

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION MEETING
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
APRIL 23, 2018**

A.) OPENING CEREMONIES & ROLL CALL

The regular scheduled Work Session Meeting of the Monroe Township Council was called to order by **Council President, Rich DiLucia** at approximately 7:00 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. Marino** led the Assembly in the Salute to Our Flag.

ROLL CALL OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Cncl. Marvin Dilks	Present	
Cncl. Ronald Garbowski	Present	
Cncl. Bob Heffner	Present	
Cncl. Joe Marino	Present	
Cncl. Bart McIlvaine	Present	
Cncl. Cody Miller	Present	(Arrived 7:45PM)
Cncl. Pres., Rich DiLucia	Present	
Mayor, Daniel P. Teefy	Present	
Business Admin., Kevin Heydel		Excused
Solicitor, Louis Cappelli	Present	
Eng., Ray Jordan, ARH	Present	
Dir. of Finance, Karyn Paccione	Present	
Dir. of Public Safety, Jim Smart	Present	
Dir. of Public Works, Mike Calvello	Present	
Dir. of Comm. Dev/Code Enf. Rosemary Flaherty	Present	
Dir. of Parks & Rec, Jim Bonder	Present	
Deputy Mayor, Andy Potopchuk		Excused
Chief of Police, John McKeown	Present	
Municipal Clerk, Susan McCormick	Present	

B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Cncl. Pres., DiLucia announced we will be working on a tight schedule as we must be in the Court Room seated at 8:00PM as the Public Hearing on the 2018 Municipal Budget is scheduled for 8:00PM. This work session will be adjourned at approximately 7:50PM regardless of where we are on the scheduled agenda items.

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B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)

• **Proposed Community Recreation Center**

Director of Parks & Rec, Jim Bonder noted that a proposal/packet was prepared and distributed to both mayor and council members with regard to the presentation. He then went on to advise that in his fourteen (14) years in working with Parks & Rec probably the single most important matter that people come to him about is when or how we are going to get a rec center. He then advised he was coming before mayor and council at this time due to location. We tried for years to come up with a location and he is now being told by Adams, Rehmann & Heggan that "*Pin Oak Estates Property*" is prepared to possibly donate twelve (12) acres to the township, if this is the case, we have our location. This parcel would directly connect to existing Owens Park behind the rear football field. He said he was a big advocate of a center location for everything. With this twelve acres that may become available to us he would recommend that we start to look at constructing a rec center. He explained what is contained in both the proposal and the presentation brought forward is input from people who come to my office, presidents of organizations, people throughout town and residents and all he is hearing most often is that a rec center is what we need. We need to be able to bring spring, summer and fall activities indoors, going on to elaborate on the needs of different organizations, etc. Mr. Bonder displayed a rendering he prepared which was pretty much to scale outlining a 90,000 sq. ft. structure, including five (5) full basketball courts, an all-purpose room with a stage, 50x75 indoor turf area, senior citizen dining area, five (5) meeting rooms, multi-purpose room for cheer, gymnastics and volleyball, in addition to a lobby space, offices, conference room, computer and lounge areas and a 22,000 sq. ft. workout facility as well as locker rooms. Mr. Bonder then spoke on some additional benefits for the township one being, this is where Camp would take place. He then noted that camp registration is up 40% to date from last year and it is continually growing. There is also the possibility of implementing after school programs. Mr. Bonder then spoke with respect to the costs associated with this particular facility, he felt it was a step up from a pole barn and probably the cost would be in the area of \$100.00/\$150.00 per sq. ft. At 90,000 sq. ft. @ \$100.00 per sq. ft. you are looking at \$9 million, if it would be twice that you would be looking at approximately \$12/\$13 million. Mr. Bonder said, this won't be easy but he felt it was time to start the ball rolling and get the information out to the people who are listening. Ultimately, he believed this will be up to the people. We do our due diligence, gather the information, decide where we can put it, calculate the costs and put it out to the people for a vote. Mr. Bonder then referred to information received from Kathryn Cornforth, ARH on the steps involved to move a project of this nature forward.

Cncl. Pres., DiLucia noted he liked the idea of having a rec center and making sure the children in this town have somewhere safe to participate in activities. He then advised that he would be appointing a committee to sit down with Mr. Bonder to iron out specifics and come back to council before we turn it over to the engineers. This way, we will have some understanding as to what direction we are going in before we initiate anything. The redevelopment committee (*Miller, Garbowski, Marino*) will be charged with this to report back to council on their findings.

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B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)

• **Enforcement of Animal Cruelty Laws & Designation of Municipal Officer Liaison**

Chief of Police, John McKeown reported he received information on this at the New Jersey State Chief of Police meeting with additional information passed on from Prosecutor, Charles A. Fiore, of the Gloucester County Prosecutor's Office. He advised the state has changed the law where they used to have the SPCA State Humane Society enforce the criminal codes relating to animal cruelty. He noted this has changed but why it has changed is beyond our time and scope, we just need to know it has changed and the state enacted a new law to say every municipality in the state will appoint someone to act as a Municipal Humane Law Enforcement Officer (*MHLEO*). The Chief was not quite sure why they are requiring this to be passed by the governing body, his only estimation was because not every agency in the state has a police department. He advised his recommendation is that we assign a detective to this. The animal control officers will continue to enforce any municipal ordinances, etc. But, when it comes to a true criminal case of animal cruelty, it is an indictable crime and there will need to be a liaison to the Prosecutor's Office. Much of this was done by the state humane officers in the past, but it certainly seems like this is being phased out. The Chief advised there is no funding for this, we don't get a penny for doing this we just get extra work. The good news is the police training commission is supposed to be providing an expedited, short training class which they are estimating should be a couple days as compared to what the humane officers had to go through in the past. **Chief McKeown** recommended to council that Detective Jules Maiorano is the officer he would like to assign. He noted there is no need for a resolution but he needs to let the prosecutor know his recommendation by the end of the week (*April 27th*). The Chief then noted the county is going to appoint an Assistant Prosecutor who will advise us on the rules, laws and prosecute the cases but the investigative end will have to be done by our agency/detective. **Cncl. McIlvaine** questioned if council had to name/appoint an officer or could we leave it to the discretion of the Chief of Police. The Chief indicated he would like it to be that way however the law specifically states the governing body shall appoint one (1) Municipal Humane Law Enforcement Officer adding this is unlike most everything we do in the agency. Discussion continued.

Cncl. Pres., DiLucia noted as Chief of Police, John McKeown was making a recommendation to appoint Detective, Jules Maiorano to this position he proceeded to poll all council members in attendance on this appointment. It was the consensus of all council members in attendance to approve the recommendation of the Chief of Police and appoint **Detective Jules Maiorano** as the Municipal Humane Law Enforcement Officer for Monroe Township.

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C.) PUBLIC PORTION

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

Jim Solomon, Chief - Cecil Fire Company approached council members with regard to looking into the possibility of opening up a charge account with the local Tractor Supply store. Each year we are challenged with the task of developing an operational budget. As soon as we mention the word fire equipment the costs seem to go up. He advised the Tractor Supply store located on Berlin-Cross Keys Road carries a lot of equipment that would be beneficial to the department for rescue equipment at about half the price I can get through any of our vendors. We could save a lot of money and we would be able to get high quality equipment. They carry a large supply of rescue equipment almost everything that I use on my rescue truck at a fraction of the cost of what I am paying now. Mr. Solomon noted each year expenses go up through our vendors, yet our operational budget that I am forwarded stays the same. I need to have different avenues to be able to save money which is the ultimate goal. He requested if this was something we can look into. **Director of Finance, Karyn Paccione** questioned about how much were you looking to spend? Mr. Sullivan responded we could spend upwards of \$4,000 to \$5,000 per year. Especially when we are renewing/expanding certain equipment. He then noted he had already compared two of the vendors he deals with and on one set of equipment I could have saved almost \$2,000. Mrs. Paccione questioned if they were looking to set up an account with Tractor Supply or a charge card. Mr. Solomon noted that Tractor Supply does not have a physical in-house charge like we do with a lot of stores in town that we deal with, so we would have to actually set up the same similar situation we have with Home Depot, an actual credit card. Mrs. Paccione noted the state actually just issued Local Finance Notice 2018-13 regarding the use of credit cards for municipalities (*use to be taboo*) now they are looking at this as long as there is a policy in place. As long as you spend less than \$17,500 she did not believe there would be an issue with this. Mr. Sullivan again stressed it would save a great deal of money and it would make it easier when I am trying to develop a budget. Mrs. Paccione advised that we would need to establish an in-house financial policy showing how we would handle the cards. Once we establish that it should not be an issue. **Cncl. Marino** posed a question as to the quality of the merchandise. Mr. Solomon noted ironically the supplies I can buy from the local vendor are the same manufacturer/same quality at a phenomenal savings. There was discussion on the possibility of having Williamstown Fire Company also utilize this. Mr. Solomon explained the credit card (*Home Depot*) is issued to me, in my name, as Chief of the department. **Cncl. Pres., DiLucia** noted that Mrs. Paccione and Business Heydel, Kevin Heydel would meet to come up with a policy for the next meeting.

Jennifer Perez - 144 Princeton Place approached council members seeking their assistance with fixing a neighborhood park (*Ward Lane*). This park is in a state of disarray and this is really disappointing as it is past the stage of just not looking pretty, it is actually dangerous. Ms. Perez displayed some photographs illustrating the conditions at the park. She added that she has lived in Williamstown since she was 12 years old and she has seen that park go from a beautiful park where I used to play to an area with broken, rusted

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C.) PUBLIC PORTION (cont'd)

equipment, graffiti, rumors of drug dealings, supposed homeless person living there, gated areas that are completely knocked down which is a problem as there are transient people traveling through there as well as a reservoir full of water that is exposed to children who visit the park. Not only are these conditions not good for our children but it is also a potential liability issue and I don't say that lightly as I am an attorney licensed in the state of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Ms. Perez added when she sees these photographs my mind goes to someone is going to get hurt. She advised that she had a video on her laptop and she was unable to transfer it to CD before the meeting. **Cncl. Pres., DiLucia** noted that he felt we are convinced that this park is in disarray and we have had on-going, lengthy discussions about these playgrounds/tot lots. He felt part of the problem facing us is the cost associated with fixing them. We did receive some estimates on replacing equipment. With the seven (7) lots just for the swing sets and sliding boards, etc. it was approximately \$60,000 to replace due to several requirements, adding that Council members are still in the process of discussing this. Ms. Perez questioned whether there is a committee in place and if funds could be allocated to perhaps do a few at a time, incorporate a 5 year-10 year plan. There has to be a way we can do this for our children, in our neighborhood. She went on to elaborate on the conditions. Ms. Perez stressed there must be something we can do, we can't just let it deteriorate. **Director of Parks & Rec, Jim Bonder** went on to explain what he thought council would like to see done, one being for him or Mr. Calvello to go out and take a look at the park, assess the damage and assess what improvements would be needed. He felt this would be the first step to take and he was prepared to do that. **Cncl. Pres., DiLucia** advised Mr. Bonder to go ahead with doing the assessment and to take a look at all of the tot lots and report back on all the conditions. There was discussion back and forth on the conditions of all the tot lots. **Cncl. Heffner** then posed a question from a liability standpoint and how some of this stuff is really crap. We can go out there and make decisions but the decision right now should be to take the stuff out, if we can't fix it tomorrow then it has to come out. **Solicitor Cappelli** advised obviously you are now on notice of potentially dangerous conditions and under New Jersey law that means you have the duty to either correct it or remove it. Therefore, I would ask that the governing body get some kind of professional out there to determine what is safe, what is not safe and whatever is not safe if it is not going to be fixed, then remove it. You are on notice now and you certainly have exposure. **Cncl. Heffner** noted this is something that can't wait until the next council meeting we have to jump on this now. **Cncl. Pres., DiLucia** noted we are on notice now and if that is the situation every one of these parks have to be looked at tomorrow. **Cncl. Marino** noted we touched on this before and we talked about potentially removing the equipment if we can't maintain them and we also talked about notifying the neighbors in those areas by posting a notification at each playground area, adding that to date he did not believe this was done. This could possibly energize residents to come together on some rejuvenation efforts. **Mayor Teefy** spoke on the problem being that the tot lots were built when the developments first went in and were maintained by them for a good ten years. He also referred to Commerce Bank who donated to the town for the purpose of fixing the tot lots. Now, here we are some 18 years later and they are all falling apart. Presently, there is not enough manpower or tax dollars to maintain those facilities. He spoke of some developments having a HOA and how Scotland Run is currently looking into finding a location for a playground and trying to organize a

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C.) PUBLIC PORTION (cont'd)

HOA where you voluntarily give money. These things start up and then die off and that is why over the years we centralized our recreational facilities. Ms. Perez stated it is nice to be able to walk to a park, there's nothing like it and I love taking my daughter there but I have to do the whole deal of watching her, making sure she does not go into certain areas. **Mayor Teefy** noted since this is dangerous and they are all that way we must put an effort in to this and for both mayor and council to say here is xx amount of dollars (*at this time many people speaking at one time*). Mr. Bonder then noted for an example the Sunrise Rotary just supported and put a playground in at a cost of approximately \$150,000. The plus for us with that particular playground is that there are six (6) cameras out there along with signage indicating the area is monitored. You can't do that unless they actually are because it would false communication to families. We can make something beautiful and do it a heartbeat, the problem is how do we maintain it? It will never look as good as when we put it in unless we come up with a fix. Mr. Bonder will be out at the park location (*Ward Lane*) tomorrow and will assess all the parks and have some answers/communication and will contact Ms. Perez.

Frank Perez – 169 Ward Lane spoke on conditions at the park noting there is a retaining pond where the fence is just falling off. Apparently, when the development was established behind us it was necessary to have a fence around the retaining pond. For some reason, years later, it is not necessary and this does not make sense, if it was necessary back then why is it not necessary now? The fence is falling apart and looks like something from an inner city. Public Works employees have come out and actually cut it, I don't what is going on but it is missing sections. He voiced his concerns with the basketball court not being maintained and spoke on the costs associated with the installation of a facility and the need for maintenance. Mr. Perez then spoke on speeding problems within the town especially in his neighborhood adding that in his neighborhood (*Green Meadows*) it is just crazy. Discussion continued. Mr. Perez then spoke of efforts to alleviate this problem in the past and how they had no effect especially in the area of Princeton Place, Gordon Avenue and Ward Lane. Ms. Perez then questioned if there was a mechanism to request signage indicating "*do not enter*" be placed at (*Gordon Avenue*) again. Mayor Teefy responded that a petition would be the first step and upon completion could be sent to the Mayor's Office. Ms. Perez questioned if a requisite number of signatures was needed. The mayor responded, no real requisite, you would want the residents in the area of concern along Gordon Avenue and Princeton Place.

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

It was noted that Resolution **R:98-2018** *Resolution Approving The Bill List For The Council Meeting Of April 23, 2018* would be removed from the Regular Council Meeting agenda and rescheduled for the May 14, 2018 meeting.

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Cncl. Pres., DiLucia advised he would move to adjourn the work session at this time due to the Public Hearing on the 2018 Budget being scheduled for 8:00PM. Any unfinished business (*as noted below*) from the work session would be addressed during the Regular Council Meeting.

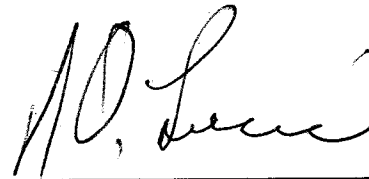
- D.) NEW BUSINESS
- E.) OLD BUSINESS
- F.) COMMITTEE REPORTS
- G.) QUESTIONS REGARDING RESOLUTIONS SCHEDULED
- H.) QUESTIONS REGARDING ORDINANCES SCHEDULED
- I.) ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further for discussion, **Cncl. Miller** made a motion to adjourn the Council Work Session of April 23, 2018. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Garbowski** and was unanimously approved by all members of Council present.

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 April 23, 2018 and serves as only 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 Am
Approved as corrected _____

Date 5/14/18
Date _____