

**MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
OCTOBER 25, 2011**

A.) OPENING CEREMONIES & ROLL CALL

The regular scheduled Work Session Meeting of the Monroe Township Council was called to order by **Council Vice-President, Frank J. Caligiuri** at approximately 7:05 PM in the Conference Room on the first floor of the Municipal Complex, located at 125 Virginia Avenue, Williamstown, New Jersey.

This meeting was advertised pursuant to the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act (*NJSA 10:4-6 thru 10:4-21*). Notices were placed in the official publications for Monroe Township (i.e.: Gloucester County Times, Courier Post and the Sentinel of Gloucester County). A copy of that notice has been posted on the bulletin board at the Municipal Complex.

SALUTE TO OUR FLAG – Cncl. Rich DiLucia led the Assembly in the Salute to Our Flag.

ROLL CALL OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Cncl. Walter Bryson	Present	
Cncl. Frank Caligiuri	Present	
Cncl. Rich DiLucia	Present	
Cncl. Ronald Garbowski	Present	
Cncl. William Sebastian	Present	
Cncl. Daniel Teefy	Present	
Cncl. Pres., Marvin G. Dilks, Jr.		Excused
Mayor, Michael Gabbianelli	Present	
Business Admin., Kevin Heydel	Present	
Solicitor, Charles Fiore	Present	
Eng., Dave Cella, ARH	Present	
Dir. of Finance, Jeff Coles	Present	
Dir. of Public Safety, Jim Smart	Present	(Arrived 7:20PM)
Dir. of Code Enforcement, George Reitz		Excused
Municipal Clerk, Susan McCormick	Present	

B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

• **Open Space at Holiday City**

Solicitor, Charles Fiore noted this matter was in regard to an issue involving outstanding taxes in the amount of \$5,900.00 owed on an open space lot located in Holiday City. He briefly updated council on what had transpired in the past. Apparently, the previous tax collector was contacted regarding how to resolve the outstanding matter and from what Mr. Fiore has been able to discern the Holiday City representatives were advised not to pay the taxes, as it was worthless property and would be sold by tax lien. Obviously, this amount of taxes is still due and the Holiday City trustees inquired if there was a mechanism whereby the township could waive the outstanding taxes and reduce the amount of taxes as we do with other areas involving basins. Mr. Fiore explained if that is

MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
OCTOBER 25, 2011

B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

done the township is still responsible to pay the county and school taxes, as they cannot be waived. **Cncl. Rich DiLucia** advised Holiday City pays for two other lots that are basically useless but this one is outside the perimeter of the complex. He noted (*for the record*) no delinquency notices were sent to Holiday City from 2005 to the present time and because the trustees were previously told not to pay the taxes they assumed it was a done deal until the Solicitor informed him that over \$5,000.00, much of which was interest, was owed to the township. **Cncl. Frank Caligiuri** questioned whether anyone checked to see if the parcel was valued as undeveloped land, which open space is usually taxed as. Mr. Fiore requested Tax Collector, Joan Rumpf to look into that as well as to see if any notices were sent to the trustees prior to her tenure and if so provide copies of that information for council. **CFO, Jeff Coles** felt delinquent notices were never pulled and were always sent out unless the former tax collector pulled them prior to a tax sale. **Cncl. Daniel Teefy** questioned how long Holiday City owned the property and if they made any payments. Cncl. DiLucia felt it was around 2004/2005 when the developer turned the entire parcel over. Mr. Fiore noted in 2002/2003 the developer's attorney contacted the mayor and wanted to deed the property over to the township; however, because it was part of the open space required in their approvals that could not legally be done. The issue now is whether Council wants to grant the relief being sought with the exception of the county and school taxes. Cncl. Caligiuri noted this issue came up in Deanna Estates and that open space property was reassessed. The rate was reasonably reduced and that unilaterally reduced the county and school taxes as well so the township did not absorb any liability. Mr. Fiore explained last year the municipality took the position that all areas deemed open space or basins owned by homeowner associations will have little or no value and the values were changed in the county books; however he was not sure whether this particular property had. He noted prospectively that might help the issue but retroactively we are faced with the tax liability of \$5,900.00. Cncl. DiLucia noted the attorney for the trustees has advised them there is no liability here and he questioned whether it was true that if the trustees did nothing there would be nothing the township could do because there is no enforcement mechanism. Mr. Fiore noted that is true, the township would hold the lien forever and still be responsible to pay county and school taxes on the property. **Cncl. William Sebastian** recommended if changes are made to the assessment of this property the entire lot could be defined as unusable land to avoid problems in the future. Cncl. Caligiuri requested the Tax Collector to provide the history on this property before Council makes any decisions.

• **Taxpayer Agreements**

Cncl. Frank Caligiuri extended his appreciation to the Tax Collector, Joan Rumpf for providing Council with the history on the tax liens to see if these families previously paid their taxes reliably and on time until encountering problems during these tougher financial times, which could have drastically changed their payment history. In some cases the mortgage company paid interest, which means they actually paid the property taxes late so that cannot be blamed on the resident. After reviewing the history he agreed we are obliged to move forward but before that is done he wanted to suggested a letter be sent to each resident advising them during the October 25th meeting Council was presented with a

MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
OCTOBER 25, 2011

B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)

mandate to approve the sale of their home at a tax sale and before that is done Council wanted to notify the residents of the severity of this matter and offer them one last option to make timely payments otherwise the properties will go to tax sale as required by law. **Tax Collector, Joan Rumpf** explained in order to have a tax sale in December she would need to advertise four weeks prior to the sale and if Council wants her to send letters to give the people a chance to bring their taxes current there may not be enough time in this year to do that. She suggested the taxpayer agreement resolution be amended and an extension be given for the taxpayers to bring their taxes current by a specified date or their properties will be placed in the 2012 tax sale, which will be held early in the year. Council questioned whether it would be reasonable to give them until the first quarter of 2012. **CFO, Jeff Coles** explained Joan was advised by the State that she is obliged to follow the current resolution adopted by Council and if the agreement is in default she must sell the properties at a tax sale. Due to that she will need to schedule a tax sale unless Council decides by way of resolution to extend the agreements. **Cncl. Bryson** noted these people were delinquent relative to their agreement and now they are also delinquent in their new taxes, which were supposed to be paid along with the agreement. He questioned Mrs. Rumpf on what taxes she wanted paid to date. Mrs. Rumpf explained their installments should be paid up to date as well as whatever they owe on their current taxes. She noted some of the taxpayers have made some sort of payment, one called and is coming in with some money but two have not contacted her at all. **Cncl. Caligiuri** polled Council and all were in favor of extending the taxpayer agreements to the end of the first quarter of 2012 and if the taxes are not paid by that time the properties will go up for tax sale. Mrs. Rumpf was requested to send the letter to the residents and Mr. Fiore will draft the amending resolution for the November 22nd Council Meeting. Mrs. Rumpf noted the taxpayer agreement resolutions state that the tax collector is recommending an installment plan and she is not in total agreement and does not recommend taxpayer installment plans. She spoke of questioning the state on whether she is required to tell delinquent taxpayers about installment plans and was advised that she is not required to but if they take it further and call the state to say the tax collector is not helping them they will recommend the installment plans. She noted she sold 142 properties in the last tax sale and quite a few of them have been redeemed within the last week. Mrs. Rumpf noted delinquent taxpayers send letters to the Mayor and Council requesting taxpayer agreements and it is their decision to grant installment plans not hers. Mr. Fiore indicated he would remove that language from the resolution, as it is not required. **Cncl. Teefy** questioned whether installment plans have worked in the past since it seems they are not currently working. Mrs. Rumpf advised installments have been successful in the past and have allowed residents to utilize the extra time to get their taxes current.

• **Report – Red Light Camera**

Business Administrator, Kevin Heydel reported in the first five months the township has received net revenue in the amount of \$181,000.00 from the red light camera. The report he compiled for council reflected the number of tickets paid and the disbursement of that money to the State, County and Monroe and subtracts out the third party billing fee of which 50% is paid by the County and 50% is paid by the township.

MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
OCTOBER 25, 2011

B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)

Mr. Heydel also provided a performance report and explained in the beginning there were approximately 3700 violation events and now after five months that number has been cut in half. Questions came up about people getting tickets even when they stopped at the red light but approximately 30% of the events are being automatically thrown out because they are those types of situations. Once all those are thrown out the videos go to the police department for review and they are very, very conservative and consistent in their review process because people may challenge the ticket. Mr. Heydel noted he expected the violation events to go down and what that shows is that intersection is much safer today than it was five months ago. **Cncl. Rich DiLucia** questioned whether Mr. Heydel had the statistics for October 11th. Mr. Heydel advised he did not as the cut off is the 30th of the month. **Cncl. DiLucia** questioned whether there were any statistics that could compare the revenue generated from red light violations between last year and this year because there is now a cost involved that we never had before. Mr. Heydel noted the cameras were installed in April 2011 with a 30 day warning period and they went into actual operation in May at one specific intersection. We do not have a way to find out whether our police officers write tickets for running red lights however in 2009 the revenue that came in through the court was approximately \$290,000.00, in 2010 it was approximately \$322,000.00 and this year it is back to \$283,000.00. **Cncl. DiLucia** noted the red light cameras seem to have increased revenue but there are no statistics to prove that and at some point in time something should be developed to measure that due to the ongoing bill of \$18,000.00-\$19,000.00 a month that must be justified. **Mayor Gabbianelli** noted the best thing about the cameras is the decrease in accidents at that intersection, which previously had some major accidents. Discussion took place regarding the cost of the cameras, whether they were paying for themselves and the safety aspect of them. **Cncl. DiLucia** expressed his concerns that based upon these reports he cannot answer his constituents' questions about whether the cameras are bringing revenue in because there is nothing to measure them against. **Director of Public Safety, Jim Smart** indicated he would see if he could get a report from the Traffic Department on the number of tickets that were issued at red lights. Mr. Heydel felt that the township is getting more revenue from the red light cameras than we are getting from all the other violations going through the court system. **Cncl. Walter Bryson** questioned whether all townships pay the same 50% maintenance and gross fees. Mr. Heydel replied yes, the fees were established by State Statute when the program was implemented. **Cncl. William Sebastian** noted the report for September lists 1800 violation events, 190 citations and a 96% issuance rate. Mr. Heydel noted he cannot reconcile that and is trying to get an answer on it. CFO, Jeff Coles spoke of the process involved with serving citations. He explained we need to know the violation was served so if no response is received they must be served again. A list of citations is sent to the judge and he can either dismiss them or keep them active. **Cncl. Ronald Garbowski** questioned whether the \$181,000.00 was the net revenue to the township after all fees were paid. Mr. Heydel replied yes, that is the revenue the township receives after all fees are paid to the County, State and vendor. He noted if the man hour costs are factored in the township probably spent \$20,000.00 to \$25,000.00 for the Police Department to review the violations. **Jim Smart** added he spoke to a member of the Traffic Department who advised that he spends on average three to four hours a day reviewing the red light camera violations. The officer also advised if the Police

MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
OCTOBER 25, 2011

B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)

Department wrote ten red light violations a month that would be a lot because they do not sit at intersections and would by chance just happen to catch a violation. Mr. Heydel noted initially the police had a problem with internet line speed when reviewing violations but that has been resolved when the line speed was increased and review capabilities were made available in the lieutenant's office.

• **Library Street Parking**

Cncl. Caligiuri noted Solicitor Fiore distributed a correspondence to Council for consideration from a property owner on South Main Street who is concerned with the parking along Library Street. **Cncl. Caligiuri** spoke of how Council previously discussed making Library Street a no parking area due to Public Works having problems plowing that street during snow emergency situations. Council had given the Police Department the option to determine whether they needed to put up no parking signs so the Public Works Department could plow the area and apparently some of the no parking signs are still in place and the people who live in the area are unable to park there. **Cncl. DiLucia** noted he attended a meeting last year when the Traffic Division agreed to remove the no parking signs and open the street for parking and that will be reflected in the meeting minutes. Council discussed the issues that were previously addressed regarding trash trucks, fire trucks and snow plows not being able to get down that street. **Former Director of Public Works, V.J. Agnesino** was in attendance and noted it was originally his idea to make one side of the street no parking because the residents are not utilizing their parking lot the way they should. Mr. Fiore noted the people that own the Chinese Restaurant purchased that parking lot from Joe Gallagher and will not allow anyone to park there. **Dan Kozak** advised the apartment building, the parking lot, the homes behind the Chinese Restaurant and the restaurant are owned by the same person. **Cncl. Bryson** noted the letter also states a Library Street resident places cones in the street so no one can park in front of his home and he suggested to address that problem the no parking area be moved to that resident's side of the street. He also recommended residents utilized the municipal parking lot. Mr. Fiore explained the street should not be blocked but if parking is permitted on both sides of the street the number of cars parking there cannot be controlled unless someone is blocking the street. **Cncl. Caligiuri** requested the Public Safety Committee review this matter prior to Council making any decisions.

C.) PUBLIC PORTION

Cncl. Ronald Garbowski made a motion to open the Public Portion. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. William Sebastian** and unanimously approved by all members of Council in attendance. With no one wishing to speak **Cncl. Rich DiLucia** made a motion to close the Public Portion. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Ronald Garbowski** and unanimously approved by all members of Council in attendance.

D.) NEW BUSINESS - None

**MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
OCTOBER 25, 2011**

E.) OLD BUSINESS

Cncl. Frank Caligiuri requested the Clerk to make copies for Council and the Environmental Commission of the Pineland Commission's correspondence dated May 17th and sample ordinance dealing with wetlands management, forestry and residential cluster development. He requested Council provide comments on this because it must go before the Planning Board in the future.

Cncl. Walter Bryson questioned whether there was any time frame as to when the corner of the Black Horse Pike and Corkery Lane would be returned to its original condition. **Mayor Gabbianelli** advised a correspondence was received on that yesterday and they are working to resolve the problems at that intersection.

F.) COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cncl. Ronald Garbowski reported completing the Excel spreadsheet for the Comcast Grant requests and forwarding it to Cncl. Sebastian and Teefy for their comments. Once the comments are received the committee will decide what recommendations will be made for the grant money and hopefully that will be done at the next Council Meeting. Cncl. Teefy referred to the request for the wireless security system for Parks and Rec and noted that cannot be expected to work for only \$6,000.00. Cncl. Garbowski explained the idea was to try to spread the grant money out to various departments and the Parks and Rec has money in their fund to supplement that cost. Cncl. Sebastian requested the Comcast Committee meet as he has some questions he would like addressed.

Cncl. William Sebastian referred to a correspondence sent to the solicitor regarding revising the Master Plan to separate part of the Acme Redevelopment Zone and he questioned whether the Redevelopment Committee was going to recommended that be done. Cncl. Caligiuri noted that is more complicated than just separating the redevelopment zone as there are concerns regarding the traffic pattern, the history of the RD Plan and the lawsuit. All that information was sent to the township engineer's office for review by the person handling the project and he will be making a report to the committee. Cncl. Sebastian questioned why it was sent to the engineer's office instead of the planner's office. Cncl. Caligiuri explained the reason it was directed to the engineer is because he is the one who handled the development of the Wainco side of the project. Originally the redevelopment zone included the Acme side as well as the Wainco side and there was no success in doing that. The engineer came up with a creative financing arrangement to stimulate development on the Wainco side so since they were familiar with the way that was accomplished and the traffic pattern for Charm Road Cncl. Caligiuri felt it was appropriate to direct it back to the engineer. Mayor Gabbianelli advised that was not Cncl. Caligiuri's call that was his call. Cncl. Sebastian questioned whether the Planning Board would have to do that. Solicitor Fiore advised it will ultimately require a resolution from council directing it back to the Planning Board but at this point in time that is premature based on the additional information we are trying to gather.

Cncl. Sebastian noted an Ordinance Meeting is scheduled for November 2nd and a Special Council Meeting is scheduled immediately prior to that at 7:00 PM.

MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
OCTOBER 25, 2011

G.) QUESTIONS REGARDING RESOLUTIONS SCHEDULED - 10/25/11

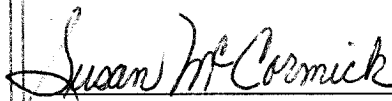
Cncl. Rich DiLucia questioned the CFO regarding his letter that stated the Susquehanna Bank (*Resolution R:177-2011*) guaranteed 75 basis points in their proposal when their proposal says .75. Mr. Coles explained he spoke to Mr. Fiore regarding whether he could go back and negotiate a higher rate on that. Mr. Fiore informed him that he could so he went back to Susquehanna and asked if they would be willing to match Colonial Bank's offer of 75 basis points. He noted he and the BA had some concerns regarding the size of Colonial Bank versus Susquehanna Bank, which is much larger and more stable bank than Colonial. Cncl. DiLucia questioned whether we can allow them to amend their bid. Mr. Coles noted this is not a bid it is an RFP and that is why it can be negotiated. He explained how this has been difficult to get and how he started a year ago trying to get proposals and the only one received was TD Bank and they are currently charging the township \$1,500.00 a month in fees and only paying about \$1,450.00 a month in interest on the eight to twelve million we have in the bank. The RFP was amended and The Bank and TD submitted a proposal the second time but both proposals were horrible, as the township would not have gotten any money. Mr. Coles noted he waited awhile and then put the RFP out again after Susquehanna came to him and indicated they were actively seeking deposits. The third time the RFP was put out Colonial, Susquehanna, TD and The Bank submitted proposals.

H.) QUESTIONS REGARDING ORDINANCES SCHEDULED - 10/25/11 - None

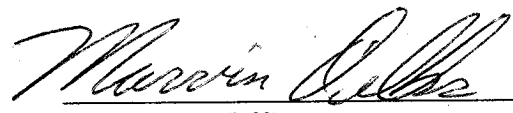
I.) ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further for discussion, **Cncl. Walter Bryson** made a motion to adjourn the Council Work Session of October 25, 2011. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Ronald Garbowski** and was unanimously approved by all members of Council in attendance.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan McCormick, RMC
Municipal Clerk



Presiding Officer

These minutes were prepared from the tape-recorded proceedings and the hand written notes of the Council Work Session of October 25, 2011 and serves only as a synopsis of the proceedings. Portions of the official tape may be heard in the Office of the Township Clerk upon proper notification pursuant to the Open Public Records Law.

Approved as submitted *SM* Date 11/22/11
Approved as corrected _____ Date _____