

Township of Vernon

TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING MINTUES

November 14, 2019

The Regular Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Vernon was convened at 7:04 p.m. on November 14, 2019 in the Vernon Municipal Center, 21 Church Street, Vernon, New Jersey with Council President Jean Murphy presiding.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Adequate notice of this meeting had been provided to the public and the press on January 3, 2019 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 Sandra Ooms, Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger and Council President Murphy, Attorney Josh Zielinski, Mayor Harry Shortway, and Business Administrator Charles Voelker.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Current Agenda Items Only)

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

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

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

MOVED: John Auberger
SECOND: Patrick Curreri
All members present voted in favor.

MINUTES

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 17, 2019 and October 28, 2019.

MOVED: John Auberger
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Patrick Curreri, Sandra Ooms, Mark Van Tassel(for Oct. 17, 2019 only), John Auberger, Jean Murphy

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: Mark Van Tassel (for October 28, 2019 minutes only)

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Township Best Practices Questionnaire

Council President Murphy asked Mr. Voelker to begin discussion. Mr. Voelker explained the Best Practices questionnaire this year contained significantly more questions than previous years for primary reason to gain information but will not affect financial aid contributions. Council Members had no questions. Municipal Clerk Kirkman stated the Best Practices Inventory was submitted on October 30, 2019 by the Chief Municipal Finance Officer and Business Administrator with a certification that answers were accurate to the best of their knowledge.

An Ordinance Of The Township Of Vernon, County Of Sussex, State Of New Jersey, And Supplementing Chapter 500 Of The Municipal Code Of The Township Of Vernon Entitled “Streets And Sidewalks” To Authorize A Deadline For Excavation Of Newly Improved Streets And Rights Of Way

Council President Murphy stated that the proposed Ordinance is a moratorium on paving Township roads to maintain the integrity of roads after they are newly paved. Council members had no further discussion.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council President Murphy gave a brief explanation and asked for a motion to adopt Resolutions #19-215 through #19-217.

MOVED: John Auberger
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Sandra Ooms, Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy
NAYES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Motion Passed to adopt Resolutions #19-215 through #19-217.

**RESOLUTION # 19-215
AMENDING RESOLUTION #19-212 REFUND OVERPAYMENT
(Block 529 Lot 33 – Bryan Cameron)**

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the Township of Vernon, Vernon, New Jersey, that Resolution 19-212 be amended to reflect that a warrant be drawn to Bryan Cameron in the amount of \$817.03 representing refund for overpayment of 3rd qtr. 2019 property taxes for Block 529 Lot 33 also known [REDACTED]

RESOLUTION #19-216

**RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE COMPLETION OF
REPLACEMENT OF SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS #1 & #2
AT MAPLE GRANGE COMMUNITY PARK**

WHEREAS, the Township awarded a contract for the Maple Grange Community Park Replacement of Synthetic Turf Fields No. 1 and No. 2 via resolution to Shaw Contract Flooring Services, Inc. dba Shaw Sports Turf awarded by Resolution #19-170 on August 12, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Replacement of Synthetic Turf Fields No. 1 and No. 2 project has been completed, and inspected as per the plans and specifications; and

WHEREAS, the Township Engineer has submitted letter dated November 5, 2019 which states that the above referenced project has been completed in full and project is now recommended to be accepted by the Township Council.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Vernon Township Council accept this project identified as Maple Grange Community Park Replacement of Synthetic Turf Fields No. 1 and No. 2 as final and complete; and

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

RESOLUTION # 19-217

AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER #1 OF CONTRACT FOR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
OF MILLING & PAVING
TO WARWICK TURNPIKE WITH TILCON NEW YORK INC.

WHEREAS, on August 12, 2019, by way of adoption of Resolution #19-169, the Council of the Township of Vernon awarded a contract to Tilcon New York, Inc. for Milling & Paving Warwick Turnpike which contract provided for an expenditure of \$363,852.35; and

WHEREAS, in a memo dated October 28, 2019, the Township Engineer states that the contract requires a Change Order #1 by the addition of one item in amount of \$544.46 and the reduction of two items in total amount of \$28,792.25 resulting in an adjusted total contract amount of \$335,604.56; and

WHEREAS, the Township Engineer, in concurrence with the Mayor, recommends approving Change Order No. 1 which will decrease the total contract amount by \$28,247.79 to an adjusted total contract amount of \$335,604.56.

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 Tilcon New York, Inc. to \$335,604.56; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be forwarded to Tilcon New York, Inc. and the Township Engineer.

PUBLIC HEARING/2ND READING OF ORDINANCES

Ordinance #19-07: Ordinance Of The Township Of Vernon, County Of Sussex, State Of New Jersey, Amending And Supplementing Chapter 99 Of The Code Of The Township Of Vernon Entitled "Vehicles And Traffic"

Council President Murphy read the title of Ordinance #19-07 asked Mr. Voelker for an update on the proposed Ordinance and noted Ordinance would prohibit entering or exiting from Cedar Ridge Drive. Mr. Voelker stated Sussex County approved of the action but requested engineering data to support request.

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to Open Public Hearing for Ordinance#19-07.

MOVED: John Auberger
SECOND: Mark Van Tassel
All Members were in Favor

Seeing no one wishing to come forward, Council President Murphy asked for a motion to close Public Hearing for Ordinance#19-07.

MOVED: Patrick Curreri
SECOND: Sandra Ooms
All Members were in Favor

Council President Murphy asked for a motion to adopt Ordinance#19-07.

MOVED: Mark Van Tassel
SECOND: Sandra Ooms
All Members were in Favor

A roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Sandra Ooms, Patrick Curreri, Mark Van Tassel, John Auberger, Jean Murphy
NAYES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Motion passed to adopt Ordinance#19-07.

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

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

MOVED: John Auberger

SECOND:

All members voted in favor.

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

MOVED: John Auberger

SECOND: Mark Van Tassel

All members voted in favor.

MAYORS REPORT

Mayor Shortway reported that the new Ladder Truck for McAfee Fire Department has been delivered and firefighters will go through mandatory training before putting her into service.

Mayor Shortway noted the back parking lot lights have all been repaired at the Municipal Building to improve safety for our residents, employees and visitors.

Mayor Shortway reported that the Maple Grange Turf Fields #1 and #2 project has been completed and the walkway around the park has been resealed.

Mayor Shortway commented that the Township has completed the 2019 road projects and is now focusing on budget preparations for the next phase of Lake Pochung Rd and Breakneck Road including the crosswalk for pedestrians.

Mayor Shortway reported that the Land Use Board voted not to support the proposed vaping Ordinance, but suggested Council approve a strong Resolution condemning the use of vaping products and advocate for increased State and Federal regulations. Mayor Shortway reported the Land Use Board also voted to move forward with the Short Term Rental Ordinance as presented and the Soil Fill Ordinance as recommended by the Township Engineer.

Mayor Shortway thanked Hannah Van Blarcom for her idea of designated parking spaces to honor Veterans which have now been installed at the Municipal Building, Veteran's Memorial Park and Maple Grange Park. Two veterans were present at the unveiling.

Mayor Shortway reported he invited Mayor-Elect Dr. Burrell to the department budget hearings to start discussions on the 2020 Budget.

Mayor Shortway congratulated Carlie Van Tassel, daughter of Council Member Van Tassel on her fantastic season with the Vernon Township Field Hockey team making All-Conference and All-North New Jersey #1 Forward honors.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Ooms made no comments.

Council Member Auberger reminded everyone when seeing First Responders with blue lights to pull over safely so they can respond to the emergency call.

Council Member Curreri commented he wished he could have been present to honor the Veterans with the parking signs. He expressed congratulations to Dr. Burrell on being first elected Veteran to win office of Mayor and also congratulated Kelly Weller on her Council Member position.

Council Member Curreri thanked Dr. Burrell for his positive campaign calling for unity in Vernon and commented that negative signs against Council President Murphy need to be removed for the good of the town.

Council Member Van Tassel made no comments.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT COMMENTS

Council President Murphy questioned the status of Highland Lakes sidewalk issue. Attorney Zielinski explained he met with their Attorney about entering into a property maintenance agreement, but Highland Lakes asked Vernon to waive enforcement of state and municipal sidewalk laws. Vernon Township then responded that it is not appropriate to waive said laws and there has been no further response back.

Council President Murphy questioned the status of Township owned lot on Grandview Road that has outstanding lake dues owed. Attorney Zielinski stated the Association would have had to file a lien for dues owed.

Council President Murphy questioned about status of Brook Hollow Bridge repairs and the temporary access road which has been stalled for last three years. Mayor Shortway commented owner stated they are waiting for NJDEP approvals. Council President Murphy stated she was told they are waiting for funds from homeowners to be collected and issue should be followed up by Administration.

Council President Murphy questioned if Lake Panorama Community sign, originally built without permits, asking was ever approved by the Township and expressed concern if sign is located in road right-of-way. Attorney Zielinski stated the Association attorney is not responding to the Township.

Council President Murphy questioned if the guard rail in front of the ACME shopping center which was damaged due to truck accident is the Township's responsibility to repair.

Council President Murphy questioned status on Northwoods property. Mayor Shortway explained the Judge ordered \$7 million in fines but the Township has been unable to move forward due to many Corporations involved with ownership of the property.

Council President Murphy provided a copy of the proposed ordinance regarding feather flags to council members to review and asked if there is any comments. Attorney Zielinski commented that the matter is not a Land Use regulation but can be given to the Land Use Board for any input. Council President Murphy explained there may not be enough time to go through adoption process this year.

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 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Mills
Acting Township Clerk

Jean Murphy,
Council President

Minutes approved: December 9, 2019