

October 8, 2020
Workshop/Regular Meeting

Regular monthly 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. Following the pledge of allegiance, rollcall confirmed the following members present: Sheppard, Miletta, Bowman,

Minutes of the September 10th and 14th meetings approved, motioned Bowman, seconded Miletta, unanimous vote. Reports for the month of September accepted, motioned Miletta, seconded Bowman, unanimous vote.

Change order #1, Resurfacing of North Avenue, as built quantities now known, original contract 280,074.00, reduction of 7,592.77 contract now 272,481.23. Change order approved motioned Bowman, seconded Miletta, unanimous vote.

Various tax refunds authorized, Resolution 2020-52, motioned Miletta, seconded Bowman, unanimous vote.

Monroe Street Reconstruction project- bids received September 22nd reviewed. All exceed grant appropriation, bids rejected motioned Miletta, seconded Bowman, unanimous vote. Engineer Stephen Nardelli will scale the project down for rebidding, bids to be received October 27th.

Contract awards, Cumberland County Cooperative Purchasing System reviewed. Township will participate as follows:

Supplying and Delivering VOC-High Performance Cold Patch, awarded to Richard E. Pierson/Diamond Materials Yard, 121.98/Ton, contract period 9/1/2020 – 8/31/2021 with option to renew one additional year motioned Bowman, seconded Miletta, unanimous vote.

Supplying and Laying Hot Mix Asphalt, South State Inc., Pick Up 60.00/Ton, Laying 98.00/Ton Milling 8.00/Sq Yd, contract period 9/1/2020-8/31/2021 with the option to renew one year, approved, motioned Miletta, seconded Bowman, unanimous vote.

Request received from Eldin Polhamus, Tri-County Sportsmens Club, to use existing trails and roadways located in the Township for the 2020 Tri-County Sportsmen's National Dual Spot Hammer Run reviewed. Mr. Polhamus's correspondence indicated that all participants are required to have a valid registration, insurance and motorcycle license. Mr. Miletta stated that this event has been held annually for many years. Solicitor Seeley stated that no permission is necessary and giving permission would be to accept liability for any issues that might occur. Mayor Sheppard stated that no action was taken in the past for this event, and agreed with Mr. Seeley that none would be required now – no action taken.

Clerk advised that Budget Rider for Abandoned and Vacant Property Code Enforcement had been approved by DLGS and she is in the process of getting checking account established. Funds may be used in the near future to resolve some Zoning /Code enforcement issues. Mr. Bowman replied that the property at 154 Main was mowed by Public Works, big improvement. He stated that a local resident is attempting to purchase that property along with the one next to it, demolish both and build a new home. Discussion held regarding demolition of 135 Maple Avenue. CCIA application for Derelict Housing Program has been completed and ready to be submitted for approval, Clerk awaiting confirmation that committee is ready to move forward with demo. Committee agreed demo needs to be completed. Application will be forwarded to CCIA for review/approval. Public Works Supervisor will get quote to rent excavator, consideration to demolish in house. Mr. Miletta stated that mark out needs to be done on existing dwelling so that the lot can be sold as buildable. Mayor Sheppard stated that Zoning Officer needs to advise what constitutes as a mark out of existing foot print. Mr. Bowman stated that the well should be good to be used for future development.

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

Mayor Sheppard announced that Trick-or-Treat will be observed on Saturday October 31st from 4-7 PM. Committeeman Bowman stated that the State and County have established guidelines, trick or treaters are to travel in small groups and not enter any homes.

Mayor Sheppard announced that he met with Millicent Davis, Qualified Purchasing Agent to discuss Agriculture Museum/ Historical Society Building project. Ms. Davis is moving along with specs which will be separate, Phase 1 – Pole Building, Phase 2-Concrete floors and sidewalk, Phase 3-Insulation & Interior Finish (most likely done in house) and Phase 4 – Electrical & HVAC. Ms. Davis will receive the quotes and forward results for committee consideration.

Mayor Sheppard advised that the Public Works employees have cut all bamboo down on firehouse property. Beavers Tree Service has provided a quote of \$1,000 to chip and remove all bamboo, proposal accepted motioned Bowman, seconded Miletta, unanimous vote.

Floor opened for public comment. Mr. Michael Huggins, 368 Main Street appeared before the committee and stated that he would like to get assistance with his property taxes. Mayor Sheppard advised that he would have to follow appeal process. Mr. Huggins stated that he filed the appeal but was denied. Solicitor Seeley stated that the application for appeal was denied due to delinquent tax status. There is a municipal lien against the property and taxes must be paid by statute for appeal to be considered. Mr. Huggins stated that his property is considered a nuisance and abandoned. The house needs a lot of work and is not livable. Clerk advised that she attempted to assist Mr. Huggins in applying for a housing rehab grant. Issues were delinquent taxes, the deed not recorded in his name and lack of homeowners insurance. Mr. Huggins stated that he does have home-owners insurance. Mayor Sheppard stated that he needs to get taxes current, deed recorded and file appeal next year. Solicitor Seely advised that the committee would like to help him, but statutes must be followed. Mr. Huggins replied that he understood. With no other public comments, floor closed.

EMS Chief Kevin Scarlato appeared before the committee and stated that his business could be discussed in open meeting, no executive session required. Chief Scarlato announced that he would be done at the end of the year. He has recently stepped back a little due to his job, and delegated some duties to John Marks. He stated that Mr. Marks and Linda Miletta, (EMT'S) have been running calls with the help of 4 or 5 non EMT volunteer members driving, and Deputy Mayor Miletta often driving during day time hours. He stated that 4 of 5 EMTs have left or are leaving and it's very difficult to get new people trained. Mr. Scarlato advised that Inspira recently signed on to provide services to Maurice River Twp for five years at no cost and might be interested in Lawrence – Committee would have to go to bid for services. Inspira would work in conjunction with current squad – providing back up as they do for Millville and Vineland. Mayor Sheppard said that discussion needs to be held with volunteers to determine what direction to go. Mr. Scarlato stated that a county wide system should be established. Chief Scarlato stated that the squad agreed to move the gator and Excursion to the Firehouse which will be used for both organizations calls. He also stated that the 2019 Tahoe used to transport for man power calls and schooling needs to be upgraded. He and Mr. Marks are looking for something that might be purchased, fully funded by EMS funds. Scarlato thanked each committeeman personally for their support, stated that he did 20 years as Chief, he will still be active with the Fire Co. is not going anywhere and will be able to answer any questions. The committee thanked him for his years of dedicated service. Mayor Sheppard voiced concerns with using Inspira at no cost for five years as once they wipe out any competition, we could be at their mercy. Mr. Miletta stated that he heard that there may be a few EMTs joining the squad. A meeting will be scheduled asap for Mayor Sheppard to discuss EMS future with EMT's John Marks and Linda Miletta.

With no further business to discuss, meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM, motioned Miletta, seconded Bowman.