A.) OPENING CEREMONIES

CALL TO ORDER

The Council Meeting of the Township of Monroe was called to order at 7 p.m. by Cncl. Pres., Carolann Fox 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., Carolann Fox 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. Heverly led the Assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to Our Flag and offered the Invocation.

ROLL CALL

Cncl. Denise Adams	Present
Cncl. Ronald Garbowski	Present
Cncl. Donald Heverly	Present
Cncl. Steven McKinney	Present
Cncl. Patrick O'Reilly	Present
Cncl. Vice-Pres. Chelsea Valcourt	Present
Cncl. Pres. Carolann Fox	Present
Mayor Gregory A. Wolfe	Present
Deputy Mayor, Joseph Kurz	Present
Solicitor, Nicholas Sullivan	Present
Business Administrator, James V. DeHart, III	Present
Dir. of Code Enforcement, William Sebastian	Present
Dir. of Community Affairs, Donna Park	D .
	Present
Dir. of Community Development, Joseph Marino	Present Present

Dir. of Community Affairs, Donna Park
Dir. of Community Development, Joseph Marino
Dir. of Finance, Lorraine Boyer
Dir. of Parks & Recreation, Brian Cope
Dir. of Public Safety, Jon Rumpf
Dir. of Public Works, Marvin Dilks
Dir. of Real Estate, Jennifer Pesotski
Present
Police Chief Craig Monahan
Municipal Clerk, Aileen Chiselko
Present
Present
Present
Present

B.) PRESENTATIONS / PROCLAMATIONS

• Proclamation – Black History Month

Mayor Wolfe and **Cncl. Pres. Fox** presented a Certificate of Recognition to Loretta Winters, the President of the Gloucester County Chapter of the NAACP in recognition of Black History Month 2023.

C.) MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION – None

D.) QUESTIONS REGARDING RESOLUTIONS SCHEDULED

Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt asked how the MOA for the Captains' contract was decided on. Mayor Wolfe explained that he was able to negotiate a new contract with the captains, which was fair to both the Township and the Captains. He noted, the contract was outstanding from 2021, when it had been presented to the previous Council, but was not properly performed in accordance to law.

E.) QUESTIONS REGARDING ORDINANCES SCHEDULED – None

F.) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted of the Council Meeting of February 13, 2023. The motion was seconded by Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt and unanimously approved by all members of Council, with the exception of Cncl. McKinney who Abstained.

G.) CORRESPONDENCE – None

H.) RESOLUTIONS

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to open the public portion for Resolutions scheduled. The motion was seconded by Cncl. Vice-Pres. 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. O'Reilly and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to bracket for approval, by Consent Agenda, Resolutions R:82-2023 through R:86-2023. The motion was seconded by Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS R:82-2023 THROUGH R:86-2023

R:82-2023 Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Monroe Transferring Funds for the Budget Year 2022

R:83-2023 Resolution Approving the Bill List and Paid List for the Council Meeting of February 27, 2023

R:84-2023 Resolution Adjusting Township of Monroe Tax Records

R:85-2023 Resolution of the Township of Monroe, County of Gloucester, Supporting the Acquisition of Farmland Preservation Development Easements on Lands by the State of New Jersey, State Agricultural Development Committee

R:86-2023 Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Monroe Authorizing the Mayor to Execute a Memorandum of Agreement Between the Township of Monroe and the Monroe Township Police Department Captains

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to approve Resolutions R:82-2023 through R:86-2023. The motion was seconded by Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

I.) ORDINANCES

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to open the meeting to the public for the Ordinances listed on the agenda for Second Reading. The motion was seconded by Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

Mark Kozachyn, 97 Sykesville Road addressed Council regarding Ordinances O:05-2023 and O:06-2023, asking what the intentions were behind the amendments to the two (2) sections of the municipal code. Mayor Wolfe explained, the new Administration has inherited some things that need to be cleaned up, noting how the code relating to Ordinances O:05-2023 and O:06-2023 contradicted each other. These amendments ensure that the responsibilities listed within the code are clearly defined to ensure that the positions are two (2) separate positions and not a combination. The Mayor noted, the items that are being deleted were placed in the Code in the years prior to match previous employees' resumes. Mr. Kozachyn spoke in reference to Ordinance O:06-2023, which references an Assistant Zoning Officer, asking if the Township will be hiring an additional Zoning Officer. Mayor Wolfe stated, the Township is not hiring anyone to fill that position, explaining that the Housing Official handles those responsibilities and fills-in for the Zoning Officer when she is on vacation. Mr. Kozachyn stated that all of the requirements and responsibilities listed in the Ordinances for the Zoning Officers and the other positions within the Community Development Department have been deleted, asking if Council is okay with these items being deleted. Director of Code Enforcement, Mr. Sebastian explained that all of the requirements and responsibilities fall under Code Enforcement, noting previously there was not a specific place for the Zoning Officer and now with the amendments, the Zoning Officer will be under the direction of the Director of Code Enforcement. He explained that the codes previously contradicted each other and how the Mayor is now correcting and simplifying them.

Mark Kozachyn asked what the Township's position is concerning ethics, specifically regarding an employee holding multiple positions in town and benefits from work being done in the town. He stated that there is a member of the Administration who recently received a \$3.3 million contract to renovate the Board of Education building. Mr. Kozachyn explained how he believes that is a violation of ethics and a conflict of interest. Director of Community Development, Mr. Marino explained the contract process and how the contract, to which Mr. Kozachyn is referring to, is still under attorney review and has not formally been awarded. He stated that the Board of Education and Monroe Township are two (2) separate entities. Mayor Wolfe stated, the Township Administration does not control what the Board of Education does.

Marlene McMahon, 173 Palomino Place addressed Council to advise them that a lot of people in the township are watching the Mayor and Council. She believes the matter Mr. Kozachyn spoke about, is a conflict of interest and noted there are other matters with the new Administration that are a conflict of interest. Solicitor Sullivan reminded Mrs. McMahon that this portion of the meeting is pertaining to questions regarding Ordinances.

With no one else wishing to speak on the Ordinances for Second Reading, Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to close the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Cncl. O'Reilly and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

O:04-2023 An Ordinance of the Township of Monroe Adopting the Redevelopment Plan for a Portion of the Commercial Corridor Rehabilitation Area Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-7

Second Reading: The above Ordinance was published in an official publication for the Township of Monroe. This portion was opened to the public.

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to approve Ordinance O:04-2023 for Second Reading and Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by **Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt** and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 0:04-2023 FOR SECOND READING
AND PUBLIC HEARING –
7 AYES (Adams, Fox, Garbowski, Heverly, McKinney, O'Reilly, Valcourt)

I.) ORDINANCES (cont'd)

Tally: 7 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 Abstain, 0 Absent. Ordinance O:04-2023 was duly approved for Second Reading and Public Hearing.

O:05-2023 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 4, Article XVII of the Township of Monroe Entitled "Department of Community Development and Land Use"

Second Reading: The above Ordinance was published in an official publication for the Township of Monroe. This portion was opened to the public.

Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt made a motion to approve Ordinance O:05-2023 for Second Reading and Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Cncl. Adams and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 0:05-2023 FOR SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING –

7 AYES (Adams, Fox, Garbowski, Heverly, McKinney, O'Reilly, Valcourt)

Tally: 7 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 Abstain, 0 Absent. Ordinance O:05-2023 was duly approved for Second Reading and Public Hearing.

O:06-2023 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 4, Article XVI of the Township of Monroe Entitled "Department of Code Enforcement"

Second Reading: The above Ordinance was published in an official publication for the Township of Monroe. This portion was opened to the public.

Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt made a motion to approve Ordinance O:06-2023 for Second Reading and Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Cncl. Adams and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 0:06-2023 FOR SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING –

7 AYES (Adams, Fox, Garbowski, Heverly, McKinney, O'Reilly, Valcourt)

Tally: 7 Ayes, 0 Nay, 0 Abstain, 0 Absent. Ordinance O:06-2023 was duly approved for Second Reading and Public Hearing.

J.) **NEW BUSINESS** – None

K.) <u>UNFINISHED BUSINESS</u> – None

L.) REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS

Mayor Wolfe stated, the Administration has been working hard getting acclimated, while also going full force in trying to accomplish some of their goals. He noted that in just a few short weeks, they have identified many areas of wasteful spending, such as cell phones that have not been in use, but were still being paid for, resolving some outstanding employee issues, finalizing a cost-saving project with updating the phones and phone system, which will save the town approximately \$187,000 over the next five (5) years, upgrading the IT Department, meeting with the Board of Education to resolve some contract agreements pertaining to the school resource officers, entering into a shared service agreement for fuel for the school-owned vehicles, along with some other much larger cost-saving measures to the taxpayers. He advised that a Business Steering Committee has been implemented, which consists of employees from the Planning Department, Zoning Department, the Economic Development Commission Chairperson, Deputy Mayor, Councilwoman Valcourt, and Councilwoman Adams to streamline

L.) REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS (cont'd)

the process for developers and businessowners entering the township, noting he has spoken with some developers to explain the process and those developers are looking forward to the new process. The Mayor attended the Williamstown High School Football and Cheerleading Recognition Banquet on January 29th. On January 31st, he attended a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the intersection of Route 322 and Fries Mill Road, with Business Administrator DeHart, Council President Fox, Councilman O'Reilly, Councilwoman Adams, Councilman Heverly, Senator Fred Madden, and Gloucester County Deputy Commissioner Heather Simmons, noting the construction has begun and will be completed in 200 days. The Mayor said, this is a large project that involved a lot of stress in the last few years, but ultimately when things are talked through and communicated with the State and County Officials, things get done and since the State and County took ownership of the project late last year, the project is now in construction. Mayor Wolfe thanked Senator Madden and his staff for their cooperation and commitment to Monroe Township in securing the funding through the State, so that the project costs do not come out of the Monroe Township taxpayers' money, noting the project will cost between \$7.5 and \$10 million. On February 15th, he attended the Library Board meeting, noting the Library is a free library and a hidden gem with many well-organized programs and encouraged everyone to visit the library. On February 21st, there was a prep test for the annual 4th of July fireworks display, noting that this year's fireworks display will take place at the new location of the Dog Park, just like it was last year. On February 22nd, he had the honor of swearing-in six (6) new police recruits who started at the Gloucester County Police Academy earlier today. These recruits, upon successful completion of the academy, will be protecting and serving the residents and are replacing some of the vacant positions in the police department through retirement and some upcoming vacancies. The Mayor wished the young men well in the academy and in their future serving the township proudly. Mayor Wolfe congratulated Captain Chris Tomasetto on his retirement, which is official on March 1st, after twenty-five (25) years of service, wishing him and his family the best. He reported that he has begun to officiate a few weddings this past month and congratulated all of the newlyweds. He noted, as the mayors in the past have done, he has decided not to accept payment for the weddings, and in lieu of payment, the newlyweds will donate to some local non-profit charities located in Monroe Township.

Deputy Mayor Kurz reported, he oversaw the project of the photo display of all of the previous mayors of Monroe Township, noting the pictures are now displayed on the 1st floor of the municipal building, outside of the courtroom.

Solicitor, Mr. Sullivan directed, with regard to ethics, everyone to the Local Government Ethics Law and the Division of Local Government Services, which applies to all officers, employees and officials of the township.

Business Administrator, Mr. DeHart reported that he has recently started new training for the supervisors to help them in their daily functions. He has also held his 1st Supervisors Meeting, which will be continued quarterly, noting he has received a lot of positive feedback from the meeting. Mr. DeHart stated, one (1) vendor has submitted a quote to update the microphones and the recording system in the courtroom and a second vendor will be visiting virtually this week to provide an additional quote. Mayor Wolfe noted, the quotes will also include the possibility of adding a camera to livestream all of the Council and Ordinance Committee meetings.

Director of Code Enforcement, Mr. Sebastian read aloud a portion of the letter sent by the Housing Department to all of the registered landlords in Monroe Township, dated January 1, 2023. He reported, for the month of January, the Construction Department has performed 356 building inspections, 108 fire inspections, 291 electrical inspections, 200 plumbing inspections, and 93 mechanical inspections, for a total of 1,048 inspections. The Housing Department has performed 105 inspections and the Zoning Department had 85 applications reviewed, for a grand total of 1,238 inspections for the month of January.

Director of Community Affairs, Mrs. Park reported, recently Community Affairs has submitted two (2) grants, on behalf of the Police Department and Community Affairs. The Police Department received \$700 from Sam's Club and Community Affairs received \$4,000

L.) REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS (cont'd)

from Walmart in Williamstown. The Pfeiffer Community Center construction is on track and moving right along. Mrs. Park informed, the Arts & Craft Festival will be held on March 25th on the grounds of the Pfeiffer Community Center. The Parks and Recreation Commission and Community Affairs will be co-hosting the Easter Egg Hunt, which will be held on April 1st, with a rain date of April 2nd, and will include many new activities for everyone to enjoy.

Director of Parks & Recreation, Mr. Cope stated that the renovations at the Owens Park playground are complete. The renovations included all new playground equipment, a ranger station, four (4) slides, swing sets, a mini rock-climbing wall and a few new climbing bars. The fence installation at the basketball courts located behind the Pfeiffer Community Center will begin tomorrow, February 28th, and will be the final phase of the project to bring the project to completion.

Director of Public Safety, Mr. Rumpf reported, the Police Department's calls for duty have doubled from January 2022 to this year and tickets have also doubled. He noted, the police officers are out on the streets, doing their jobs and they are extremely busy running radar posts daily. Mr. Rumpf congratulated Chief Monahan on a job well done with the limited amount of personnel he has in the department. Mr. Rumpf noted, he is in the process of gathering the stats for both Fire and EMS and he will report on those at the next meeting.

Director of Public Works, Mr. Dilks spoke regarding the issue on Whitehall Road that Cncl. Valcourt spoke in reference to at the previous Council meeting. He noted, there is a need for re-striping; however, it is a passing zone and he has directed it to Lt. Burton in Traffic Safety, who made the recommendation to make Whitehall Road a no passing zone for the entire area; this request will be presented to the Ordinance Committee for review and approval.

Police Chief Monahan reported that February was just as busy as January and the Police Department is closing in on close to 10,000 calls, which is approximately 4,000 more calls than they received this time last year. The Police Department is very busy and the department is handling the job well. He reported, there have been numerous ATV complaints throughout the Township and he has recently posted on the Township's Facebook page the Ordinance pertaining to ATV and off-road vehicles used in the Township, which is prohibited unless there is written consent from the land owner where riding, noting he has received a lot of negative feedback to the post. Chief Monahan has stopped submitting requests to the Gloucester County Prosecutor's office to receive forfeiture funds for the purchase of two (2) on/off road motorcycles, which the department is going to attempt to obtain. In November, he pulled a list of thirty (30) candidates for selection for the Police Department and through the process of the PT tests, backgrounds, psychological exams and physicals, the list was narrowed down and five (5) new recruits and one (1) new officer were hired. All of the new hires were sworn-in on February 22nd. The five (5) recruits will be attending the Gloucester County Police Academy and expectedly graduating in late June and the one (1) officer is in training, as he was an officer at the Gloucester County Sheriff's Department. Chief Monahan advised that on February 28th, the Police Department is hosting a Town Watch meeting at the Monroe Township Public Library, where they will be reviewing scams that are on the rise and how the residents can protect themselves. He welcomed everyone to attend the meeting.

Cncl. Adams attended the Economic Development Commission meeting on February 21st, where they spoke mainly about how to open up the lines of communication for new and current business owners with the Zoning Department, Administration and the Commission. The Commission spoke regarding establishing some sub committees to address different information and to streamline some of the programs of the Committee; also, each of the members agreed to visit local businesses to speak with them to find out how Monroe Township can do a better job in assisting them in growing their business and attracting patrons to the town.

Cncl. Garbowski attended the Library Board meeting on February 15th, where the Mayor was also in attendance. The Library Board has requested Council's consideration for an electric vehicle charging station to be installed at the library, noting he has forwarded the matter to Cncl. O'Reilly, as he has been researching the installation of electric vehicle charging stations at several of the Township's facilities. Cncl. Garbowski stated that the library is a real gem, and invited everyone to visit the library to see everything they have to offer.

L.) REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS (cont'd)

Cncl. O'Reilly stated, he had begun an evaluation on the electric vehicle charging stations a couple years ago, which had stalled; however, he is going to re-initiate the evaluation and review all of the township facilities. He noted, there is a lot of grant money available and in some cases, it is a 100% reimbursement through the State. Cncl. O'Reilly stated, he is relooking at Mary Mazza Duffy Park, Owens Park and townhall from an energy efficiency standpoint, noting these three (3) facilities were not able to be upgraded through the State program in the last round; however, they are now re-qualified, so all of the facilities will be reviewed with the grant money that is available for the HVAC and the LED lightening to help reduce the costs.

Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt encouraged everyone to get involved, noting the Business Administrator, Mr. DeHart has placed a modification on the Township website, a "How do I? FAQ" tab, which provides a link to obtain a Citizen Leadership Form that can be completed and submitted to the Clerk's Office.

Cncl. Pres. Fox spoke in reference to the Seniors Commission, noting the Commission offers a lot of nice trips throughout the year for the residents of Monroe Township who are 55 years of age and older. Cncl. Pres. Fox congratulated all of the new police recruits and officer.

M.) GENERAL PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Cncl. Garbowski made a motion to open the General Public Discussion. The motion was seconded by Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

Marlene McMahon, 173 Palomino Place addressed the Mayor and Council to ask that everyone please speak into the microphones when speaking, so that everyone in the courtroom can hear. She thanked Cncl. O'Reilly for his help with the street lights in the community. Business Administrator DeHart mentioned, the day after the previous Council Meeting, he placed a link on the Township website for the residents to be able to report a street light outage directly to Atlantic City Electric. Police Chief Monahan noted, his officers have performed a street light survey throughout the entire township and have compiled a list of all of the streetlight outages, which have been reported to Atlantic City Electric. Mrs. McMahon believes, in the past year, Cncl. Valcourt has asked questions which seemingly only the Mayor can place blame on someone else, noting she is keeping a record of when these events happen. Mrs. McMahon stated that the residents in Friendly Village watched the swearing-in ceremony and have questioned why there are so many directors now as opposed to years past. Mayor Wolfe clarified that there are no new positions and that all of the director positions have been in the Township Code for many years. Mrs. McMahon stated, with regard to the Route 322 and Fries Mill Road project, the project was never going to be placed on the taxpayers of Monroe Township, it was always going to be the State and the County who were to be in charge of the project. Mayor Wolfe clarified that the project did cost the taxpayers money previously, because the Township opted to take on the project when it should not have and it was not until he scheduled a meeting with the Senator that the project was taken back by the State and County. Mrs. McMahon stated that she noticed that the current Township Solicitor holds more than one position in the Township as a Solicitor. Mrs. McMahon spoke regarding the conflict of interest issue that was brought up earlier in the meeting. Mayor Wolfe suggested that she bring her concerns with the Board of Education project to the Board of Education, as it is not a Township project, and the Board of Education and the Township are two (2) separate entities. He also suggested that if she feels there was an ethical violation, that she should file a complaint with the Division of Consumer Affairs. Director of Community Development, Mr. Marino explained the bid process. A discussion followed regarding the bid and the project in question.

Dorothy Spaulding, 1092 Blue Bell Road stated, she is a member of a local civic group, who provides four (4) scholarships to towns' graduating seniors. The organization meets every 2nd Tuesday at the library; they previously met at the Pfeiffer Community Center at no charge. Ms. Spaulding asked for reconsideration of the room rental fee.

M.) GENERAL PUBLIC DISCUSSION (cont'd)

Alan Dodd, 1619 Herbert Blvd. addressed the Mayor and Council to acknowledge Cncl. Valcourt's work as a Councilperson and her work on the Open Space Advisory Committee, noting he appreciates her ability to place the residents of Monroe Township above political parties. He acknowledged every member of Council who are able to work together despite being of different political affiliations. Mr. Dodd asked for an update concerning police body-worn cameras, to which Police Chief Monahan explained that since December 2021, every police officer is mandated by the Attorney General guidelines to wear an active body-worn camera on all calls.

Frank Russo, 83 Comfort Road addressed the Mayor and Council to express his concerns with the dumping of trash in the bushes across from the houses in his development and the excessive speeding that also takes place. Mr. Russo also expressed his concerns with the harassment that he feels he has received from the Township, specifically the Zoning Officer, and his development's HOA. Mayor Wolfe stated, the Township has a program called Clean Communities, which funds various local groups to clean portions of the township, suggesting maybe they can schedule a cleanup in the Hamilton Greene development. He noted that he will also research to see if the Township has any contracts with the Hamilton Greene HOA regarding trash and recycling.

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

N.) ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further to discuss, Cncl. Vice-Pres. Valcourt made a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting of February 27, 2023. The motion was seconded by Cncl. Garbowski and unanimously approved by all members of Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Aileen Chiselko
Municipal Clerk

These minutes were prepared from excerpts of the recorded proceedings, as well as hand-written notes taken, of the Council Meeting of February 27, 2023, 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

3/13/2023

Date