

**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 6, 2017**

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on March 6, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the Township Hall, 2600 Bayshore Road, Villas, New Jersey.

The Clerk announced that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and that adequate notice of the meeting had been provided according to law.

The following members of Council were present for roll call taken by the Clerk:

- Councilmember Thomas Conrad
- Councilmember David Perry
- Councilmember Roland Roy, Jr.
- Deputy Mayor Frank Sippel
- Mayor Erik Simonsen

Also present: James Ridgway, Township Manager, David Stefankiewicz, Township Solicitor and Karen Fournier, Deputy Township Clerk

**Work Session**

Vacant Property Ordinance Discussion – Councilman Conrad/ Solicitor

Councilman Conrad communicated the need for an ordinance pertaining to vacant properties. At the request of several Township representatives, Solicitor Belasco, reviewed other municipal vacant property ordinances and reported his findings to Council. He explained that the intent of an ordinance would be to hold property owners accountable for maintaining their vacant properties. An ordinance would mandate that the property owner register their unoccupied properties and supply the Township with contact information. Councilman Conrad expressed concern about the language in the ordinance for the interest of the residents. Solicitor Stefankiewicz informed about the extent of their research.

**Consent Agenda**

Approval of NJ State Firemen's Association Membership Application – J. Brady & M. Lepor, Erma Volunteer Fire Company

Approval of Minutes - February 22, 2017

Approval of Closed Session Minutes – February 22, 2017

Res. #2017-90 Payment of Vouchers \$ 427,780.80

Res. #2017-91 Authorization to Close Inactive Bank Accounts and Cancel General Ledger Balances

Res. #2017-92 A Resolution Authorizing the Fifth Annual Escape the Cape Triathlon Scheduled for June 3 & 4, 2017

Res. #2017-93 Authorization for Refund of Taxes (1 property \$1,498.16)

Res. #2017-94 Bid Acceptance and Award for Re-Bid of Two (2) Standby Generator Set Replacements for Public Works and Recreation Departments (Ronald Janney Electrical Contractor, Inc \$134,395.)

Res. #2017-95 Change in Monetary Amount of Petty Cash (Police Dept from \$250 to \$550)

Res. #2017-96 Approval of Contribution to the Coast Guard Community Festival (\$1,000)

Res. #2017-97 A Resolution In Support Of The Delaware River and Bay Authority's (DRBA) Application to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), Division of Land Use Regulation (DLUR) for an Individual Permit and Freshwater Wetland Transition Area Waiver Applications for Cape May Approach Road Improvements – Phase 2

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD			X			
PERRY	X		X			
ROY			X			
SIPPEL		X	X			
SIMONSEN			X			

**Regular Agenda**

Ordinance #2017-05 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance #2005-05; Amending Chapter 157-7 – Alcoholic Beverages – of the Code of the Township of Lower. This is the 1<sup>st</sup> reading of this

Ordinance. The 2<sup>nd</sup> reading and public hearing for this Ordinance will be scheduled for March 20, 2017.

Councilman Perry explained the intent of the ordinance, to make the times consistent year round.

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD			X			
PERRY	X		X			
ROY		X	X			
SIPPEL				X		
SIMONSEN			X			

**Council Comments**

Councilman Conrad announced an offer from Atlantic City Electric for free trees in honor of Arbor Day. For more information, visit [www.arborday.org/ace](http://www.arborday.org/ace). He also commended Public Works on the beach access paths and encouraged everyone to check them out.

Councilman Perry gave a detailed update on the Roseann Avenue Project to begin on or about March 15<sup>th</sup>. He also reminded about Daylight Savings Time this weekend and suggested changing batteries in smoke detectors.

Manager Ridgway provided additional information about the Roseann Avenue project. He gave a brief agenda of the 2017 DPW projects and said he hopes to have a 5 year plan in place soon. He gave an update on the Cape May Bridge project, per Dale Foster. He shared positive feedback from Governor Christie's office and the EPA on two Township projects using Green Acre funds and thanked Public Works and Recreation, namely Keith Palek, Tom Connelly Sr. and Judy Gillis for their efforts. Lastly, he communicated the success of fundraising efforts for Bob Bonner and Kim Blackley.

Councilman Conrad voiced concern about drainage on Greenwood and Mowery Avenues. Manager Ridgway assured that it is being addressed. Mayor Simonsen communicated that the MUA has a backup plan.

Councilman Roy suggested notification be given to the police regarding the Roseann Avenue project.

Deputy Mayor Sippel commended Councilman Perry on his diligence with the Roseann Avenue project. He also communicated his work with Cape Assist on combating the drug and alcohol problems in the Township.

Mayor Simonsen commended Eileen Kreis for her efforts with the NJ Run for the Fallen, and thanked Judy Gillis and all volunteers for their cleanup efforts at the Union Bethel Veterans Cemetery. He shared news about the Interdistrict Choir Concert and the Cape May County Honors Choir. He sent his condolences to Dave Lepor and family on the loss of his father, and requested prayers for Jerry Griffin.

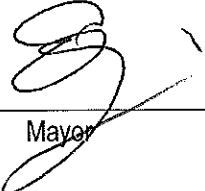
**Call to Public**

Mary Reader, W. Drumbed, thanked contributors for the success of the Cape Aid Homeless Concert. She also expressed concern about ICE coming to Cape May County and how it will affect our community. She requested that Council confer with County Freeholders for more information.

Mayor Simonsen voiced his intention to have a representative from the Sheriff's Department or a Freeholder speak at a work session about ICE. Councilman Conrad referred to the article in the newspaper about it.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Councilmember Conrad, seconded by Deputy Mayor Sippel. Motion to adjourn unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

  
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Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Township Clerk

Approved: 3-20-2017