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May 9, 2019

Workshop Meeting

Regular monthly workshop meeting of the Lawrence Township Committee called to order at 7:30 pm as advertised and held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Members present: Bowman, Miletta. Absent: Sheppard.

George Ripper, Supervisor of Public Works was present and updated committee on current Public Works activities. Discussion held regarding the hiring of new employee for position vacated in January. Clerk will run employment ad for applications to be reviewed at the June workshop meeting, and interviews at the regular meeting. Part time landfill attendant will assist in mowing until the position is filled.

Mayor Bowman provided a draft Community Cat Management Program Model Ordinance which was distributed to Mayors at a recent CDC meeting. The ordinance originated from Bev Greco of the South Jersey Regional Animal Shelter, to serve as a basis for towns that may be considering TNVR for cats to be used as a way to reduce feral cat population. Solicitor Seeley suggested that Commercial Townships Ordinance be reviewed also. Further consideration may be given following full review. Also distributed to mayors was a sample resolution in support of a designation that allows Cumberland County high schools to serve as a satellite county vocational centers for specialized CTE (Certified Technical Education) programs. Mayor Bowman stated that Cumberland Regional High School currently has an Agriculture program that could be improved/expanded if approved as a Agriculture Satellite CTE, by increased state funding. Currently there is a lack of graduating students that are skilled or trained to work in the agriculture business. Mayor Bowman advised that all agriculture businesses in the Township will be contacted for letters of support which will accompany the Township’s resolution to the County Freeholder Board hopefully to gain their support for recommendation of CRHS as an Agriculture Satellite to the County Vocational Board of Education.

Correspondence received from American Tower Corp. regarding lump sum payment for perpetual easement interest in tower site at Senior Center location reviewed. Committee members expressed no interest.

Payment of approved vouchers granted, motioned Miletta, seconded Bowman, unanimous vote.

With no further business to discuss, meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm, motioned Miletta, seconded Bowman.

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Ruth Dawson, Clerk

May 13, 2019

Regular Monthly Meeting

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm as advertised and held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Members present: Bowman, Sheppard, Miletta.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, minutes of the April 4th and 8th meetings approved, motioned Miletta, seconded Sheppard. Reports for the month of April accepted, motioned Sheppard, seconded Miletta.

Public hearing opened as advertised, Ordinance No. 2019-412, Calendar Year 2019 Model Ordinance to exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriations Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank. Receiving no public comments, hearing closed and ordinance finally adopted, motioned Miletta, seconded Sheppard.

Resolution 2019-33 Providing the budget be read by title only at the time of the public hearing approved, motioned Miletta, seconded Sheppard, unanimous vote.

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Continued

Auditor Fred Caltabiano was present and provided a detailed budget presentation. Six year comparison of number of homes show a decrease in residential dwellings and assessments, due to “Super Storm Sandy” and State buy-outs in the Bay Point area. Tax collection rates remain stable. State aid remains flat for the past 5 years although reduced by 148,682 since 2007. Comparison of major appropriations was provided. The largest appropriation is the reserve for uncollected taxes. It was explained that with a 94% collection rate, the reserve is to pay County & School taxes on the 6% uncollected. Resident Willie McCoy questioned the high rate of interest on delinquent taxes and stated that it (interest) makes it harder for residents to pay. He also questioned who set the rate of interest. Both Mr. Caltabiano and Solicitor Seeley advised that rate of interest is established by State statute. Mr. McCoy requested a copy of the statute. Resident Steve Miletta questioned the cost of workers comp insurance. It was explained that all Fire and EMS volunteers are covered. Mr. Caltabiano advised that the proposed tax rate increase of 0.031 would generate a total of 884.00 to the Township on the average house assessed at 170,000. This amounts to 52.70 increase in local taxes. Throughout the presentation it was noted that the County and School district receive that largest portion of taxes (81.42%), with the Township getting only 18.52%. Mayor Bowman thanked Mr. Caltabiano for the informative presentation and also for his expertise in keeping the local rate low. Public hearing opened, receiving no additional comments the hearing was closed and the budget adopted, motioned Sheppard, seconded Miletta, unanimous vote. Mr. Miletta questioned if our local rate was in line with other towns, Mr. Caltabiano replied yes. Mr. Sheppard stated that one of our increases was due to Engineering work on Lummistown Rd. Project. A grant was received from the NJDOT for the project but the Township is responsible for the required Engineering, which is 25,000 in the capital budget.

Quotes received to purchase and install overhead doors (5) on commodities Building reviewed.

South Jersey overhead Door 7,250.00, Eastern Door Company 8,982.72, Elmer Door Co. 10,300.00

Job awarded to low quote, South Jersey overhead Door, motioned Miletta, seconded Sheppard, unanimous vote.

Discussion held regarding bamboo issue at 48 Maple Ave. The resident has removed the bamboo within his property lines and needs to dispose of ground up debris. He is questioning when the Township will remove the bamboo that encroached on Township property. Mayor Bowman stated that it could not be accepted at Convenience Center brush pile. Mr. Sheppard stated that it should be moved to another location and burned. Public Works Employees will look into the removal issue. Solicitor Seeley advised that Commercial Township has an ordinance banning the planting of bamboo, and suggested that committee consider same.

Payment of additional approved vouchers authorized motioned Sheppard, seconded Miletta, unanimous vote.

Mr. Miletta stated that although the weather did not cooperate, annual triathlon appeared to be a success. Fire Co. and EMS receive a great donation for their participation in the event.

Floor opened for public comment: Resident Willie McCoy requested update with issue at 59 Mulford Ave. family living in the dwelling with no inspections or certificate of occupancy. Anthony Lamanteer, Zoning Officer is trying to determine if occupants are tenants. He has been to the house on multiple occasions but no one will answer the door. The house is assessed to an LLC located in MI. Certified letter was sent and received, but they have failed to respond. All information will be supplied to Solicitor Seeley who will contact the owner of the dwelling in an effort to get them in compliance. Mr. McCoy suggested that the Township have the Sheriff’s Department serve notice to the resident.

Receiving no additional public input, the floor was closed and meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm, motioned Sheppard, seconded Miletta.

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Ruth Dawson, Clerk