing is very also very concerned about the safety and security issues in this house. He has pictures, which he supplied to the Council, of his driveway being blocked by occupants of the home and garbage all around the property. Mr. Ruffing also gave the Council pictures of cars parked in his driveway from this house and people in front of his house in the middle of the night.

Mr. Ruffing feels that having this type of rental is a commercial use, the same as a hotel. He feels that this is a huge security issue because there is a new people renting the home every few days. The homeowners are at risk because there is no vetting of the guests. Mr. Ruffing hopes that this will not be allowed in residential areas.

Thomas McClachrie – commented that the Wanawana Tree Farm or Platz Property has an old cemetery located on the property. Mr. McClachrie said the tombstones have been removed and he requested that the cemetery be marked to commemorate those who are buried there.

Seeing no one further wishing to come forward, Council President Murphy asked for a motion to close the meeting to Public Comments.

MOVED: Patrick Curreri

SECOND: John Auberger

All members present voted in favor.

MAYORS REPORT

Mayor Burrell told Mr. Ruffing and Mr. McClachrie that he heard them loud and clear.

Mayor Burrell updated the public and the Council on the outstanding job Tax Assessor, Kristen Umansky and her team are doing to implement the property reevaluation. The Township of Vernon was ordered by the Sussex County Board of Taxation and the New Jersey Division of Taxation to perform a revaluation program to be implemented for tax year 2020. The revaluation will ensure uniform and equitable assessments throughout the municipality and account for the recent changes in the real estate market. The township is working with Realty Appraisal to conduct the revaluation program. Introductory letters and an informational brochure were mailed to all owners in March 2019. Residential inspections began the week of April 1, 2019 and have been completed as of December 30, 2019. Condominium inspections began the week of November 11, 2019 and have been completed as of December 23, 2019. Letters were mailed on November 12, 2019 to owners of 1-4 family homes that have not had an interior inspection, requesting owners to schedule an inspection with Realty Appraisal to avoid using estimated information for the property assessment. Value letters have been mailed beginning Friday, December 27, 2019. If you have received your value letter in the mail, you may schedule your one-on-one meeting online or by calling Realty Appraisal at 1-800-841-6740. Meetings are being held 6 days a week, Monday through Saturday, at the municipal building through January 25th

Mayor Burrell in accordance with the Township Code, has appointed all of the members to the Senior Citizen Committee to 3-year terms.

Mayor Burrell appointed Council President Shortway to the Greenway Advisory Committee for a 1-year term.

Mayor Burrell commented saying that on January 1st as the new Mayor, he expressed the confidence that this combined Mayor and Council would bring an end to the long negative political nightmare. Mayor Burrell feels that each of the Council Members shares his desire to focus comments on town issues and not on personalities. Although everything will not be agreed on, Mayor Burrell is confident that as a collective Governing Body, we will do what is best for the town. Mayor Burrell hopes that the people who view this meet, will see the difference in the conduct of tonight's meeting. Tonight's work by the Council and Mayor is the first step to bring our town together for the purpose of moving Vernon forward.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Murphy commented on Ms. Paladini's comments saying that they are not all accurate.

Council Member Murphy expressed several concerns with the Short Tern Rental ordinance. She feels that there are a lot of discrepancies with the ordinance.

Council Members Van Tassel, Weller and Auberger had no comments.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT COMMENTS

Council President Shortway thanked the public for their attendance tonight. He feels he and the Mayor will work great together. Council Member Shortway asked the Council and the Mayor to forward to him three to five objectives that they would like to see accomplished this year. Council President Shortway will compile these objectives and the Council will discuss the objectives and give the public an idea of what their main objectives are and what they would like to accomplish.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business to be conducted on the agenda, a motion for Adjournment was made by Council Member Auberger and was seconded by Council Member Van Tassel with all members voting in favor.

The Regular Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcy Gianattasio
Municipal Clerk

Harry Shortway,
Council President

Minutes approved: January 27, 2020