

**MINUTES  
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE  
AUGUST 3, 2022**

**A.) OPENING CEREMONIES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Ordinance Committee Meeting of the Township of Monroe was called to order at approximately 7:00 PM by **Ordinance Chairwoman, Cncl. Chelsea Valcourt** 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*). Notices were 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.

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

**Cncl. Vice-Pres. Fox** led the Assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to Our Flag.

**ROLL CALL**

Cncl. Katherine Falcone		Excused
Cncl. Ronald Garbowski	Present	
Cncl. Steven McKinney	Present	
Cncl. Patrick O'Reilly		Excused
Cncl. Chelsea Valcourt	Present	
Cncl. Vice-Pres. Carolann Fox	Present	
Cncl. Pres. Gregory Wolfe		Excused
Mayor Richard DiLucia		Excused
Solicitor, John Trimble	Present	
Dir. of Public Safety, Joseph Kurz	Present	<i>(excused @ 7:36pm)</i>
Dir. of Public Works, Nicholas Mercado	Present	
Zoning Officer, Tara Nelms	Present	<i>(arrived @7:13pm) (excused @8:04pm)</i>
Police Chief Monahan	Present	
Deputy Municipal Clerk, Jennifer Harbison	Present	

**B.) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Cncl. Vice-Pres. Fox** made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted of the Ordinance Committee Meeting of July 6, 2022. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. McKinney** and unanimously approved by all members of Council in attendance with the exception of **Cncl. Garbowski** who abstained.

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**C.) RESOLUTIONS**

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

**R:167-2022** Resolution of the Township of Monroe Rejecting All Bids for Williamstown Fire Station Demolition Project

**Cncl. Garbowski** made a motion to approve Resolution R:167-2022. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. McKinney** and unanimously approved by all members of Council in attendance.

**R:168-2022** Resolution of the Township of Monroe Rejecting All Bids for New Williamstown Fire Station No. 1 Project

**Cncl. Garbowski** made a motion to approve Resolution R:168-2022. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. McKinney** and unanimously approved by all members of Council in attendance.

**Solicitor Trimble** explained the reasons for the rejections of the bids for both the Williamstown Fire Station Demolition Project and the New Williamstown Fire Station No. 1 Project. He stated, the bids for the new fire station came in well over budget and the lowest bidder withdrew the bid due to mistakes made within the bid. On July 25, 2022 Engineer, Dan Rodier sent a letter to Business Administrator, Jill McCrea laying out his recommendations for the project. He explained that the rejection of the bid will trigger the return of the bid bond to the bidders and the statement from the Township that there is not going to be a claim against the bid bond.

**D.) ORDINANCES FOR REVIEW – None**

**E.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

- **Chapter 4 “Administrative Code” – Parks and Recreation - Fees Collected for Background Checks**

**Cncl. Valcourt** advised that the Director of Parks & Recreation, Mr. Salvadori has asked that this item be removed from this evening’s agenda and be placed on a future agenda. **Cncl. Garbowski** made a motion to Table Matters for Discussion Item “Chapter 4 Administrative Code – Parks and Recreation – Fees Collected for Background Checks”. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Vice-Pres. Fox** and unanimously approved by all members of Council in attendance.

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

- **Municipal Fees for Emergency Fire Department Response**

**Director of Public Safety, Joe Kurz** reported that he has contacted and spoken with the State Fire Office and the Board of Public Utilities and Cncl. O'Reilly spoke with South Jersey Gas. According to the Board of Public Utilities, South Jersey Gas operates under a federal mandate that they must contact 911 and have the fire department respond if there is a gas leak, so the Township has no authority to charge the gas company for the fire department's response. **Solicitor Trimble** clarified, it is his understanding that the issue was not the call for response, but that South Jersey Gas does not show up to the scene of the call for hours after the call for response, leaving the fire department to "babysit" the scene until South Jersey Gas arrives, which ties them up when they need to respond to other calls. Mr. Kurz said, he was unable to receive a definite answer on that, with everyone siding with the gas company. **Williamstown Fire Company Chief Pat Mason** spoke regarding the issues with South Jersey Gas. He noted, the residents are calling South Jersey Gas and 24 to 36 hours later the gas company is alerting the fire department. The gas company is not treating the cases as an emergency, but they are relying on the fire department to treat it as an emergency. A discussion followed regarding the calls and how they are handled.

- **Property Owner's Request for Vacation of Maple Avenue Paper Road**

**Solicitor Trimble** advised, this is a request by a homeowner to come before Council and make a presentation to discuss why they feel that vacation of this road is appropriate. The request by the homeowner is to have the road vacated all the way down to Winslow Road. Apparently, this paper street has never been used by the town but it has been used by some of the private owners there and there is an issue of the paper street running right through the middle of the homeowner's property. The homeowner is not asking to have the entire street vacated because there is an issue with receiving consent from other property owners, but merely to have the portion that runs through their property vacated so they can clean up their property lines and eventually if they need to, sell the house. Two (2) planners have looked at this request and have provided the easy answer, which is to obtain consent from all of the property owners and if consent is received the vacation will be signed off on. The homeowner is unable to get consent from one (1) of the property owners and that one (1) owner would not be landlocked if this road was vacated, they would still be able to use their property and have access. Solicitor Trimble spoke with the homeowner's attorney and was informed that if the road is not vacated, the homeowner may simply have a fence installed, which is going to stop the other property owner, who will not provide consent, to be unable to use portions of their property. This situation is at a point where the neighbors are not going to consent to the vacation of the road and the requesting homeowner would like to come before Council to provide a presentation in order to explain why it is in the best interest of everyone involved to vacate the road. Solicitor Trimble suggested that Council invite the homeowner to attend the next scheduled Ordinance Committee Meeting to present, to which Cncl. Valcourt agreed. Solicitor Trimble will report back to the homeowner and invite them to attend along with their professionals to present the reasons for their request.

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

- **Chapter 175 “Land Management” – Cannabis Security Amendments**

**Police Chief Monahan** stated he would like to have the Township’s Code relating to Cannabis amended to include armed security requirements, similar to Bellmawr’s armed security requirements. He expressed his concerns with the amount of money and product that goes in and out of the various cannabis facilities, noting the need to have armed security added as a requirement. **Solicitor Trimble** stated he will draft the amendment to the Cannabis Ordinance for First Reading at the August 22<sup>nd</sup> Council Meeting.

- **Short-Term Rentals/Air B&B and Pool Rentals**

**Zoning Officer, Tara Nelms** stated, the Township has received some complaints regarding Air B&Bs. They thought they had a handle on how to register the properties and had received some interpretation from the Zoning Board Solicitor, where they stated that the Township does not have an actual Ordinance for Air B&Bs, VRBOs or short-term rentals in the sense that there is not a clear timeframe listed. Mrs. Nelms researched the Ordinances from many neighboring municipalities and as far as Air B&Bs, there is not a concrete answer, with some towns prohibiting it, some that allow it and some who will permit it only if the property is a registered bed and breakfast, but ultimately it is up to the Township. She noted, it is becoming prevalent that this is an issue and some residents want to operate this type of operation.

**Zoning Officer, Tara Nelms** spoke regarding her concerns with pool parties, pool renting and the party promoters, noting the website swimply.com, where people are advertising their pools for rent. She explained the two (2) recent occasions where she worked closely with the Police Department and they were able to shut down these potentially large events prior to them being held. Mrs. Nelms stated that she would like to see language added to the Swimming Pool Ordinance to state there is absolutely no pool renting, no swimming pool renting, and no business as part of pool ownership within the Township. **Cncl. McKinney** asked, if Mrs. Nelms knew how many Air B&Bs are in the Township, to which Mrs. Nelms advised the last time letters were sent out, there were nine (9) residences, however she was unable to distinguish the single families that were renting rooms because with Air B&B, she is unable to find an exact location unless the owner is contacted. She noted, this is also part of the Air B&B Ordinance that needs to be discussed, if the Township were to permit them or not, and that the renting of single rooms would not be permitted, as the Township does not allow boarding houses. **Cncl. McKinney** asked if Mrs. Nelms and the Police Department are seeing a lot of pools being rented out within the Township. **Police Chief Monahan** stated, this is happening all over the state not only in Monroe, explaining there has been a lot of people who are renting homes that are under foreclosure, most of the time these are homes located in premier developments and they are throwing a huge party with sometimes over 1,000 people in attendance because they are promoted and advertised parties. He spoke regarding the two (2) recent occasions that he, the Police Department and Mrs. Nelms handled in the Township. **Cncl. McKinney** asked what the current language is concerning short-term rentals in the Township, to which Mrs. Nelms advised, there is no language stated concerning short-term rentals, rentals are rentals whether it is rented

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

for one (1) day, ninety (90) days, or one (1) year, it is a rental. She suggested Council discuss whether they want the Township to allow Air B&Bs, VRBOs, and/or allow people to rent their houses on a daily or weekend basis. **Solicitor Trimble** asked Mrs. Nelms to send him as much detail and information as she can and he will begin reviewing the information for further discussion at the next scheduled Ordinance Committee Meeting.

- **Chapter 280 “Animal Control” – Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Release (TNR) Pilot Program**

**Cncl. Valcourt** noted, after reviewing some of the neighboring towns’ Ordinances on how they control cats, she believes in an effort to move forward and away from the burdensome registration process of the Township’s current Ordinance, is to potentially do away with the TNR program and move towards addressing the Community cats and running at large Ordinances. **Dawn Fenza, 714 Lois Drive** stated the current registration process within the TNR Ordinance is difficult and suggested amending the Code to focus on having the running at large laws not pertain to Community Cats, as long as the ear is tipped. **Cncl. Garbowski** suggested sending everything to the Board of Health for their input and discussion at the next scheduled Ordinance Committee Meeting.

**F.) NEW BUSINESS – None**

**G.) UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None**

**H.) PUBLIC PORTION**

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

**Michael Gennaro, 621 Campus Drive** addressed Council expressing his concerns with trash being left out at the curbs in his development and throughout town. He noted, he would like to see the Township Code Chapter 239 enforced.

**William Jess, 165 Princeton Place**, stated that he stands opposed to the Air B&Bs, expressing his concerns with the property next door being used as an Air B&B, as it poses a major security issue, as strangers come and go at all hours of the day and night.

**Gregory Davis, 159 Princeton Place**, expressed his concerns with the Air B&B property and the security issues it imposes to himself and the other neighboring homes.

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**H.) PUBLIC PORTION (cont'd)**

**Christine Davis, 159 Princeton Place** expressed her concerns with the security issues surrounding the Air B&B and suggested possibly allowing properties with larger amounts of land be allowed to be registered as an Air B&B, not those properties in developments on smaller parcels of land.

**Solicitor Trimble** asked Mrs. Nelms and Council what amount of time, what duration of a short-term rental do they think would deter an Air B&B from happening. **Zoning Officer, Mrs. Nelms** suggested that no rentals be less than sixty (60) days. **Police Chief Monahan** suggested having a maximum number of rentals allowed within a one (1) year period for a property.

**Deborah Sherman, 201 Buckhorn Drive** suggested possibly limiting the number of people who can stay in a house.

**Daniel Delrosso, 164 Princeton Place** spoke regarding the security concerns with the Air B&B property and concerns with how if social media presents Monroe Township to be Air B&B friendly, it could potentially bring even more Air B&Bs into the town. He noted, he would like Monroe Township to set a precedence and disallow Air B&Bs.

**Jake Murray, 160 Princeton Place** expressed his concerns with the security issues surrounding his neighbor's residence being an Air B&B and all of the out of state visitors to the residence at all times of the day and night.

**Carol Centrone, 168 Princeton Place** noted, this area has been a very quiet family orientated community until recently when the neighbor's residence became an Air B&B. She expressed her concerns with the noise that she has heard from the residence during odd hours of the night.

**Yorkman Mejia De Los Santos, 161 Princeton Place** stated that he is the owner of the residence which is used as an Air B&B. He explained that he and Air B&B have rules that the tenants must follow, he also has security cameras installed inside and outside of the house, which all of the tenants are aware of. He noted, he has provided the two (2) closest neighbors with his cell phone number, so that they can contact them with any problems prior to calling the police, as he is available 24-hours a day. He stated that he has only received one (1) complaint regarding any tenants from Air B&B and that was from this past weekend. **Solicitor Trimble** asked Mr. De Los Santos to provide a copy of his rules and the Air B&B rules to Council for review, to which Mr. De Los Santos advised his attorney, Len Schwartz has a copy of everything and he will provide copies for Council's review. A discussion between Solicitor Trimble, the members of Council in attendance, Chief Monahan and Mr. De Los Santos ensued.

**Daniel Delrosso, 164 Princeton Place** asked, what is the recourse to the renters of the Air B&B if they do not obey the stated rules from Air B&B and Mr. De Los Santos.

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**H.) PUBLIC PORTION (cont'd)**

**Police Chief Monahan** stated that Monroe Township is a long-term community, it is not a short-term community.

**Jake Murray, 160 Princeton Place** stated, how uncomfortable it is to be outside on his own property with the ever-changing renters at the Air B&B next door.

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

**I.) ADJOURNMENT**

With nothing further to discuss, **Cncl. Garbowski** made a motion to adjourn the Ordinance Committee Meeting of August 3, 2022. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. McKinney** and unanimously approved by all members of Council in attendance.

**Respectfully submitted,**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Deputy Municipal Clerk, Jennifer Harbison**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Presiding Officer**

*These minutes were prepared from excerpts of the recorded proceedings and hand-written notes taken during the Ordinance Committee Meeting of August 3, 2022 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 Law.*

Approved as submitted \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ Date 9/7/22  
Approved as corrected \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_