

**MINUTES
COUNCIL MEETING
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
SEPTEMBER 27, 2021**

A.) OPENING CEREMONIES

CALL TO ORDER

The Council Meeting of the Township of Monroe was called to order at 7:00PM by **Cncl. Pres., Patrick O'Reilly** in the Courtroom 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 (*N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 thru 10:4-21*). Adequate notice was placed in the official publications for the Township of Monroe (i.e.: South Jersey Times, Courier Post and The Sentinel of Gloucester County). A copy of that notice is posted on the bulletin board at the Municipal Complex and on the Monroe Township website.

Cncl. Pres., Patrick O'Reilly stated, the Clerk has placed a sign-in sheet in the rear of the meeting room. If anyone would like to address Council, please sign-in and raise your hand and you will be asked to come forward to the microphone. Kindly state your name and address for the record.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Cncl. Falcone led the Assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to Our Flag. **Cncl. Vice-Pres. Wolfe** offered the Invocation.

ROLL CALL

Cncl. Katherine Falcone	Present	
Cncl. Carolann Fox	Present	
Cncl. Ronald Garbowski	Present	
Cncl. Steven McKinney	Present	
Cncl. Chelsea Valcourt	Present	
Cncl. Vice-Pres. Gregory Wolfe	Present	
Cncl. Pres. Patrick O'Reilly	Present	
Mayor Richard DiLucia	Present	
Deputy Mayor, Joseph DiLolle	Present	
Solicitor, John Trimble	Present	
Business Administrator, Jill McCrea	Present	
Dir. of Code Enforcement, Joseph Broderick	Present	
Dir. of Community Affairs, Brandee Derieux	Present	
Dir. of Finance, Lorraine Boyer		Excused
Dir. of Parks & Recreation, Brent Salvadori	Present	
Dir. of Public Safety, Joseph Kurz	Present	
Dir. of Public Works, Nicholas Mercado	Present	
Dir. of Real Estate, Angelina Matese	Present	(arrived @ 7:09pm)
Police Chief Craig Monahan	Present	
Deputy Municipal Clerk, Jennifer Harbison	Present	

SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS

- Innovative Catering – Rocco Gallelli

Rocco Gallelli was not in attendance, Spotlight on Business is rescheduled until the October 25, 2021 Council Meeting.

B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

- Resolution of the Township of Monroe to Request the State of New Jersey and County of Gloucester to Reconstruct the Intersection of U.S. Route 322 and Fries Mill Road (C.R. 655) at No Cost to Monroe Township

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B.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont'd)

Solicitor Trimble updated Council on the status of the reconstruction of the Fries Mill Road and Route 322 Intersection. He noted, there have been promises by Government Officials to get the road reconstructed for three Mayors now and nothing has been done. In January 2021, the four property owners received tentative approval for access permits to develop the intersection and begin the reconstruction, however, since that time the County is asking the Monroe Township residents to cover the costs necessary to bring the project to a bid ready phase. In order to bring the project to a bid ready phase, it will cost approximately \$400,000.00 in engineering fees, before the County will take over the project. They are also requiring Monroe Township to enter into a Developer's Agreement with the State of New Jersey, wherein the Township will be responsible for approximately \$200,000.00 in escrow fees in addition to the \$400,000.00 in engineering fees. He noted, given that this is a County road and a State road intersection, the Mayor does not believe it is proper or fair for the residents of Monroe Township to cover the cost for an intersection that is not a Township road. Solicitor Trimble reported that after requesting information through Open Public Records Act requests with the County and the other area towns, he has found that Route 322 intersections have been reconstructed in various towns throughout the County at no cost to those towns and without Developer's Agreements. Solicitor Trimble spoke in reference to the prepared letter which lays out the history of the project and points out that there has been approximately \$7.5 million of State and County funding that is sitting, appropriated for this project waiting to be used and has been sitting for years, however the County is requesting that Monroe Township pay approximately \$400,000.00 in engineering fees and \$200,000.00 in escrow fees in order for the State to review a road project on their own road. He stated, the Mayor would like to submit the prepared letter along with the Resolution that is before Council for approval to County Commissioner Robert Damminger and Senator Fred Madden in order to get their attention to get the intersection moving. **Mayor DiLucia** spoke regarding his experience with the project during his time serving on Council and as Mayor and explained why he is presenting the prepared letter and Resolution to the County officials for approval. He is hopeful that by sending the County and State officials the letter along with the Resolution that they will be able to have some meaningful dialogue, be productive and begin working towards the reconstruction of the intersection. **Cncl. Vice-Pres. Wolfe** questioned if there is an agreement between this Administration or previous Administrations and the County stating that the Township would handle certain items pertaining to the reconstruction, to which Solicitor Trimble advised there is no agreement. Solicitor Trimble noted, Monroe Township has never agreed to take on the burden of that intersection, they have only attempted to help the four corner property owners along. **Cncl. Pres. O'Reilly** asked if the Township is in possession of a written estimate from the Township Engineer explaining the \$400,000.00 cost to bring the project to a bid ready phase. Solicitor Trimble explained what the estimate entailed. **Cncl. McKinney** made a motion that the Draft Resolution be designated as Resolution R:186-2021 and moved forward for approval in order to communicate the Township's intentions to the County. The Motion was seconded by **Cncl. Falcone**. **Cncl. Garbowski** spoke in reference to his experience with the project, expressing his frustrations with the "stand still" of the project. A discussion ensued regarding the project, the communications with the County, the time spent and the lack of movement on the project due to the County not being willing to pay any of the expenses. Mayor DiLucia stated that he believes the only way this project will move forward is if the County Officials feel the heat of the Resolution. Solicitor Trimble explained the motion on the floor is to assign Draft Resolution as Resolution R:186-2021 and approve same. Solicitor Trimble proceeded to read aloud the Resolution. A Roll Call Vote was taken and all members of Council were in agreement to move Resolution R:186-2021 forward for approval. **Cncl. Vice-Pres. Wolfe** stated, he will be voting yes because the project needs to move forward, however, he will be reaching out to the County Commissioners as well as State Senator Madden to try and schedule a meeting to discuss the project. **Cncl. Pres. O'Reilly** stated, he will be voting yes with the caveat that the Administration will consider removing the dollar amounts stated within the letter and stick to the issue at hand, which is that the Township should not be bearing any of the cost.

**ROLL CALL VOTE TO BRING FORWARD AND APPROVE
RESOLUTION R:186-2021 –
7 AYES (Falcone, Fox, Garbowski, McKinney, O'Reilly, Valcourt, Wolfe)**

Tally: 7 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 Abstain, 0 Absent. Resolution R:186-2021 was duly approved.

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C.) QUESTIONS REGARDING RESOLUTIONS SCHEDULED

Cncl. Valcourt spoke regarding Resolution R:178-2021, questioning who owns the listed properties and why is the Township cancelling the taxes on the properties. **Solicitor Trimble** explained that the Township now owns the listed properties, so the taxes are now being cancelled. He noted, these properties will be placed on the next Land Sale list.

Cncl. Valcourt spoke regarding the Bill Paid List, questioning line item #2102697, a reimbursement to Business Administrator, Jill McCrea for \$26.65 for peppermint oil. **Business Administrator, Jill McCrea** explained the reason for the expense was for the use of natural insect repellent for the trash cans at Owens Park.

D.) QUESTIONS REGARDING ORDINANCES SCHEDULED - None

E.) CORRESPONDENCE – None

F.) RESOLUTIONS

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to open the public portion for Resolutions scheduled. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Valcourt** and unanimously approved by all members of Council. With no one wishing to speak, **Cncl. Garbowski** made a motion to close the public portion for Resolutions scheduled. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Fox** and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

Cncl. Vice-Pres. Wolfe made a motion to bracket for approval, by Consent Agenda, Resolutions R:176-2021 through R:180-2021 and Resolutions R:182-2021 through R:185-2021. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Valcourt** and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

**CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS R:176-2021 THROUGH R:180-2021 AND
RESOLUTIONS R:182-2021 THROUGH R:185-2021**

R:176-2021 Resolution Adjusting Township of Monroe Tax Records

R:177-2021 Resolution Approving the Bill List and Paid List for the Council Meeting of September 27, 2021

R:178-2021 Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Monroe Adjusting Township of Monroe Tax Records (*In Rem Foreclosure*)

R:179-2021 Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Monroe Authorizing the Mayor to Execute an Agreement with Virtua Health, Inc.

R:180-2021 Resolution of the Township of Monroe Authorizing the Mayor to Execute a Settlement Agreement Between the Township of Monroe and Brian Schneck

R:182-2021 Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Monroe Authoring the Purchase of Two (2) Labrie 33 (31+2) CU. YD R/H Automizer Automated Refuse Collection System Mounted on a 2022 Autocar Model ACX64 Chassis 66,000LB GVW under a National Cooperative Purchasing Agreement

R:183-2021 Resolution of the Township of Monroe Authorizing An Award of Contract to DiMeglio Construction Company, for the Central Avenue Drainage Project

R:184-2021 Resolution of the Township of Monroe Authorizing An Award of Contract to South State, Inc. for the NJDOT FY 2021 Municipal Aid Whispering Woods Project

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F.) RESOLUTIONS (cont'd)

R:185-2021 Resolution Authorizing Closed Executive Session of the Township Council of the Township of Monroe to Discuss Litigation

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to approve Resolutions R:176-2021 through R:180-2021 and Resolutions R:182-2021 through R:185-2021. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Vice-Pres. Wolfe** and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

G.) ORDINANCES – None

H.) NEW BUSINESS / COMMITTEE REPORTS – None

I.) UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

J.) REPORTS

Mayor DiLucia attended the Autumn Lake Wine gathering, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. He also visited Blue Cork Winery last week and met with the owner. Mayor DiLucia invited everyone, if given the opportunity, to visit both of the beautiful wineries. On September 18th, he attended the Craft Fair which was a successful event. He attended the POW/MIA Memorial and thanked the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and everyone who attended the event, in particular Walter Schafer, who organized the event. The Mayor stated, finally it appears that the Township is on footstep of being able to advertise for bids for the Dog Park. The Dog Park project has been approximately five (5) years in the making and has been difficult at times to get through to the Pinelands and the County for various approvals. He noted, per the Township Engineer, the Township is approximately a week or two away from receiving Pinelands approval and once that approval is obtained the Township will go out for bids on the project. Mayor DiLucia thanked the MMUA for agreeing to be part of the Shared Services Agreement and provide all of the water hookups at the Dog Park. The Mayor thanked Director of Real Estate, Angie Matese and Solicitor Trimble for all of their hard work on the Land Sale. He noted, the real impact of the Land Sale is not just the revenue that is derived from the sale, but the Township's obligation to pay 75% of taxes on each of the properties to the schools and the County has been removed now that the properties have been sold.

Deputy Mayor DiLolle attended the Craft Fair and thanked Director of Community Affairs, Brandee Derieux and the Township employees who were in attendance, on a job well done. He attended the Autumn Lake event, noting how beautiful the winery is. Mr. DiLolle believes, Monroe Township is the only town in Gloucester County that has two (2) breweries and two (2) wineries, which is something to be proud of. He thanked Director of Public Works, Nicholas Mercado for helping with a resident complaint that he received.

Solicitor Trimble thanked Director of Real Estate, Angie Matese, Tax Collector, Joanne Potopchuk and Zoning Officer, Tara Nelms for all of their hard work and participation in the Land Sale. Solicitor Trimble spoke regarding Resolution R:180-2021, approving a settlement matter in the amount of \$70,000.00 which dealt with prior Zoning Officials issuing improper permits. He advised, the cost to the town will be \$30,000.00 after applying the JIF self-retention and deductible formula.

Director of Code Enforcement, Mr. Broderick reported that for the month of September, the Code Enforcement Department including Building, HVAC, Electrical and Fire have performed planning reviews for permits, inspections, and permits on 644 various permits and 344 various operations.

Director of Community Affairs, Ms. Derieux reported, the Arts and Crafts Festival was held on September 18th on Main Street. She noted, it was a beautiful day and a successful event,

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J.) REPORTS (cont'd)

with eighty seven (87) vendors, crafters and food trucks and approximately 2,000 people in attendance. Ms. Derieux spoke regarding some upcoming events that will be taking place at the Pfeiffer Community Center. This coming Saturday, October 2nd between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m., is the Scarecrow Down Main Street event. The Pride Celebration will be held on October 8th between 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. The Little Mr. and Miss Monroe Township Pageant will be held on October 16th between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Community Affairs will be hosting the Holiday Lights Festival again this year, also a new event, the Holiday Bizarre will be held on December 18th between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Ms. Derieux advised if anyone has any questions regarding any of the upcoming events, to call the Department of Community Affairs at 856-728-9841.

Director of Parks & Recreation, Mr. Salvadori advised that the Fall Festival will be held on October 23rd from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with the Halloween Parade beginning at 7:00 p.m. He thanked Anne Bracarello and Donna Park for all of their hard work thus far with the event. Mr. Salvadori spoke regarding the Girl Scout who is working towards her Eagle Scout, noting she has begun construction of the gazebo at Owens Park.

Director Public Safety, Mr. Kurz invited everyone to attend the Monroe Township Fire Prevention Night with the Williamstown Fire Company and the Cecil Fire Company, which will be held in the Walmart parking lot on October 5th.

Director of Public Works, Mr. Mercado thanked Council for the approval of their various Resolutions this evening. He reported that the delivery of the two (2) approved trash trucks will not be expected until August 2022. Mr. Mercado spoke in reference to the Dog Park, noting he will be meeting with the Township Engineer, Pennoni this Friday to finalize the plans and specifications and attempt to expedite the bid process pending the Pinelands approval.

Solicitor Trimble thanked Municipal Clerk, Aileen Chiselko and Deputy Municipal Clerk, Jenn Harbison for taking the lead on the Land Sale, handling all of the paperwork and ensuring all of the contracts were completed properly.

Director of Real Estate, Ms. Matese thanked everyone that was involved in the Land Sale. She reported, there were seventy-five (75) properties listed on the Land Sale list, with fifty-three (53) on the private list and twenty-two (22) on the public list and a total of forty-five (45) properties were sold. Ms. Matese advised, the forty-five (45) properties sold for a total of \$230,000.00 and the taxes that those properties represent are over \$4 million.

Police Chief Monahan provided a follow-up on the resident complaint received at the last Council Meeting, in reference to the noise coming from South State Auto Parts. An officer was assigned to investigate and obtain noise measurements. The noise measurement conducted from the curb line on Morgan Road, found that the impulsive sounds registered at the street were 71 decibels which falls below the Ordinance at 80 decibels along with various other readings which fell in the 40-decibel range. The Officer met with the resident and explained his investigation and findings.

Cncl. Falcone reported that the Seniors Commission met for the first time this year, they have a small budget and are planning a holiday trip. She attended the 5th Annual Main Street Arts Festival, which was a great event. The Trunk and Treat is scheduled for October 30th from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the 7/8 parking lot of the Williamstown Middle School. Cncl. Falcone asked everyone to save the date for the upcoming Holiday Bizarre on December 18th, where they will also have photos with Grinch.

Cncl. Fox attended the Bag for Hunger at Shoprite on September 14th along with Chief Monahan and several other officers. She thanked Shoprite for the invitation, noting, it was a fun event and she received a lot of positive notes from the residents and customers.

Cncl. Garbowski advised that the next Ordinance Committee Meeting is scheduled for October 6, 2021. He recommended, if anyone has anything to be brought forth for the meeting,

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J.) REPORTS (cont'd)

that it be submitted to the Ordinance Committee Secretary as soon as possible. Cncl. Garbowski noted, the Library has new operating hours. He thanked Council for approving the Route 322 Resolution earlier this evening.

Cncl. McKinney attended the MMUA meeting on September 15th, where they announced and expressed condolences to a 3-year employee who passed, Kenny Hignutt. Cncl. McKinney expressed his condolences to the Hignutt family.

Cncl. Valcourt attended the Board of Education meeting. The Board of Education has received grant funding allowing them to open additional preschool classes. Cncl. Valcourt attended the Craft Fair, noting the event brought the town together and she is hopeful that the community spirit continues to grow.

Cncl. Vice-Pres. Wolfe thanked Director of Public Works Director, Mr. Mercado for his quick response in addressing the yellow curbing at the bike trail entrance on Whispering Woods Drive. He advised that the Fall Festival will be held on October 23rd from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Owens Park followed by the Halloween Parade down Main Street beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Cncl. Pres. O'Reilly spoke in reference to the Solar Program, noting that the solar at both the Library and the Municipal Building are live and producing electricity.

K.) GENERAL PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to open the General Public Discussion. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Fox** and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

Michael Burke, 317 Taylor Lane thanked the Department of Public Works for providing Saturday hours for resident drop off. He asked for consideration to continue providing Saturday hours, possibly once or twice a month throughout the year. **Director of Public Works, Mr. Mercado** advised, this subject is currently being discussed.

Jouan Laznik-Davis, 21 Harrell Avenue asked what the justification is for the lettering on the police vehicles being less visible than they were in the past. **Police Chief Monahan** explained, all of the vehicles are still clearly marked with lights and overheads and explained by having low profile vehicles, it enables the Police Department to target violations and speeders. Chief Monahan noted that many Police Departments throughout the country are transitioning to low-profile/stealth vehicles.

With no one else wishing to speak, **Cncl. Garbowski** made a motion to close the General Public Discussion. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Vice-Pres. Wolfe** and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

Solicitor Trimble advised that Council will be going into Closed Session to discuss a potential settlement agreement of the Township of Monroe v. Will matter and there will be action taken on it.

CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

Cncl. Vice-Pres. Wolfe made a motion to come out of Closed Executive Session. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Valcourt** and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

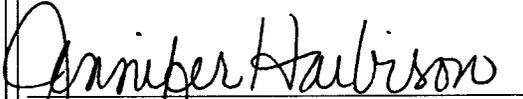
R:181-2021 Resolution of the Township of Monroe Authorizing the Mayor to Execute a Settlement Agreement Between the Township of Monroe and Andrew Will

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to approve Resolution R:181-2021. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Valcourt** and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

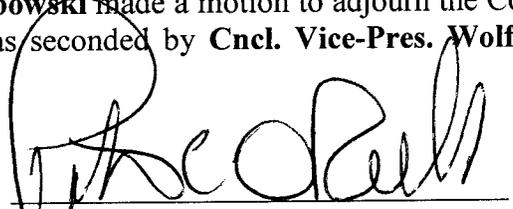
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L.) ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further to discuss, **Cncl. Garbowski** made a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting of September 27, 2021. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Vice-Pres. Wolfe** and unanimously approved by all members of Council.



**Jennifer Harbison
Deputy Municipal Clerk**



Presiding Officer

These minutes were prepared from excerpts of the recorded proceedings, as well as hand-written notes taken, of the Council Meeting of September 27, 2021 and serve only as a synopsis of the proceedings. The official recording may be heard in the Office of the Township Clerk upon proper notification, pursuant to the Open Public Records Act.

Approved as submitted _____  _____
Approved as corrected _____

Date 10/25/2021
Date _____