

**WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
TOWNSHIP COUNCIL – TOWNSHIP OF OCEAN**

APRIL 11, 2024

OAKHURST, NEW JERSEY

The Workshop Meeting was held in the Council Conference Room, Town Hall, 399 Monmouth Road, Oakhurst, NJ 07755 beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Napolitani
Deputy Mayor Fisher
Councilmember(s) Acerra, Kaplan and Terry

Others: David G. Brown, II, Township Manager
Matthew Goode, Esq., Township Attorney
Jessie M. Joseph, Township Clerk

Mayor Napolitani announced that the notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act for this meeting have been satisfied; a copy of the Annual Notice was sent to the Asbury Park Press and The Coaster, posted in Town Hall and filed in the Office of the Township Clerk on December 14, 2023.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

SUBJECT: Various Township Projects - Update

ACTION: Greg Blash, Township Engineer, reported on the following:

- 2022 Road Program -The Contractor has re-started on Roosevelt Avenue. He has Roosevelt and Walnut Avenue curbing and should be done in about four weeks and then we'll have him start paving. He should be done by the beginning of June.
- 2023 Road Program – He and the Clerk met with the residents the past two evenings who will be affected by the paving, to discuss the concrete assessments and give them the option to opt out of the program.
- 2024 Road Program – Waiting for the adoption of the 2024 Budget before we can move forward.
- 1001 Wickapecko Drive – 90% done, waiting for gas and electric connections. There was a change in the roof going from a metal roof to a shingled roof. It saved money and time.
- Deal Road Sidewalk and Bike Path – these projects were both been awarded. We are waiting for approval from the State and once that's received we can set-up pre-construction meetings for both projects and we will begin work within three to four weeks after that.
- Kramer Court Pedestrian Bridge – Soil report was done and we should have the report tomorrow. He had a conference call with the structural guy today and there are a few minor things to be worked out but everything is in line to move forward once the funding is received.

David G. Brown, II, Township Manager gave a brief explanation of the escrow and maintenance agreements that need to be in place along with the funds, before anymore work can be done on the project.

- Second Rounds of stream Cleaning – waiting for adoption of the budget to see if we have extra money to clean the next section of the stream corridor. He will be checking with the CFO to see if we can use Open Space Funds for the stream cleaning in Palaia Park.

Deputy Mayor Fisher asked Mr. Blash for an update on the paving of Deal Road.

Mr. Blash said one section will be paved by the end of June and the section between 35 and Logan Road will be done in late summer as part of the 2023 Road Program.

Councilman Acerra asked for an update on 1515 Logan Road.

Mr. Blash responded that we are still waiting for the permits from DEP.

Jim Baye, David Street, had concerns and suggestions regarding the stream cleaning projects.

Mr. Blash disagreed with Mr. Baye's suggestions and stated that cleaning a blocked channel is completely effective. We will continue to clean the channels and get on a stream cleaning maintenance schedule going forward.

Councilmember Terry asked if we found any other locations for the dog park.

Mayor Napolitani said after he went back and revisited the original site where the park was going, he reached out to Ross Licitra, from the County, for him to come and meet him at the area where we were going to put the park originally.

Deputy Mayor Fisher also looked for potential locations around town and suggested a site in Palaia Park by the DPW buildings that may work.

SUBJECT: New Stormwater Management Regulations

ACTION: Mr. Blash said last July NJDEP amended the Stormwater Management rules to ensure that areas at most significant risk of flooding due to climate change are better defined. Ocean Township needs to revise their stormwater control ordinance to conform with the amended rules. It needs to be done by July 18, 2024.

SUBJECT: Various Township Matters Update – David G. Brown, II, Township Manager, reported on the following:

- Resolution #24-089 – Authorizing application to the NJ Clean Energy Program Community Energy Planning Grant Program. Mr. Brown said the Environmental Commission presented this grant to him and after reviewing it, he is in complete agreement that we should move forward with this. Basically, community energy planning is a process by which the communities collaborate, select and strategically implement emissions reducing initiatives that fulfill the energy master plan. We would be applying for a \$10,000.00 grant to invoke Millenium Strategies to make this application. He then explained what needs to be done after we receive the \$10,000.00 grant. There is potential to eventually obtain a grant for \$250,000.00. This also gives us Sustainable Jersey points as well. The deadline for the initial grant application is May 24, 2024.
- Cross Acceptance Plan Committee – He received a letter about the State Plan Act going into effect, which brings in the cross-acceptance process with Monmouth County Planning. He has now submitted Joe Barris, Monmouth County Planning Director, our team, which consists of himself, along with Colleen Mayer, Planning Administrator and Greg Blash.
- 2024-2025 RFQ's for Professional Services – The following RFQ's are out and due back to the Township Clerk's office by 3:00 PM on April 29th: COAH Attorney, COAH Consultant/Planner, Bond Counsel, Labor Attorney, Redevelopment Counsel, Special Project Engineer, Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, Administrative Agent for Affordable Housing, Legal Services, Tax Appeals, Engineering Services, Planning Board Attorney, Planning Board Planner, Planning Board Engineer, Zoning Board Attorney, Zoning Board Planner, Zoning Board Engineer and Architectural Services

- Deer Management Plan Update – Mr. Brown, Tracey Berkowitz and the Consultant met today and are close to putting together the response to the State’s questions. There are two things that came up. One is we will need to amend an Ordinance that currently does not allow for the use of firearms in Joe Palaia Park. We will also need to do a resolution approving for furtherance after the budget is adopted so that the money is there and appropriated so that we can get the certified funds from the CFO to hire the consultant to do the major work.

Mayor Napolitani wanted to make sure the public is aware that the Township is dragging their feet on the deer management plan.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Deputy Mayor Fisher reported we will be moving forward with the Mayor’s Wellness initiative, by forming a committee that will be replacing the Community Hope Drug and Alcohol Alliance. It will be focused on all aspects of health, such as mental and physical health, diet, drugs, alcohol and elder health. There is a 5k coming up at Joe Palaia Park on May 19th. We are looking into having a speaker series, small and large events, community CPR classes, walk with a councilmember, OEM preparedness, bike safety and maybe we could invite Kenny Pickett in for a Punt, Pass and Kick competition.

Councilmember Terry said there have been complaints from residents about work that is being done early on weekend mornings, maybe without permits and she would like to see more enforcement by Township personnel on weekends.

Mr. Brown told her that once the budget is passed we may be able to hire someone to go out on the weekends, but right now we only have one part-time enforcement officer.

Jessie Joseph, Township Clerk has received a Flag Request from Monmouth County Clerk Christine Hanlon, Commissioner Director Tom Arnone and the Italian American Association of the Township of Ocean to fly the Italian Flag from October 1, 2024 – October 31, 204 for Italian American Heritage Month. The Council does not have an issue with flying the flag, it is the month-long duration that they have an issue with. Councilman Acerra asked for October 1, 2024 – October 20, 2024 instead. UPON MOTION of Councilmember Terry , seconded by Councilmember Kaplan moved to allow the Italian American Flag be flown from October 12, 2024 through October 20, 2024. All were in favor, Councilman Acerra abstained.

There following did not offer a report at this time:

Mayor Napolitani
Councilmember Kaplan
Matthew Goode, Esq., Township Attorney

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Jim Baye, David Street, asked if the CFO will be doing a formal presentation tonight on the budget and will there be an opportunity for questions from the public.

Mr. Brown said tonight is just the introduction. The formal presentation and the public hearing will be at the May 9th Council Meeting.

Mr. Baye distributed a sheet on his estimates of salaries and benefits for Township employees. He had comments, questions and concerns regarding his estimates.

There were no further Public Comments at this time.

Deputy Mayor Fisher asked to go over the Ordinance regarding E-Bikes.

Matthew Goode, Esq., Township Attorney, gave brief explanation of the ordinance. It states you have to abide by bike and traffic laws, helmets for kids, no sidewalks, no public parks or playgrounds.

Deputy Mayor Fisher feels that a campaign needs to be implemented to let the public know when/where they are allowed to ride e-bikes, so it doesn’t become just an enforcement issue.

There was a discussion on e-bikes and the Council were all in agreement that there will need to be a major campaign to educate the residents on e-bikes and electric scooters usage and restrictions.

Councilman Acerra read an e-mail he received from a resident asking for the Council to reconsider banning e-bikes in the Park.

Councilman Acerra asked Mr. Goode, if there are any concerns with squatter’s rights in New Jersey and if that is something the Township needs to be concerned about.

Mr. Goode said the laws in New Jersey are not as favorable towards squatters as some other states such as New York are.

**RESOLUTION
DECLARING CLOSED SESSION**

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 Ocean, County of Monmouth 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:
 - C1. Potential Litigation
- 3. It is anticipated at this time that the Municipal Clerk shall review the minutes of closed session of the Township of Ocean and make a recommendation to the Governing Body which minutes should be considered for public record. The minutes which are made public shall not thereafter be treated as confidential, but may be seen and copied by any person(s) in the same manner as any meeting minutes of the Township of Ocean.
- 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Record of Vote	Deputy Mayor Fisher	Councilman Acerra	Councilwoman Kaplan	Councilwoman Terry	Mayor Napolitani
Motion to Approve		X			
Motion to Second				X	
Approved	X	X	X	X	X
Opposed					
Not Voting/Recuse					
Absent/Excused					

Seeing there were no other comments, the meeting was adjourned.

Record of Vote	Deputy Mayor Fisher	Councilman Acerra	Councilwoman Kaplan	Councilwoman Terry	Mayor Napolitani
Motion to Approve		X			
Motion to Second				X	
Approved	X	X	X	X	X
Opposed					
Not Voting/Recuse					
Absent/Excused					

Respectfully submitted,

Jessie M. Joseph, RMC/CMC
Township Clerk