

**MINUTES  
COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE  
SEPTEMBER 11, 2012**

**A.) OPENING CEREMONIES & ROLL CALL**

The regular scheduled Work Session Meeting of the Monroe Township Council was called to order by **Council President, Frank J. Caligiuri** at approximately 7:04 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. Daniel Teefy led the Assembly in the Salute to Our Flag.

**ROLL CALL OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

Cncl. Walter Bryson	Present
Cncl. Marvin Dilks	Present
Cncl. Rich DiLucia	Present
Cncl. Ronald Garbowski	Present
Cncl. William Sebastian	Present
Cncl. Daniel Teefy	Present
Cncl. Pres., Frank J. Caligiuri	Present

Mayor, Michael Gabbianelli	Present
Business Admin., Kevin Heydel	Present
Solicitor, Charles Fiore	Present
Eng., Chris Rehmann, ARH	Present
Dir. of Finance, Jeff Coles	Present
Dir. of Public Safety, Jim Smart	Present
Dir. of Code Enforcement, George Reitz	Present
Dir. of Public Works, Bob Avis	Present
Municipal Clerk, Susan McCormick	Present

Cncl. Pres., **Frank J. Caligiuri** requested a "*Moment of Silence*" on the passing of Anna Smart, mother of Director of Public Safety, Jim Smart and Chief of Police, Joe Smart, in recognition of their family loss.

**B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

• **Open Space PILOT Funding**

Cncl. Pres., **Frank Caligiuri** made reference to a correspondence dated August 21, 2012 addressed to Honorable Michael Gabbianelli from Fred Akers, Administrator for the Great Egg Harbor River Council. The letter and a resolution approved by the Great Egg

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**B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)**

Harbor National Science and Recreational River Council on June 20, 2012 (*R:04-2012 A Resolution Supporting Fully Restored Open Space PILOT (payment-in-lieu-of-tax) Funding Indexed To the Level Of Inflation*) was sent for Council's consideration. There was a brief discussion on the content of the resolution as well as the letter urging support for reversing the decision to cut Open Space Payment in Lieu of Tax Funding and it was the consensus of council members to have a resolution drafted for council's consideration at the next regular council meeting scheduled for September 25<sup>th</sup>.

• **Request - Waiver of Permit Fees (Grand Theatre)**

Cncl. Pres., Frank Caligiuri spoke on an email he received from Michael Kretschmer, Director of Community Affairs, The Grand Theatre Home of the Road Company. The request was to be placed on the agenda for next council meeting to discuss a possible refund of the Township permit fees (*Permit # 20120631*) for the re-building of the Grand Theatre. Mr. Kretschmer noted in his email (*as indicated below*) that this is a non-profit all volunteer organization that is keeping the performing arts alive in Monroe Twp. The rebuilding of the Grand will likely spur economic growth in the downtown area once again which will benefit the citizens and the Township as a whole. Please let me know if there is any more information you need from me. I appreciate your accommodation in this matter. Cncl. Ronald Garbowski referenced Resolution R:131-2010 which reimbursed the construction permit fees for The Road Company Theatre Group, Inc. in the amount of \$1,200.00. It was the consensus of council members to have a resolution drafted for the next council meeting waiving the permit fees for the re-building of the Grand Theater (*Permit # 20120631*). Business Administrator, Kevin Heydel advised that the township could only reimburse the municipal portion of that permit fee; we cannot reimburse the state portion.

• **Monroe Township Landfill - Remedial Investigation**

Cncl. Pres., Frank Caligiuri referenced a correspondence dated September 6, 2012 from Solicitor Charles Fiore with regard to the above referenced. At that time there was some discussion with regard to a contract that was awarded to Trevan Houser of Land Resource Solutions to conduct a remedial investigative study. Cncl. Pres., Caligiuri indicated that Mr. Houser is still having problems gaining access to certain properties to complete his study. The Solicitor then advised that Mr. Houser attended a meeting on Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup> and the letter he sent to Mr. Caligiuri predated that meeting. He then advised that Mr. Houser is approximately three months short of completing his site review and data will be available for council's review. Mr. Fiore noted he can now move forward without accessing the Ira Taylor property as long as he goes within the right of way. This information will then be sent to Trenton (*DEP*) to determine if they are convinced this is sufficient enough to come up with a plan to remediate the site. At this time, there is no council action that must be taken. The Solicitor again stressed that Mr. Houser feels, as an expert, he can perform this study in the right of way and is confident with the data he can collect. Mayor Gabbianelli then noted the he (*Mr. Houser*) believes, if this study is done in the right of way, his report can be 99% complete where we

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**B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)**

can move to the next phase. The Solicitor then noted, what is interesting is with the age of the landfill, whether it be methane or whatever it is diminishing now, it peaked out some five years ago and now it is diminishing. By the time Mr. Houser completes his study and the report is received in Trenton for approval it may just bottom out. **Cncl. Pres., Caligiuri** noted he remembers seeing all the wells that were being dug because he (*Mr. Houser*) was going to sample out all throughout the Taylor property and that plan was approved by the DEP. Another plan was then initiated due to the inability to access certain properties. **Cncl. William Sebastian** referred to emails received from Ira Taylor where he elaborated on many issues but he did mention that his property was contaminated by our landfill, but he will not let us on this property to prove this; this does not make sense. Mayor Gabbianelli then noted we just want to come to some type of closure with this phase. The Solicitor indicated that he (*Houser*) will probably be prepared to come in by the end of the year. He explained there is not action required by council, at this time.

**Cncl. Pres., Frank Caligiuri** read into the record a letter he had received from a township resident.

*As a township resident for over 25 years, I am writing you this letter to address the serious decline in patient care, the mismanagement of funds, and the decline in overall service to our town that has been shown by the Monroe Township Ambulance and Rescue Association in recent years. This once reputable organization has undergone a considerable regression in their ability to effectively perform the duties they once had done so proficiently.*

*Of primary concern to me is the performance of the paid duty ambulance crews which operate during the day. Their reputation has become one of laziness and apathy. While many other paid first responders in the county perform chores related to their duties, I frequently ride past the ambulance hall and do not see the same jobs being performed by these individuals. While I do not have full knowledge of the division between career employees and volunteers, it appears as though these individuals feel that their responsibilities are simply to run calls between the hours of 6:00am and 6:00pm, and that the housekeeping details are best left to the volunteers. This seems to be a waste of money, in my opinion. All individuals who are associated with the ambulance squad are equal in the eyes of the residents. If such dissent is present in this organization, I believe it speaks to much deeper problems which need to be addressed as quickly as possible.*

*Regarding the volunteer ambulance squad, I have serious reservations regarding their abilities to consistently and quickly perform their duties. It is my understanding that volunteer ambulance services are on the decline and that many townships have relied on shared services throughout the county. It is also my understanding that the squad located on Blue Bell Road and Corkery Lane was given 2 new ambulances once they began taking over response calls in the Cecil Section, which they promised that they would be able to consistently staff 2 ambulances to handle the call volume. Evidently, Cecil was having some issues with staffing and response times and admirably made the decision that they could not perform these duties effectively. They chose not to jeopardize the health, safety and well being of the township residents. Obviously, I am also aware that we are not consistently*

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*staffing 2 ambulances. I am also aware, through listening to my scanner, that many calls are dispatched a second and even a third time as all call pages. On this third dispatch frequently other townships are dispatched to handle the calls. This concerns me on three fronts. Primarily that means that a patient would need to wait in excess of 6 minutes before an ambulance responded. This delays treatment. In a situation that already posing a risk to health and welfare this is unacceptable. Second, when another township comes in to our town to perform a service, we cannot bill for this service. I have heard on multiple occasions that the ambulance squad is self-sufficient because it can charge for calls. However, money is being lost when I see a Washington Township ambulance deep in our township. This means that there is a greater reliance on the taxpayers for monies to fund first responder services, and these services are not even being performed by our own ambulance squad. Finally, I have a lot of township pride. I have lived here for many years. I believe that we are taking care of our own. Seeing a Washington Township ambulance in my town when I have paid staff during the day and was promised 2 at night is an affront to my civic pride. How shameful. I encourage you to check the response times and mutual aid instances to verify these facts.*

*Finally, I have grave concerns regarding the rescue company associated with the ambulance squad. Putting aside the fact that these duties are handled by the fire departments of other municipalities in 99% of the state I have staffing and experience issues. As mentioned previously, many dispatched calls go to a second and third dispatch when 2 ambulances are needed and sadly sometimes when 1 is needed. If we are not able to staff 2 ambulances how are we able to staff 2 ambulances and a rescue truck? I believe from my listening experience, that most, if not all car accidents that have a rescue company dispatched call for 2 ambulances and a rescue truck. I am not a math guy but if we can't staff 2 ambulances it seems pretty difficult to staff 3. I would also encourage you to examine the qualifications of the individuals charged with performing the rescue duties. I would hope that each individual who is on that truck has received at least basic training in operating the machines on the truck.*

*In closing I am requesting that you examine as a whole the services this organization has provided. As a township resident, I am very dissatisfied with the level of service I have seen and heard from this organization. I understand that this may be a painful experience, as the results of what you find may reflect unfavorable upon the organization and may lead to difficult decisions. However, when the health and safety of our residents are at stake sometimes difficult decisions need to be made.*

*Thank you, sir for your time.*

**Cncl. Pres., Caligiuri** then indicated that the letter was **not signed**, however he wanted to bring it to the table. He did not know if it was true, untrue or otherwise. He did not write it so don't blame the messenger.

**Mayor Gabbianelli** then noted that if the letter is unsigned, it might have been a letter from the Cecil ambulance who is disgruntled because of what is going on.

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**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.

**Mayor Gabbianelli** then posed a question to **Pete Mercanti**, representative from Gloucester County and questioned if he had an update on what was being done for Monroe Township.

**Cncl. Walter Bryson** made a motion to close the Public Portion. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Marvin Dilks** and unanimously approved by all members of Council in attendance.

**D.) NEW BUSINESS**

**Cncl. William Sebastian** posed a follow up question to the Mayor's comment to the county representative. He requested a written statement be submitted to the Clerk's Office on what was spent in Monroe Township for last year. Mr. Mercanti will report back on this.

**E.) OLD BUSINESS**

**Solicitor, Charles Fiore** reported that the Fairness Hearing on the Blaze Mill settlement agreement was originally scheduled for Wednesday, September 19<sup>th</sup> and has been postponed until sometime in November.

**F.) COMMITTEE REPORTS - None**

**G.) QUESTIONS REGARDING RESOLUTIONS SCHEDULED**

**Cncl. Pres., Frank Caligiuri** posed a question with regard to Resolution R:161-2012 (*Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Monroe Awarding Bid to Jottan, Inc. for the Municipal Building Re-Roofing & Sheet Metal Work Within the Township of Monroe*). The Solicitor advised that there was one missing item in the bid proposal of the apparent low bidder however he was confident that Jottan, Inc. was correctly named as the "lowest responsible bidder".

**H.) QUESTIONS REGARDING ORDINANCES SCHEDULED**

**Cncl. William Sebastian** noted a *point of clarification* on Ordinance O:24-2012 (*An Ordinance of the Township Council of the Township of Monroe to Amend Chapter 267 of the Code of the Township of Monroe Entitled "Vehicles and Traffic" - No Parking Virginia Avenue*). He questioned if this was on both sides all the way down from one end to the other. The Solicitor replied "yes" however, there could be exceptions for volunteer

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**H.) QUESTIONS REGARDING ORDINANCES SCHEDULED (cont'd)**

emergency services. It was also noted that the "no parking" on the opposite side of the street from where the homes are located is from 11:00PM to 6:00AM, because there was a concern with vehicles parking in the middle of the night. The side where the homes are located had always been "no parking".

**OTHER MATTERS**

**Director of Public Safety, Jim Smart** requested that perhaps the Public Safety Committee of Council could meet to discuss the process of rolling the rescue truck over to the fire department. The Mayor noted they should just do it, to proceed with this. The Solicitor advised that there is an ordinance on the books that differentiates between the two associations, that is why there should be a review of council as there is a need to amend the ordinance. Mr. Smart explained that the code recognizes Monroe Ambulance & Rescue Association as the authority of ambulance services. **Cncl. William Sebastian, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee** noted he would like additional information on this.

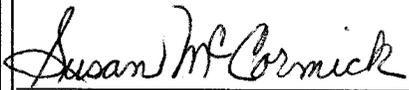
**Engineer, Chris Rehmann** spoke to Mr. Mercanti, county representative advising him on an issue involving the Fries Mill Road intersection and a road/traffic signal project along a portion of the Black Horse Pike. He explained the Fries Mill Road intersection involves both county and state highway where we received the participation of private individuals to fund the design and through the efforts of the Mayor's office, the individuals were gently approached to donate the right of way. Normally it takes anywhere from eighteen (18) months to two (2) years to acquire right of way. On the Black Horse Pike we are attempting to put in a new traffic signal intersection to allow a private developer to construct a 300,000 square foot shopping center. Mr. Rehmann noted in this day and age when the State of New Jersey is in an economic malaise he has no idea why the Bureau of Traffic Signals in Trenton are holding up two (2) projects that both have significant construction jobs with one of them bringing permanent job placements to the township. Mr. Rehmann felt that a six to eight month review period for two projects that does involve rocket science was far too long. We are not trying to replace a traffic circle, we are not trying to do anything that significant. Any help we could get regarding the Fries Mill Road intersection through the county to move this along before we lose the \$2 million dollars we acquired through the state would be helpful. The other project (*Black Horse Pike*) has private funding and there is a mechanism in place to get reimbursed through a pilot program, everything for this is in place except we have bureaucrats that are standing in the way. Mr. Rehmann urged Mr. Mercanti to bring this matter back to the county as any help they can give us in figuring out the delays at the state level would be most appreciated. **Cncl. William Sebastian** noted the Fries Mill Road project is more important than the other (*ratable*) strictly because this is costing lives. A number of years ago we ran a survey, through the county to determine where the most active intersections were located, as far as fatalities and collisions. The outcome of the survey showed it was the Fries Mill Road intersection. The Mayor noted when we went to Trenton to discuss this project a number of years ago the state, even at that time, stressed this was what they referred to as an "F" intersection, meaning a *failed* intersection.

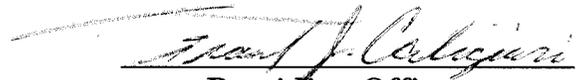
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**I.) ADJOURNMENT**

With nothing further for discussion, **Cncl. William Sebastian** made a motion to adjourn the Council Work Session of September 11, 2012. 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 September 11, 2012 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 \_\_\_\_\_ AmJ \_\_\_\_\_ Date 9/25/12  
Approved as corrected \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_