

**MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
FEBRUARY 8, 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 **7:02 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		Excused
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		Excused
Business Admin., Kevin Heydel	Present	(Arrived 7:20PM)
Solicitor, Charles Fiore	Present	
Engineer, Chris Rehmann, 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		Excused
Municipal Clerk, Susan McCormick	Present	

B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

• **Sustainable Monroe Update**

Patrick McDevitt, Chairman Monroe Green Team was in attendance to give an update on the status of the Sustainable NJ certification. He explained the point system used and what was required to obtain a certification. June 5th is the 2016 submission date deadline and that is why the resolution scheduled (*R:62-2016*) is required along with a few other items to be submitted as well. He spoke of some comparisons county wide in the 24 municipalities, 14 are registered, with 3 being certified bronze and 7 not being registered. Mr. McDevitt was hopeful with the additional submissions that we would be the 4th municipality registered in Gloucester County. He added Camden County has every one of the 37 municipalities registered and Burlington County has 14 out of 40 municipalities registered. He advised he has been personally networking with a lot of our neighbors in Gloucester County and it seems

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B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)

everyone is at different stages so we are working on trying to have everyone throughout the county registered. He noted that the team has been working in conjunction with the SPG solar store located in the farmer's market where we hold our meetings, they have been most helpful. We have also been working with Cross County Connections and the Safe Routes to School Program, we have also been partnering with the school district, the Main Street committee and we have just posted on the township website and are having events at the library. He also met with public works and parks and rec. Mr. McDevitt went on to speak of the municipal communications and mentioned the lack of a mechanism where everyone can be in touch with one another and at times it is frustrating getting our information out. He added that we have met with Elk Township, Pitman, Glassboro and Washington Township but it seems like there is not much county support. Camden County is very pro-active but for some reason Gloucester County is not and we hope to change that. We are a member of the Tri-county Sustainability Alliance and we hope to be hosting a Green Fair this year as well as a shredding event and we are planning some community gardens. Again, he noted we will be submitting our application in June so whatever assistance any one can provide would be gratefully appreciated and hopefully we will be certified this year. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** posed a question, when we get our certification what does that entitle the municipality too or what access do we have to certain grants? Mr. McDevitt noted he just passed along information on to Ernie Carbone (*last week*) there was a \$200,000.00 grant for energy projects and most of them seem to be not very competitive whereas if you get a good proposal together you could be pretty set on getting the money. This year South Jersey Gas put up \$200,000.00 and the New Jersey Education Association put up \$120,000.00 for school projects.

• **Cap Bank Ordinance**

Cncl. Pres., Miller noted this ordinance *O:04-2016 Calendar Year 2016 Ordinance To Exceed The Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits And To Establish A Cap Bank (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)* scheduled for first reading on the Regular Council Meeting agenda was addressed at the Ordinance Committee Meeting of February 3rd and Auditor, Nick Petroni was in attendance to explain different aspects of the ordinance including the percentage figure used. **Nick Petroni, Petroni & Associates** addressed council members and advised when preparing budgets we have two caps, a 2% cap on the amount to be raised by taxation and 2½% cap on certain appropriations. That 2½% cap only goes into effect if something called the *Implicit Price Deflator* of state and local government, which is basically the CPI for government, is at 2½% or higher and this year it is at zero. What this means is even if you have the money to apply to appropriations you wouldn't be able to increase them, not even zero percent without having the option in the law to pass a COLA (cost of living) adjustment ordinance and what that allows you to do is to pass an ordinance to go up to 3½%. Now that does not mean you are raising your taxes by 3½% that means it allows you room in your appropriations in case you need to spend some money that otherwise would be capped. Mr. Petroni continued and noted what we recommend to all our clients is that they adopt this ordinance because then you can bank two years' worth of the cost of living increases at 3½%, so it is up to you as to what you are going to appropriate as far as taxes subject to the 2% cap but you may have this artificial governor on your appropriations if you don't use this COLA

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B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)

ordinance. He then noted, this time for the first time in a number of years I actually have a client that if they hadn't done the ordinance that they would be in trouble this year in trying to appropriate the monies to operate the municipality. Even though they said inflation was at zero, we all know that it is not. So, that is why we recommend you do this ordinance and what it does again, it allows you to bank that extra spending ability, it doesn't really create a tax increase you do that when you appropriate your budget subject to a 2% increase. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** questioned if this is something we have been doing for a number of years. **Mr. Petroni** responded, every year you have been doing this and I recommend it to all of my clients.

Cncl. Bryson noted each year we have done this since being mandated by the state we have had our budget increased by at least that 2%, correct? **Mr. Petroni** noted last year it was 1.9%. **Cncl. Bryson** noted it usually goes up as much as that state mandated cap. **Mr. Petroni** explained by giving an example of the year you are in right now. Last year, inside your cap, you had \$29,281,000.00 worth of appropriations, based on the technical adjustments you must do to get to this cap bank, if you did not bank anything your cap would be \$29,181,000.00 you would actually be less than what you spent last year. However, you are going to be fine because you did the ordinance and you have some banking (\$1.7 million). **Cncl. DiLucia** questioned, is it true that if you don't pass this ordinance you can't raise it above 2%? **Mr. Petroni** explained the taxes are capped at 2%, this has to do with the appropriation side, the spending side not with the revenue side. He went on to further explain the law and give some background information on when the laws were put into place. **Mr. Petroni** then explained the 2% has nothing to do with this ordinance, this ordinance deals only with the spending side. The 2% cap is on the amount to be raised by taxation and there are specific laws on what can be excluded from the cap such as debt service and capital improvements. There are 2 caps, the one we are talking about now has to do with what you are allowed to appropriate on the spending side. It gives you flexibility and allows you to spend up to a certain amount.

- **EDC Budget**

Cncl. Pres., Miller noted some questions were posed regarding this budget at the last ordinance committee meeting. EDC has submitted a breakdown of all the money that was spent in the past year. He noted there were some members of the commission in attendance to advise of their meeting times and if there are any questions on the expenditures, rather than us drag it out in a work session their meetings are scheduled for the third Monday of each month. **Cncl. Bryson** questioned two purchase orders which were just distributed to council, one for \$5,000.00 and the other for \$10,000.00 and if these were coming out of EDC budget. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** responded, yes. He added anything they are doing with Suasion Communications Group some of the money will be coming from the next fiscal year when we do our budget appropriation. **Cncl. DiLucia** then noted there are two things, a \$25,000.00 dollar budget was given the Economic Development Commission last time and my question is in the year of 2015 how much of that was spent, and how much is left. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** noted he believes they spent a majority of the money. **Cncl. DiLucia** requested that someone give us an overview of what that \$25,000.00 was spent on.

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B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)

Tony Langella, Chairman of the Economic Development Commission responded that he would rather you (*Cncl. DiLucia*) come to our meeting in March so that we could sit down and review the budget penny for penny, item for item. **Cncl. DiLucia** advised he did not mind attending a meeting but we are the appropriating body and I think it is contingent upon you to tell council, in this forum, what you did with the money. He added if I can't make your meeting due to a conflict of some kind that is not what I should have to depend on. What I am asking you basically is what was the \$25,000.00 spent on? Another thing is your budget went from \$10,000.00 to \$25,000.00 last year (2015) and I have a question on those tax cards. Mr. Langella advised that is not in there that has nothing to do with it. **Cncl. DiLucia** then noted (*for clarification*) that this \$25,000.00 that was spent, \$5,000.00 of it was not spent on the tax cards. Mr. Langella responded, absolutely not. **Cncl. DiLucia** then questioned where we were with the tax card program. Mr. Langella again referred to the sheet that was presented to council members. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** then advised we recently had a meeting with regard to the tax card program and we are looking to having Rosemary Flaherty, Zoning Officer take on the administration of the actual program. That has been their biggest issue, they didn't have someone to act as a point person. **Cncl. DiLucia** questioned if we still had the commitment from the bank for \$5,000.00. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** advised we already cashed the check however it has been placed in a separate escrow account. **Cncl. DiLucia** noted all we really need now is a sponsor/sponsors for \$5,000.00 to set this card program in motion, correct? **Cncl. Pres., Miller** advised that it could be through sponsors but we had discussed in one of our meetings the township was going to put up the \$5,000.00 because we wanted to show our commitment to the success of this program. **Cncl. DiLucia** noted he did not believe this happened on the record because his recollection was that not one penny would be taken out of tax payer's money to go toward this card program. If that has changed, if now council is anticipating taking that \$5,000.00 figure I feel there should be a discussion and that discussion has not taken place, at least formally. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** noted he would like to see if we could get some sponsorships as I think we do have some potential businesses that would be interested. **Cncl. DiLucia** noted he would review the report submitted by the EDC at his leisure and any questions on it he would address with Mr. Heydel. **Cncl. Bryson** then posed a question on a PO for the CBAC (*Cooperative Business Assistance Corporation, Inc.*) in the amount of \$5,000.00 and what concerns him is the wording used "down payment", if this is so what would be the entire amount. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** noted he was advised that CBAC is fronting the money and the \$5,000.00 was just the down payment for the program. I am told we are not contributing any additional money for this, this was just to start the program itself and I think there is about \$60,000.00-\$70,000.00 that CBAC has allocated toward businesses that would apply for this. The county does something similar, the county fronts a certain portion of money for this micro-loan program through CBAC and then they administer it. It is a low interest rate loan that they supply to businesses for such things as façade improvements, etc. **Cncl. Bryson** noted the question still remains that "down payment" is noted on the PO, if you put this down as a contribution I don't have a problem but I do have a problem with "down payment". **Tony Langella** noted this amount is \$5,000.00 period and we are going to get back some \$50,000.00-\$60,000.00 to distribute amongst Main Street businesses to beautify the stores. They (*business owners*) will have to pay whatever amount back and also kick in \$1,000.00 of their own money, we are making them chip in also. Many people started speaking at one

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B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)

time with regard to the program. Solicitor, Charles Fiore then noted it is seed money to participate in the program. **Cncl. Bryson** questioned, suppose they don't pay it back, who would pay it back. **Cncl. Pres., Miller** advised they would be at fault, they are on the hook for payment, and it is not the municipality. **Rob Bender, Economic Development Commission** explained it is a fully subsidized loan program (\$5,000.00 fully subsidized) the business owners get individual loans and it is administered by a company (*Cooperative Business Assistance Corporation, Inc.*) and what you are able to do is offer interest free loans to business owners along Main Street, this is over a four year period and there is a caveat to the program where the business owners have to put their own money into the program as well. **Tony Langella** then noted for us to put up the \$5,000.00 CBAC is giving us back \$50,000.00 so we can distribute that amount amongst ten (10) businesses along Main Street to beautify their properties. They have to pay that loan back plus kick in \$1,000.00 of their own money. **Cncl. Bryson** again noted basically his concern was with the wording included on the PO "down payment" and if Mr. Heydel can change that wording I would greatly appreciate it.

C.) PUBLIC PORTION

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

Dominic Burgese noted there was a tentative meeting scheduled regarding the towing ordinance for Tuesday, February 9th and he questioned if this was still on. It was noted that meeting will have to be re-scheduled.

Cncl. Heffner 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.

D.) NEW BUSINESS - None

E.) OLD BUSINESS - None

F.) COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

G.) QUESTIONS REGARDING RESOLUTIONS SCHEDULED - None

H.) QUESTIONS REGARDING ORDINANCES SCHEDULED

Cncl. Heffner questioned the solicitor with regard to **O:07-2016** *An Ordinance Of The Township Council Of The Township Of Monroe To Amend Chapter 26 Of The Code Of The Township Of Monroe Entitled "Economic Development Commission"* scheduled for First Reading.

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

He referred to the verbiage regarding political parties and he thought this was going to be deleted. The solicitor advised that language cannot be deleted, it must remain.

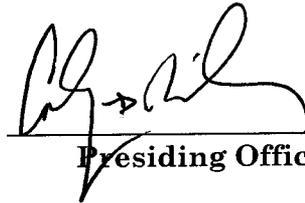
I.) ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further for discussion, **Cncl. Heffner** made a motion to adjourn the Council Work Session of February 8, 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 8, 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 2/22/16
Date _____