

**MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
FEBRUARY 22, 2016**

A.) OPENING CEREMONIES & ROLL CALL

The regular scheduled Work Session Meeting of the Monroe Township Council was called to order by **Council President Cody D. Miller** at approximately **7:01 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.: South Jersey 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. Dilks led the Assembly in the Salute to Our Flag.

ROLL CALL OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Cncl. Walter Bryson	Present	
Cncl. Frank Caligiuri	Present	
Cncl. Marvin Dilks	Present	
Cncl. Rich DiLucia	Present	
Cncl. Bob Heffner	Present	
Cncl. Bart McIlvaine	Present	
Cncl. Pres., Cody D. Miller	Present	
Mayor, Daniel Teefy	Present	
Business Admin., Kevin Heydel	Present	(Arrived 7:07PM)
Solicitor, Charles Fiore	Present	
Engineer, Kathryn Cornforth, ARH	Present	
Dir. of Public Safety, Jim Smart	Present	(Arrived 7:20PM)
Dir. of Code Enforcement, George Reitz	Present	
Dir. Of Public Works, Mike Calvello	Present	
Deputy Mayor, Andy Potopchuk	Present	
Municipal Clerk, Susan McCormick	Present	

B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION - None

C.) PUBLIC PORTION

Cncl. Dilks made a motion to open the Public Portion. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Caligiuri** and unanimously approved by all members of council in attendance.

Grafton Davis approached council members with his concerns on the rubber tire crumb materials being used on township ball fields/recreational areas as well as having information on some of the developments, etc. where this material is possibly being used. He then noted he heard perhaps the township would be doing something on the stuff being used in the recreation areas. He advised that he knew the county has completed removal of the substance from Scotland Run Park and has remediated the site. Mr. Davis also advised that he spoke personally with Superintendent, Charles Earling and he advised

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C.) PUBLIC PORTION (cont'd)

the school would be looking into considering different materials for their athletic fields. He questioned if anyone with the township had some insight on this or any further input in addition to what he brought forward. He then advised he knows this material is used at Owens Park. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** noted Owens Park is the only place that has the rubber tire crumb however he was not sure if the new park at Duffy field was going to have this material, he felt they may be going with mulch because of the potential health concerns. There was discussion on the many news articles and specials done on national TV on the effects of this material. Mr. Davis noted with all the information we have he would think the township would like to err on the side of caution. **Cncl. Bryson** noted, if he was not mistaken the material in question was more expensive than using something like a natural wood such as cedar, cork or mulch. He then suggested to bring this matter to Jim Bonder for his input. **Cncl. Heffner** then requested that Mr. Calvello contact the county to ascertain exactly what type of remediation was done at Scotland Run Park.

Mayor Teefy then questioned if we were talking about the same type of substance. Rubber crumb is finite bits that is put on the turf fields, but what we have out at Owens are big chips and pellets. Mr. Davis noted this was the same thing. Mayor Teefy then noted it is different and he questioned Mr. Heydel (*JIF Fund Commissioner*) if the JIF had any recommendations on this. Mr. Heydel responded, they have not come out with any bulletins nor have they addressed this as a potential hazard. However, he will check with the JIF to verify if anything further has been put out. Mayor Teefy thought there may be a difference in how what we have out there (*Owens*) is processed and made. What we have out there, we have had for some ten years and emphasized that rubber crumb is different than pellets. He advised that we will definitely look into it and no decision will be made until we hear from both the county and the JIF because again there is a difference between crumb and the chips out there (*Owens Park*). **Cncl. Pres. Miller** then advised Mr. Davis that the township welcomes any further information he may have on this matter.

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

D.) NEW BUSINESS

Cncl. Pres., Miller then spoke on the possibility of creating an actual Certified Contractors List for use in emergent situations such as boarding up buildings. Traditionally, a list was on file in town hall and whenever an issue arose they would contact a company who would come out and correct the problem. In discussing this with our code enforcement officer there is really no way to check and see if the individual is licensed, bonded or even insured and is familiar with our property maintenance code. He felt the best way to address this issue would be to do an RFQ for a certified contractor's list, it would be used by the following departments: zoning, code enforcement, construction, public works, police and fire and emergency management. The individuals would have to prove they are licensed, bonded and insured. If an issue arose the way we could utilize this would be on an alphabetic order basis with a list that would interchange so that everyone had an opportunity, the number of companies listed would be six (6). **Cncl. Pres., Miller** was bringing this to the attention of

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D.) NEW BUSINESS (cont'd)

council to see what their thoughts were on this and went on to go into more detail on how the boarding up process should work. **Cncl. Dilks** questioned the list that is currently being utilized. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** responded that he was not sure however he was told that **Fred Weikel** (*prior zoning officer*) had a list of approximately five individuals that he would contact. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** did not know if there were was any kind of paperwork submitted to the township and that is his concern. **Cncl. Dilks** questioned, once we go through this process would they get paid through the insurance company. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** responded, no they get paid through the municipality, there is money in the code enforcement budget and we pay the company to do the boarding up process. **Cncl. DiLucia** questioned if a step to be taken before this would be to contact the company in charge of vacant housing in an attempt to locate whoever the lien holder is. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** acknowledged that would be the first step, he just knows with some of these abandoned properties you try to contact the bank and they don't get back to you so it is more that if we have to do this in an emergency situation we would be able to have someone go out there to do the work.

Solicitor Charles Fiore questioned if property maintenance such as grass cutting will also be included in the RFQ. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** indicated that was the discussion here. **Cncl. Bryson** noted he was always under the impression, in the case of fire, that the insurance company (*homeowners/fire*) is the one that goes and selects the person to board up the property. **Business Administrator, Kevin Heydel** explained anytime we have a fire with a situation such as this at that point in time we are required to secure the property so that no one can get in and we would board that up. Number 1 you don't get to the insurance company the night of the fire, nor the week of the fire and they are not going to respond quickly. In those situations (*emergent*) we would go out and board up the home. If we run into a home where there is a break in and it is abandoned and needs to be secured right away, we are not waiting to call the property maintenance company as these are emergency situations. Mr. Fiore only mentioned the grass cutting because it could be something from a cost effective standpoint you may want to look at. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** indicated that he was interested in this suggestion and can we make it a little more encompassing. The solicitor advised we could break this into sub-parts and again when you break this down it would be general board up costs and in preparing a draft RFQ we would need to see if it was to broken down by an hourly rate or by hour and material, just some things to consider. It was the consensus of council members to have the solicitor draft an RFQ for review. **Mayor Teefy** advised in working with Community Champions of Melbourne, Florida has made a huge change in regard to the abandoned properties. The turnaround time in contacting entities is much quicker, the construction code office on the housing side is really able to utilize this information to board up houses, plus there is money coming into that fund to do this type of work. This company has been working with us and it is starting to make a difference in the process. The solicitor will draft an RFQ for review.

Cncl. Bryson referred to an email received from the Gloucester County Tax Board on an equalization meeting that will be taking place on March 1, 2016. **Business Administrator, Kevin Heydel** advised that they are required to send out Public Notice when they are finalizing the equalization for public comment. They have already finalized the numbers for 2015 for the 2016 taxes.

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D.) NEW BUSINESS (cont'd)

Cncl. Bryson then inquired on a matter that appeared on Facebook as well as an article that appeared in the newspaper dealing with drug related problems and how Monroe Township is roughly 22 times higher (*overdoses*) than the rest of the county. He would like to see if we could get something together to enhance enforcement. He would like to see who we are working with and how many people are we really pulling in and arresting. If we have that much of a drug problem within the township with a very good police force, we should be sure to get those numbers out as to what we are doing, that 22 times higher figure is just horrendous. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** then commented on the article because again it is a personal issue. The Municipal Alliance Commission is working with the Gloucester County Prosecutor's office and this is the first time they have had an opiate initiative in the schools and the pilot program started in Monroe Township. They are trying to combat it on the end starting with the school children. The biggest issue we are facing, and the article does not elaborate on this, is the fact that while we have the highest amount of overdoses and deaths they don't tell you where those individuals came from. It was also expressed in the article that due to our location and because of our situation as sad as it sounds a lot of the people that are overdosing in this municipality are people who are not actually Williamstown residents. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** noted that he will contact the Chief of Police to see what their protocol is, what they have in place, if there are certain areas where they are enforcing because to his knowledge if anyone has a complaint about a certain issue, especially in the case of Herbert Blvd, where they know this is a heavily trafficked area and they know that there have been drug deals in the vicinity. It is quite difficult when you are dealing with something like this because it is not just in Monroe Township, it is in every municipality in Gloucester County and unfortunately our numbers are higher because of our area demographics. **Cncl. Bryson** noted he would like to see what steps are being taken but I also want to see the enforcement. You have people who use drugs but they don't get those drugs by pulling them out of a tree, they get those drugs from somebody. Are the guys who are selling these drugs to the kids, to the people are they from this town? **Deputy Mayor Potopchuk** noted that he has attended many meetings on this subject and a lot of it has to do with the doctors and prescription drugs. Once you get on those you can't get off, they give you opiates and when they run out you go to the cheapest thing you can get which is heroin. **Cncl. McIlvaine** advised that he requested retired Detective Lieutenant Joe Kurz to speak on this and he will explain what happened concerning this eschewed report and once you hear this it should answer some questions as to what is taking place. **Joe Kurz** reported that the article was very slanted. Narcan is administered when someone overdoses and the use of the Narcan must be reported to the Gloucester County Prosecutor's office. In our township we do not have a paid ambulance squad from 6:00PM to 6:00AM and this is nothing against the ambulance personnel I am just explaining the reporting system. When there is an overdose after 6:00PM the ambulance squad responds, they being volunteers are not allowed to administer Narcan. **Business Administrator, Kevin Heydel** indicated that was incorrect. Mr. Kurz noted that this is what was told to him. That the ambulance personnel are to call the police and the police administer it. So in our township the police administering Narcan and reporting back to the prosecutor's office is extremely high compared to other towns where they can call EMS and they administer the Narcan. The Police Chief and Detective Sgt. Lorusso, who were mentioned in the article, tried to have the

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D.) NEW BUSINESS (cont'd)

article written with more accuracy. For some reason the author of that article slanted it against Monroe Township, the numbers are eschewed, to say that Monroe Township is 3rd in the state in heroin usage is ridiculous. **Mr. Heydel** then wished to clarify explaining that what happens when there is a call, the call goes both to the police department and to the ambulance. The police department is always on scene first so they are the first ones there to administer the Narcan even before whether the paid crew gets there or whether a volunteer crew gets there. Any use of Narcan has to be reported to the prosecutor's office but it also must be reported to the State Department of Health as it is a requirement on the patient care record. The person dispensing is first on scene which is usually a police officer. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** noted what he can do because of this recent article he can have the police chief come in and give a report to council explaining what they are doing in terms of being proactive (*drug usage, dealers, etc.*) and what steps are being taken and possibly elaborate on some areas around the municipality where they have noticed there is an increase in drug activity. Much discussion took place with many people speaking at the same time. The solicitor then noted in speaking with an investigator from the state police, the drugs are no longer being transported from Miami to New York or whatever, it is being mailed via UPS and other carriers and it is the most sophisticated way of shipping it all over the place, and if they lose some they just don't care. He addressed an issue brought up by Cncl. Bryson, explaining a lot of times you will find a situation where somebody gets busted for drugs and it may be questionable on whether or not it is a distribution or whether they are using for their own individual use. It will then go up to the prosecutor's office and it could be something like 18 lbs. of weed and it could be as an example Monroe, Deptford, Westville or other towns I am prosecuting in and amazingly many, many times it gets dumped back to the municipality for a possession charge. A lot of times, if there is a bad search or bad stops instead of dumping them to the county where they don't want to affect their statistics they send it back to municipalities. Under our system now if someone is charged with possession of a CDS (*marijuana under 50 grams*) they are entitled to what is called a conditional discharge and this allows them to be on probation for a period of 6 months, they must remain law abiding, they must remain drug free and they would have 4 or 5 drug tests and if they remain negative then they are off the conditional discharge and the charges are dismissed. He spoke of implementing a program through the state legislature, that rather than paying a sum of money and giving 3-4 urine samples and remaining law-abiding, you must go for treatment and you must complete treatment. **Mr. Fiore** noted, however that may not work because a lot of people that are hard core never get through the treatment and never make it. Within the system, let's assume they get through the conditional discharge and a year later they get arrested for drugs again. They are not entitled to the conditional discharge and under our sentencing guidelines the court would look at mitigating and aggravating factors and for the most part the second time they are found with drugs and convicted of something they're not going to jail, they are going to be put on probation. It probably has to be at least 4 or 5 times that they are arrested and convicted before they would see any time. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** then noted it is more than just being tough on crime when you are dealing with substance abuse disorder. Some people have an addiction so you don't want to hammer them with a stick because then you created someone who has the potential to constantly being in the criminal system. He went on to speak of what both police and municipal alliance are working on and this is also an issue that is an agenda item for the governor. Again, he will have the

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D.) NEW BUSINESS *(cont'd)*

Police Chief come in and address some issues and can advise on what proactive steps they are taking.

Cncl. Bryson then noted there are some townships in South Jersey that really enforce the motor vehicle/traffic laws. You know when you go into certain townships that you better observe those laws. It is the same type of situation in addressing the drug problem in that same kind of light, that Monroe enforces the law to the extent that a drug dealer doesn't want to come into Monroe.

Cncl. DiLucia noted drugs have been a problem for as long as he can remember. There has always been the drug of choice, ten years ago it may have been crack cocaine because it was the cheapest. Now, unfortunately the cheapest is heroin and this is a very, very addictive drug. He spoke of veterans returning from the Viet Nam war and many were addicted. At the time I had a lot of experience with heroin addicts because I was president of a large union and had a lot of inter-action with them. **Cncl. DiLucia** then noted I am not so critical on the user as I feel that is a sickness. The sellers are really the problem and I really can't say that our township is any different than any other, there is an epidemic of drug use out there and it is a lucrative business to sell drugs. There is always someone who is so desperate to make money that they are going to sell. What was striking to him regarding the article is where they referred to the school having a nickname. He was more interested in hearing what we are doing about that situation. Whatever they (*police*) could do to give us some kind of report because that article made it sound like there is an infestation of drugs and it is contrary to how well our kids are doing academically. Again, **Cncl. Pres., Miller** noted we can have the chairperson to the municipal alliance come in along with Detective Sgt. Lorusso (*prosecutor's office*) to give council a report on the funding they provide and what programs they are implementing. **Mayor Teefy** then noted it is never good news when the headlines read Williamstown and the drug use and the percentage rate. When he spoke with the reporter who wrote the article, his comments were that in this town we were doing something about the problem, the municipal alliance was stepping up and doing more than anyone else in the county is doing. That, I feel, was lost in the article because if you read through it you would see that certain programs are going on and they have set up a program in the school that has never been done before. They are teaching the teachers what to look for to get the kids help, they are speaking with bus drivers and reaching out to everyone. It is a pilot program that the county is now looking to use in other school districts. He took it as a positive that we are not sticking our heads in the sand, we are doing something about it. The mayor then explained he has been working on this issue since the first day he took office and continues to speak with Police Chief and the police department is certainly working on it and, no, they are not going to tell you what they are doing. He continued to speak on the positive direction the township is taking.

Mayor Teefy then advised that it is key to know when retirements are upcoming in our police department so that we backfill those positions to keep the number of officers up there. Just recently, we put out a list for candidates and we had it down to four (4) however one person was a no show. Three excellent candidates came in for an interview, almost as good or better than the candidates we had last year. We are looking to hire three officers this

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year as it appears two more officers may be retiring and he heard of a possible one more by the end of the year. This way, we keep the numbers in our police department in the mid-sixty range. **Cncl. McIlvaine** advised it takes approximately one year from the date of hire to have an officer fully operational. **Cncl. DiLucia** questioned how many positions were open and how many candidates were sent by civil service. **Mayor Teefy** advised there were twelve (12) on the list and we had four (4) that were offered interviews and three (3) showed up.

Director of Public Safety, Jim Smart reported there is a growing concern regarding response time and he spoke of a particular call that came in last evening where the patient was taken by private vehicle after waiting almost a full 20 minutes and he explained the series of events that took place. He advised we are not a township that puts our head in the sand and to stay proactive on the growing issues of 20 plus minute responses on last month's report showing 20 plus calls, to give our residents fair EMS coverage I did have a conversation with **Cncl. McIlvaine, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee** as how best to proceed and his suggestion was to bring this to an open forum. Mr. Smart continued and noted what he was looking for is to get the committee together with himself and the EMS chiefs and start putting together some suggestions on how we can proceed to start minimizing this. Whether it be going with longer paid days to supplement the volunteers, whatever it is it must be looked into. Mr. Smart then explained to council members the nature of the particular call that came into question, there was a head trauma on Saturday with the patient feeling sick and ill on Sunday and they called for an ambulance. That was pretty much it then they decided to drive themselves. This is getting to be something that needs to be addressed. There was further discussion on the ideal response time or the gold standard. Mr. Smart indicated 10-12 minutes total response on location. He felt the average was somewhere between 8-10 minutes and we do have all those statistics. For the most part we do a lot we are just a very busy township with back to back and sometimes back to back to back calls. There have been times when we have 3 or 4 ambulances on a street and there are other times where we can't make it happen. He also spoke on responses taken for Franklinville and those numbers are increasing as their volunteer numbers are very low and it creates problems. Mr. Smart noted somewhere along the way we have to come up with something. **Cncl. Bryson** questioned the manpower dealing with the volunteers and has it gone down. Mr. Smart replied it has gone down a bit, in talking with Frank McLaughlin, they lost 6 to 7 people but I don't know whether those were heavy hitters, so for me to give an absolute answer I would be giving you false information. **Mr. Heydel** questioned why is it we can't get the county to be a second truck in our town since we pay them a large amount of money. Mr. Smart indicated there was not a reason in his mind and that is why we are going to sit down and review everything and that may be our potential change. **Mayor Teefy** noted this was more of a manpower issue as opposed to an equipment issue. Mr. Smart indicated that was correct and as to our vehicles at this point everything is up and running inside the building, which gives us a full 5-6 trucks. There was then discussion on the staffing as well as background information on scheduling as it now exists and how it came to evolve over the years. Mr. Smart noted there is now a need to evolve and restructure and sit back and take a hard look at this. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** requested that as soon as possible the Public Safety Committee should meet with Mr. Smart

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and the Mayor to discuss our next course of action. **Cncl. McIlvaine** noted it may take a week or two to get this meeting together, do you see a need for the solicitor to send a letter to Franklinville as of tonight to try and alleviate these problems. Mr. Smart advised he would pull the stats and if necessary he will contact the solicitor to draft a letter to Franklinville, all of council was in agreement. **Cncl. McIlvaine** advised that he will coordinate a meeting with all concerned as soon as possible to come up with some solutions to the issues. Mr. Smart emphasized it is not a crisis but it is a growing concern.

E.) OLD BUSINESS - None

F.) COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cncl. McIlvaine reported that the **Public Safety Committee** did meet and reviewed the RFQ's received for the Architectural services dealing with the Williamstown and Cecil Fire Company renovations and it is our opinion that the position should go to Rodier Ebersberger Architects. He also advised that the committee (*McIlvaine, Dilks, Heffner*) is still working on the towing ordinance and we have a final **draft** put together. Also, there is another meeting scheduled (*February 23rd*) to hopefully finalize the ordinance.

G.) QUESTIONS REGARDING RESOLUTIONS SCHEDULED

Cncl. McIlvaine posed a question regarding *R:69-2016 (Resolution Authorizing The Execution Of The Amended Resolution To Participate In The State Health Benefits Program To Provide Health Insurance Coverage And Benefits To The Township Of Monroe Employees, Retirees And Their Families)* scheduled for approval at the Regular Council Meeting. **Business Administrator, Kevin Heydel** after the resolution was passed authorizing us to go into the SHBP what had happened when we went through the certification process we found that not every retiree is under Chapter 48, we have some older retirees under Chapter 88 and as it turned out those retirees were not required to have 25 years of service with the township, as their requirement was based on retirement at age 62 with 15 years of service and it applies to those listed on the supplemental resolution addendum, this was needed to verify to the state those specific members were eligible under this. Mr. Heydel continued to advise that we have gone through the certification process everything is moving along and ready to go. On March 2nd the township will be having informational sessions for all the retirees and he is in the process of drawing up an RFQ to go out to a third party company to handle the reimbursement process.

H.) QUESTIONS REGARDING ORDINANCES SCHEDULED

Cncl. Heffner, Chairman of the Ordinance Committee advised that Ordinance **O:05-2016** An Ordinance Of The Township Council Of The Township Of Monroe To Amend Chapter 175 Of The Code Of The Township Of Monroe, Entitled "Land Management" (*Chapter*

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

175-133 "Sidewalks") and **O:06-2016** An Ordinance Of The Township Council Of The Township Of Monroe To Amend Chapter 175 Of The Code Of The Township Of Monroe, Entitled "Land Management" (Chapter 175-54 "Subdivision, Site Plan & Conditional Use Approval") both scheduled for 2nd reading on the Regular Council Meeting agenda were being removed. **Solicitor Fiore** then requested the above referenced ordinances be placed on the Ordinance Committee meeting agenda scheduled for March 2nd.

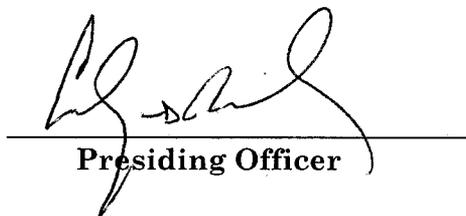
I.) ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further for discussion, **Cncl. Caligiuri** made a motion to adjourn the Council Work Session of February 22, 2016. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Dilks** 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 February 22, 2016 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
Approved as corrected _____

Date 3/14/16
Date _____