

**VERNON TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
July 10, 2008**

The Regular Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was convened at 7:09 p.m. on Thursday, July 10, 2008 in the Vernon Municipal Center, Church Street, Vernon, New Jersey. There were 15 interested persons in attendance.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to the public and the press on January 2, 2008, by delivering to the press and posting at the Municipal Building a copy of the "Annual Notice of Meetings" pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Mayor led the assemblage in the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

The roll call of members was called and Richard Carson, Neil Desmond, Glenn McLaughlin, and Austin Carew answered the call. Also present were Melinda Carlton, Township Manager, and Michael Witt, Township Attorney. Councilmember Valerie Seufert arrived at 7:11 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Carew announced the recent passing of a previous council member of Vernon Township, Rich Lafrenz. He described him as a "good friend and a good community leader."

Laura Branigan, Breakneck Rd., Vernon. Ms. Branigan spoke on behalf of Christ Community Church in Highland Lakes, to seek ordinance relief for prohibited signs relating to banners. She asked to be able to hang a banner for 30 days in Highland Lakes promoting the church's Vacation Bible School, to be held from Aug. 11 thru 15. She would like to put the banner up as soon as possible. The mayor asked if everyone was in favor of letting the church put it up right away, for a total of 30 days, and the council voted Yes. Township Attorney Mike Witt said a resolution would be drafted with regard to this request.

Tom McClachrie, Vernon Taxpayers Association. Mr. McClachrie said his organization is opposed to Resolution #08-131, to amend the municipal budget, "since it raises taxes." He also voiced opposition to #08-132, because he didn't think the township should spend money on legal fees to fight the COAH regulations. Mr. McClachrie was not optimistic that a challenge to COAH would be successful. There followed some discussion to the particulars of Ordinance #08-14, which Mayor Carew said would be outlined in more detail by Mr. Witt during his Attorney's Report later in the evening.

Mr. McClachrie asked about a tax levy increase in the budget of \$1.5 million, from \$12.46 million to \$13.94 million. He wanted to know what the increase was specifically for. Ms. Carlton said she would be glad to answer his question if given adequate time to research it, but that she could not "pull the answer out of the air." Mr. McClachrie asked other questions, and Ms. Carlton said she would be happy to get the answers to him either by the next meeting, or convey them to him privately prior to the next meeting.

Tiffany Tavares, 6 Gnomes Knoll, Vernon. Ms. Tavares asked many specific questions regarding the Town Center project, which she read from typewritten pages in front of her. Mayor Carew addressed each of her questions, but asked that she contact Ms. Carlton with any remaining concerns. Ms. Tavares questioned the benefit of any future development to the residents; Mayor Carew explained that further market and impact studies would have to be done as a condition of development.

Ms. Tavares voiced concern over what she perceives as a “drug problem” on the South Summit of Mountain Creek. “I have kids doing pot in my backyard,” she said, adding that she has seen drug deals being conducted on the ski slopes and in the lodge. Councilmember Desmond said the “crossing guards” that Ms. Tavares referred to at the South Summit are police officers working on their off hours and are paid by Mountain Creek to direct traffic, not by Vernon taxpayers. Ms. Tavares expressed a desire to see more officers working undercover in the parking lots and on the slopes. By extension, she wondered where the township would get money to pay for the increased security and police protection that growth in the township would necessitate. Councilmember Desmond said that, through growth, more tax dollars will stay in the township and would thus be available to put more police on duty. He added that it is certainly a “challenge” to strike a balance. Councilmember Glenn McLaughlin said that it may be years before the town gets more large ratables. Therefore, any immediate concerns at Mountain Creek should be addressed by the property owner.

Ms. Tavares and the council also spoke briefly about fire suppression issues with the possible advent of high-rise hotels, as well as the health department moving to the county. She also asked whether the municipal salary survey had been started and Ms. Carlton said No.

Ms. Tavares also suggested that the Vernon Township High School’s DECA program could use the platform of the Economic Development Commission as a project to provide the township with some free input on the Town Center. It would give “generation-wide” perspective going forward, she said. Councilmember McLaughlin commented that it was a “great idea.” Councilmember Carson agreed.

Gary Martinsen, Vernon resident. Mr. Martinsen reiterated Mr. McClachrie’s point that it would be very difficult for the township to do anything about its COAH obligations and he had reservations that any challenges to COAH would be successful.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Ms. Carlton stated that Resolution #08-134, with regard to the liquor license for HV Hospitality, has been added to the agenda.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

Presentation and Special Items

1. Discussion of Town Center Time Line Diagram --- Lou Kneip

Lou Kneip, Township Engineer, presented an updated timeline chart, which he said he will update prior to each Town Council meeting. He then discussed the items that were completed in the month of June. There were five specific progress notes, covering June and July, which Mr. Kneip talked about, with input and questions from the attorney, mayor, and council. Councilmember Desmond expressed concern that the length of time for soliciting proposals of interest to develop/redevelop the Town Center seemed much too short. “What’s the quality of the response that you’re going to get in 35 days?” he asked.

MANAGER’S REPORT

Ms. Carlton introduced Mr. Benecke, who was on hand to present a redevelopment overview to help those members of the council and township staff who hadn’t been involved with the redevelopment process from the beginning.

Mr. Benecke addressed Councilmember Desmond’s concerns by saying that the township manager has the authority to extend the RFQ/SOI deadline, if necessary, but that most companies are prepared to respond within 30 days because they already have most of the paperwork ready to go. However, the township still has the option to extend the deadline. Mr. Benecke then briefly described the RFQ/SOI process as it relates to the two Town Center ordinances (#07-43 and #08-02). Mr. Benecke also clarified some confusion with respect to the permitted heights of buildings in the Town Center area.

Mr. Benecke then introduced one of his partners, Dr. Henry Coleman, who was asked to explain redevelopment in plain language for the benefit of council, township staff, and the public. Mr. Benecke described Dr. Coleman as one of the

most renowned public economists in the state of New Jersey, “if not the Northeast.” Dr. Coleman then gave a 25-minute talk on the economics and benefits of redevelopment. The discussion was largely a historical overview of redevelopment and local economies in general, without specific reference to Vernon. The council had a few questions for Dr. Coleman, which he answered in great detail during the course of his discussion. He also addressed the subjects of property taxes and shared services. For instance, he mentioned that some towns are too small and some too large to achieve economies of scale. He suggested the “optimal” size would be somewhere in the range of 25,000 to 50,000 residents. Dr. Coleman also talked about broader trends in New Jersey with reference to labor and municipal finances, and provided relevant statistics. He said that New Jersey likes to tackle “billion-dollar problems with million-dollar solutions.” Mayor Carew thanked Dr. Coleman for the information.

Following Dr. Coleman’s talk, Mr. Benecke mentioned that the council still needs to explore redevelopment plans with regard to Northwoods and St. Francis de Sales Church, and must consider whether it wants to study or restudy the remainder of Church Street, Omega Drive, and Theta Drive. There followed discussion among the council and Mr. Benecke to water and sewer/septic service for these potential projects. There followed a lengthy discussion regarding the redevelopment areas and the four redevelopment plans, which cover Mountain Creek, Town Center, McAfee Village (Legends), and McAfee Village (Shinnihon). Overlaying the Town Center redevelopment plan is the Town Center ordinance, which implements the Looney Ricks Kiss (LRK) report, the design standards, the Design Review Committee, the project controls approved by the governing body, and all of the other standards included therein.

Councilmember Desmond asked about the next steps that need to be taken on the St. Francis de Sales application, so that they are consistent with the previous redevelopment ordinances. Mr. Benecke emphasized that the council cannot compare a two-acre project (St. Francis de Sales Church) with a 40-acre, \$110 million build-out (Legends). Ms. Carlton informed the council that she has a tentative meeting set up on July 24th with the township professionals and Father Boland of St. Francis de Sales. “We will talk about the process, so that he knows exactly what to expect and what is expected of him,” Ms. Carlton said. She added that the current concept plan on file for St. Francis is, in her opinion, deficient in that it doesn’t give a clear, visual picture of what the project is going to look like. Councilmember Desmond said it would behoove the township to have set criteria and an established process for redevelopment-plan applicants, and Ms. Carlton agreed. A discussion followed to more specifics of the St. Francis de Sales property and the concept plan, pursuant to the draft ordinance. Councilmember Desmond said that whatever goes before the Planning Board should be consistent with what the Board is used to seeing. The mayor and council thanked Mr. Benecke for his time and input.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #1

At 9:00 p.m., Councilmember McLaughlin made a motion to suspend the regular order of business and close the meeting to the public, to enter Executive Session for reasons of attorney-client privilege, contract negotiations, and personnel matters. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Seufert, with all in favor.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist;

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 public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the hereinafter

specified subject matters.

2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows: attorney-client privilege, contract negotiations, and personnel matters.
3. It is anticipated at this time that the above-stated subject matter will be made public when deemed appropriate.
4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

The meeting was reopened to the public at 9:49 p.m. Mayor Carew stated that the Council went into Executive Session for reasons of attorney-client privilege, contract negotiations, and personnel matters.

MANAGER'S REPORT (Continued)

At 9:51 p.m., Melinda Carlton continued her Manager's Report. She passed out maps requested by the council, showing vacant, potentially COAH-effected parcels in the township. Ms. Carlton asked the council to forward their questions to her prior to the next Town Council meeting, scheduled for July 24th.

Ms. Carlton reported that owners of property contiguous to the proposed Appalachian Trail parking lot do not have to be notified of the construction of the lot. Councilmember Desmond was of the opinion that they should be notified anyway, as a courtesy, and the council agreed. Further discussion followed to the size of the parking lot, and to hikers who might instead decide to park on County Route 517.

The manager then updated the council on the internal auditor process that was begun approximately two months ago, covering cash management and disbursement procedures. She expects a report will be delivered to the council by the second meeting in August (Aug. 28).

Ms. Carlton informed the council of the "Jeep 48Straight" mountain bike event that will be held at Mountain Creek on Aug. 22 and 23. The organizers would like to display two banners with the council's approval. The council said it was in favor. Ms. Carlton said a resolution would be prepared for a vote at the July 24th meeting.

Ms. Carlton next discussed a memo from Craig Williams, of the Environmental Commission, that has to do with an Open Space Audit that had been promised. Ms. Carlton asked for direction from the council as to what it would like her to do in this regard. Mayor Carew said the Environmental Commission did some preliminary research with regard to an audit, but was now "handing off" the follow-up work to the council to find a proper authority to investigate the Open Space expenditures. Mayor Carew suggested that the audit cover the township's full participation in the program, including the earlier years. The council voiced its support of this approach.

At Ms. Carlton's request, Lou Kneip updated the council on the grant for the Black Creek Restoration Project, which totaled \$380,000 and was granted by the DEP in 2005 but has not been active for about a year now. DEP has sent the township a notice asking that the grant be closed out within 30 days, and Mr. Kneip said this would likely be the best approach at this stage. Mr. Kneip and Kerrie Scott, Principal Fiscal Analyst, will review the paperwork and total expenditures on this project and will report back to the council through Ms. Carlton. On a related note, Ms. Carlton said the township is not in possession of project-management accounting software, which is necessary going forward and which would have been very helpful in terms of tracking expenditures related to the aforementioned Black Creek Restoration grant.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Witt addressed a possible conflict of interest that a resident brought to the council's attention, concerning Councilmember Carson and a previous vote appropriating monies for EMT equipment. Mr. Witt evaluated the situation and reported that he found no such conflict of interest.

At the request of Councilmember Desmond, Mr. Witt then addressed the council and the gallery regarding the background and details of the Defined Contribution Retirement Program (DCRP) in relation to the ordinance on the agenda for this evening (#08-14). Mr. Witt explained that the state of New Jersey requires all municipalities to pass such an ordinance, which must outline which municipal employees are eligible for the DCRP and which employees are exempt from participation. He spoke to some of the specific exceptions and left copies of a publication from the New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits (Fact Sheet #80, February 2008) for any members of the public who would be interested in seeing details of the DCRP. Despite this guidance, Mr. Witt said many items with regard to eligibility still remain unclear. Tom McClachrie, of the Vernon Taxpayers Association, asked a few questions about the ordinance and Mr. Witt responded to him, adding that it “will be amended as necessary” as time goes on and further guidance becomes available.

ITEMS FOR ACTION

Approval of Minutes by Vote

Regular Meetings: The following minutes were presented for approval: Regular Meeting of June 26, 2008.

Prior to the vote, Melinda Carlton corrected a statement from the June 26, 2008 minutes. The statement was related to comments by resident Patrick Ashton, with the minutes stating: “He asked if the operating budget could be moved over to the capital budget. Melinda Carlton said yes.” It should read “operating *funds*” or “*monies* from the operating budget,” Ms. Carlton clarified. “The operating budget itself would not be moved (to the capital budget).” The acting municipal clerk, Dennis Murray, said he would correct the wording in the minutes before they are posted on the township website.

A motion was made by Councilmember Seufert to approve the above minutes with the clarification from Ms. Carlton, which was seconded by Councilmember McLaughlin.

A roll call vote was taken. Rich Carson, yes; Neil Desmond, yes; Valerie Seufert, yes; Glenn McLaughlin, yes; Austin Carew, yes. Motion carried.

Executive Sessions: The following minutes were presented for approval: Executive Session for June 26, 2008.

A motion was made by Councilmember Seufert to approve the above minutes, which was seconded by Councilmember McLaughlin.

A roll call vote was taken. Rich Carson, yes; Neil Desmond, yes; Valerie Seufert, yes; Glenn McLaughlin, yes; Austin Carew, yes. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda (all items voted on concurrently)

Resolution # 08-130

Resolution –Authorizing the Approval of Bills List

Be it resolved that the following bills lists are hereby approved:

Current	ck# 29300	to	ck# 29359
Current	ck# 29365	to	ck# 29432
Current	ck# 29436	to	ck#
Capital	ck# 2515	to	ck# 2523
Capital	ck# 2524	to	ck# 2526
Grant	ck# 29360	to	ck# 29363
Grant	ck# 29433	to	ck# 29435
Planning & Zoning	ck#	to	ck#
Recreation Trust	ck# 759	to	ck#
Recreation Trust	ck# 760	to	ck# 761
Recreation Trust	ck# 762	to	ck# 772
Dog Trust	ck#	to	ck#
Other Trust	ck#	to	ck#
Senior Citizen Trust	ck# 1020	to	ck# 1021

Outside Services	ck# 1454	to	ck# 1458
Unemployment Trust	ck#	to	ck#
Open Space Trust	ck#	to	ck#
PVL Dam Rehab Asm	ck#	to	ck#
PVL Dam Rehab Exp	ck#	to	ck#
COAH	ck#	to	ck#
Sewer Operating	ck# 119	to	ck#
Sewer Capital	ck#	to	ck#
Developer's Bonds	ck#	to	ck#
Road Assessment	ck#	to	ck#
Payroll Deduction	ck#	to	ck#
Payroll Checks	ck# 32432 thru ck# 32486 (2nd pay in June)		
Payroll Deduction	ck# 2950 thru ck# 2963 (void ck#2961)		
Total Payroll	\$320,823.92		

A motion was made by Councilmember McLaughlin to approve the consent agenda, which was seconded by Councilmember Carson.

A roll call vote was taken. Rich Carson, yes; Neil Desmond, yes; Valerie Seufert, yes; Glenn McLaughlin, yes; Austin Carew, yes. Motion carried.

Resolutions for Discussion and Action

Resolution # 08-131

TO AMEND 2008 INTRODUCED BUDGET

(ELECTRONIC VERSION OF BUDGET IS IN AN EXCEL SPREADSHEET FILE AND AVAILABLE FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE)

Councilmember Desmond said he requested at the Budget Work Session in May that the assistant manager's position *not* be included in the 2008 budget. He also asked the township manager to identify the nine departments that were not affected by staff cuts. Ms. Carlton provided that information to him. Councilmember Desmond said he saw no proposed cutbacks, staff or otherwise, in any of those nine departments. He also stated that he had asked for an analysis of the Animal Control department and the possibility of offering Animal Control services to other towns, as a way to generate revenue for the township. Mr. Desmond said that analysis was not provided. "Anything that comes up with relation to the 2008 budget, I will vote No on, specifically because my requests were not honored," he said.

Valerie Seufert asked if the approximately \$90,000 in tax monies collected in 2008 for 2007 tax bills could be used to alleviate some of the layoffs. Ms. Carlton said the township is actually \$500,000 "in the hole" because of recent tax appeals, so the \$90,000 will have to be used to offset that deficit.

A roll call vote was taken on the above budget amendment. Rich Carson, yes; Neil Desmond, no; Valerie Seufert, yes; Glenn McLaughlin, yes; Austin Carew, yes. Motion carried.

At this point, Councilmember Desmond made a motion to reconsider the above budget resolution with reference to the items that he mentioned. There was no second to this motion. Councilmember Desmond thanked Mayor Carew, who proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

Resolution # 08-132

RESOLUTION OF INTENT TO APPEAL COAH REGULATIONS

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing has adopted new Third Round Housing Regulations; and

WHEREAS, those regulations will impose an unreasonable burden, which will adversely impact the property taxpayers of this municipality; and

WHEREAS, various municipalities have gathered together for the purpose of exploring common litigation challenging the validity of the regulations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Vernon Township does hereby express its intent to join in such litigation for the common welfare, subject to entry into an inter-local services agreement for such purpose.

Melinda Carlton stated that she and Mr. Witt believe that the last paragraph of this resolution provides enough latitude that it will not commit the council to going forward. Therefore, there would be no harm in passing it, she said.

A motion was made by Councilmember McLaughlin to approve the above resolution, which was seconded by Councilmember Carson.

A roll call vote was taken. Rich Carson, yes; Neil Desmond, yes; Valerie Seufert, yes; Glenn McLaughlin, yes; Austin Carew, yes. Motion carried.

Resolution #R08-133

AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION FOR NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES GRANT

WHEREAS, the Township of Vernon desires to apply for and obtain a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, for approximately \$27,360.00 State share with \$6,840.00 local share for a total contract of \$34,200.00 for 2008 to provide therapeutic horse back riding recreational opportunities for people with disabilities.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Township of Vernon does hereby authorize the application for such a grant; and, recognizes and accepts that the Department may offer a lessor or greater amount and therefore, upon receipt of the grant agreement from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, does further authorize the execution of the agreement; and also, upon receipt of the fully executed agreement from the Department, does further authorize the expenditure of such funds pursuant to the terms of said Agreement between the Township of Vernon and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the persons whose names, titles and signatures appear below are authorized to sign the application, the agreement and any other documents necessary in connection therewith:

SIGNED: _____

SIGNED: _____

TITLE: Township Manager

TITLE: Township Mayor

A motion was made by Councilmember Carson to approve the above resolution, which was seconded by Councilmember Seufert.

Mayor Carew said it seems that the township's match for this grant is lower than it had been in previous years.

A roll call vote was taken. Rich Carson, yes; Neil Desmond, yes; Valerie Seufert, yes; Glenn McLaughlin, yes; Austin Carew, yes. Motion carried.

Resolution # 08-134

RENEWAL OF LIQUOR LICENSE FOR VERNON TOWNSHIP 2008-2009

WHEREAS, all licenses to dispose alcoholic beverages must be renewed and reissued no later than July 1, 2008 and

WHEREAS, pursuant to R.S. 33:1, the Police Chief has made the necessary inspections and reported same to the Township Council; and

WHEREAS, the renewal application and associated state fees for the following license were not received by the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission of the State of New Jersey prior to July 1.

WHEREAS, the applicant for the following license has now paid the fees and completed the necessary paperwork, and has secured an ad interim (temporary) permit effective from July 1, 2008 through July 11, 2008.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Vernon that the following license shall be reissued effective as of July 11, 2008:

PLENARY RETAIL CONSUMPTION

Hidden Valley Inc. (HV Hospitality, LLC) 1922-33-004-004

Mr. Witt explained that the applicant for this license had not secured all of the paperwork needed to approve this license, as previously believed, but has since gone to Trenton to secure an "ad interim" temporary license. The state has requested that the township re-pass the resolution approving the license.

A motion was made by Councilmember Seufert to approve the above resolution, which was seconded by Councilmember McLaughlin.

A roll call vote was taken. Rich Carson, yes; Neil Desmond, yes; Valerie Seufert, yes; Glenn McLaughlin, yes; Austin Carew, yes. Motion carried.

Second Reading, Public Hearing and Action on Proposed Ordinances

Ordinance # 08-14

DETERMINING POSITIONS ELIGIBLE FOR THE DEFINED CONTRIBUTION RETIREMENT PROGRAM

The above ordinance was read by title only. First reading was held on June 26, 2008. A motion to carry this ordinance was made by Councilmember Seufert, and was seconded by Councilmember Desmond. Mayor Carew said the new date for the public hearing would be July 24, 2008.

A roll call vote was taken to carry this ordinance to July 24, 2008. Rich Carson, yes; Neil Desmond, yes; Valerie Seufert, yes; Glenn McLaughlin, yes; Austin Carew, yes. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor Carew asked Melinda Carlton if she has had a chance to review the possible cost-savings that could be accomplished by combining the Planning and Zoning boards. Ms. Carlton said her staff has not been able to get to this yet.

Mayor Carew asked about the sewer negotiations and Mr. Witt said those would be addressed in Executive Session.

The proposal to televise meetings is still being explored. Mr. Witt related a humorous anecdote with respect to televising meetings. Ms. Carlton said there may be some cable TV franchising work that needs to be done; her office is in the process of locating the franchise agreements with each cable TV company that does business in Vernon.

Mayor Carew asked Mr. Witt to draft a resolution that would establish an Economic Development Commission. The council was in favor of this. Councilmember Desmond named two people who have expressed interest in being appointed as members of the EDC: Craig English and former council member James Oroho. Mr. Desmond also said he'd be pleased to sit on this commission.

The mayor asked the township attorney to draft a resolution that would create a Green Task Force, which he said should be distinct and separate from the Environmental Commission. The Environmental Commission, he added, is already doing "double duty" by examining Open Space issues.

A motion to have Mr. Witt draft a Green Task Force resolution was made by Councilmember Seufert, and was seconded by Councilmember Carson. A roll call vote was taken. Rich Carson, yes; Neil Desmond, yes; Valerie Seufert, yes; Glenn McLaughlin, yes; Austin Carew, yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Carew also spoke to the need to create a Design Review Committee, which is underneath the ordinance for the Town Center (Ord. #08-02). Mr. Benecke said the ordinance provides for the establishment of a Design Review Committee, but that members need to be appointed. Mr. Benecke said a resolution is needed to designate the broad categories of appointees that can sit on the DRC: township engineer, number of council members, number of members of the public, etc. Members of the DRC cannot also be members of either the Planning or Zoning boards, Mr. Benecke said.

A discussion followed to mass transit in Vernon, which Mayor Carew said the township should push for, especially if the Town Center comes to full fruition.

Mayor Carew also said Vernon is "primed" to have a hospital within the township. Councilmember McLaughlin warned, however, that a hospital would increase the township's COAH obligation. The council agreed that this should be placed on a back burner, given the demand for other reports from the Manager's Office.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilmember McLaughlin suggested having someone from the council or the township staff approach Wantage and Sussex with a proposal to share police services, in lieu of having those towns use the state police. This would lead to the possible creation of a "regional police department," Mr. McLaughlin said. He further asked the council and township manager to investigate the possibility of subcontracting out road work, plowing, and maintenance. Councilmember Seufert said the investigation into subcontracting should be extended to Animal Control as well—but in terms of bringing *in* revenue to Vernon. Ms. Carlton reminded the council that Councilmember Desmond has already placed a request for such an analysis. She added that a further analysis will be done to look at outsourcing or sharing services with regard to the Finance and Personnel departments. Mayor Carew asked if any of the financial services could be farmed out to non-governmental entities, and Ms. Carlton said Yes. In light of the economy, Councilmember Seufert said the township has an obligation to investigate shared services for every function now handled by the municipality. Councilmember Desmond said there might also be shared-services opportunities with the School Board in terms of snow removal and road maintenance.

Mayor Carew mentioned a request from a member of the public that Coster Gerard be nominated for a "Friends of Vernon" Award, which has not be awarded in some time. Other names were mentioned as possible honorees, including former mayor Jim Kilby, even if they're honored posthumously. Councilmember Desmond suggested creating a list of nominees for the award and the council agreed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #2

At 11:00 p.m., Councilmember McLaughlin made a motion to close the meeting to the public and enter Executive Session for reasons of contract negotiations and personnel matters. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Seufert, with all in favor.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist;

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 public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the hereinafter specified subject matters.
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows: contract negotiations and personnel matters.
3. It is anticipated at this time that the above-stated subject matter will be made public when deemed appropriate.
4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

The meeting was reopened to the public at 11:53 p.m. Mayor Carew stated that the Council went into Executive Session for reasons of contract negotiations and personnel matters.

Mayor Carew asked the council if it would like the township manager to create a resolution in favor of what the School Board is doing to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Walnut Ridge School. All in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business on the agenda, a motion was made by Councilmember McLaughlin to adjourn the meeting. All in favor.

The Regular Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was adjourned at 11:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis G. Murray
Acting Municipal Clerk

Presiding Officer