

**WORKSHOP MEETING
OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS WAS
HELD THIS EVENING IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

Monday, August 12, 2024

Council President Sgobba called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Christine Hablitz, Michael Murphy, and Christopher Vancheri. Also present were Mayor James Damiano, Township Attorney Carol Marquez, Administrator Vincent Quatrone, Municipal Clerk Cynthia Kraus, and Deputy Clerk Melissa DePiro.

Absent: Councilmember Jayna Patel.

Township Employees present: Police Chief Bryan Prall, Detective John Moncato, and Health Officer John Biegel.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC NOTICE: Take notice that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-8 and N.J.S.A. 10:4-10 as follows: A notice of the meeting was prominently posted on the bulletin board at the Municipal Building, located at 225 Main Street, Little Falls, N.J. on January 4, 2024. A copy of the notice was mailed to the North Jersey Herald and News and The Record on the same date. Additionally, a copy of the notice was filed in the office of the Township Clerk on said date. **A link and a telephone number to join the meeting virtually can be accessed on the Township website at www.lfnj.com. Electronic provisions have been established for the public to participate during the public comment portion of the meeting.**

HEALTH DEPARTMENT REPORT BY HEALTH OFFICER JOHN BIEGEL – At this time, John Biegel reported on the incidence of a case of West Nile virus in the Township, the recent alert regarding Listeria in cold cuts, and methods for prevention. Kimberly Finkler, Health Educator, described the role of educators and methods to inform residents of upcoming events. Ms. Finkler highlighted upcoming events at the Civic Center including a men’s mental health screening on August 19th, a children’s immunization clinic on August 20th, and a program on understanding memory loss on September 26th. Events held at the Satellite Office were also reviewed as well as ongoing projects. Little Falls resident Norman Scherzer reported on his visit to the Clifton Health Department and commented on the memorial for Covid victims. Mr. Scherzer then discussed recommendations to declare public health a Township priority, to improve the communication system to make sure residents get the information they need, to designate a Township official to communicate information, and to evaluate of the quality of air in the public buildings in the Township. Council President SGOBBA, Mayor Damiano, and Councilmember Vancheri made comments and agreed with Mr. Scherzer’s emphasis on communication and discussed ways to reach more of the community.

PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL MATTERS AND AGENDA ITEMS

Anyone wishing to address the Township Council may do so through the Council President. It is preferred if you give your name and address for the record. Comments are to be limited to three minutes, however, if appropriate, you may be granted additional time in the sole discretion of the Council President.

Members of the public who have joined the meeting virtually and desire to provide comment shall raise their virtual hand in the Zoom application. The Meeting moderator will queue the members of the public that wish to provide comment and the Council President will recognize them in order. Members of the public who have joined the meeting by calling in must press *6 to mute and unmute themselves and *9 to raise their hand. Members of the public who have joined the Meeting via the Zoom application must click the Reactions icon and then the Raise Hand icon. Once the process is complete, we will return to the regular order of business.

It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Murphy, that the meeting be and it was opened to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Sebastian Arboleda & Diana Navarro- made comments regarding the renewal of Chela’s license stating the limited hours have made it difficult to conduct business and sell the business, and queried what could be done to get the license so that the business could be sold. John Moncato, LFPD Detective, commented on the events that occurred at Chela’s. Chief Prall provided a summarization of prior and current year inspections. Chief Prall also responded to Councilmember MURPHY’s query regarding compliant establishments.

No one having come forward to be heard, it was moved by Councilmember Murphy, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that the meeting be and it was closed to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:

MAYOR/ADMINISTRATOR:

1. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TOWNSHIP TO APPLY FOR FUNDS FROM THE NJDCA UNDER THE FY 2025 ROID GRANT PROGRAM – Mayor Damiano explained the Township can apply for this grant annually and allows for programs for those individuals with special needs. This is a grant application to attempt to obtain funds for the Recreation Department.
 2. RESOLUTION RENEWING THE GROUP DENTAL BENEFITS PROGRAM – Mayor Damiano also explained the nature of this Resolution.
 3. RESOLUTION DENYING APPLICATION OF CHELAS’S RESTAURANT AND BAR, LLC FOR RENEWAL OF A PLENARY RETAIL CONSUMPTION LICENSE - This Resolution was previously discussed during Public Comment.
- Lastly, Mayor Damiano reported on progress the contractor for Stevens Avenue has made on site today. The Mayor then discussed issues impeding progress with the parking lot, such as the relocation of the pole by PSE&G.

ACTION ITEMS:

It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, to approve Resolutions A, B and D:

Application for Funds Under the ROID Grant Program

RESOLUTION [A] 24-08-12 - #1

TITLE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP TO APPLY FOR FUNDS FROM THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS UNDER THE FY2025 RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES (ROID) GRANT PROGRAM TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, PASSAIC COUNTY, NJ

WHEREAS, there is a need to provide recreation and leisure services for individuals with disabilities in the Township of Little Falls; and

WHEREAS, the Recreational Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities (ROID) Grant supports projects that will provide these services to people with disabilities in our community by offering the ROID Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls wishes to provide individuals with disabilities in need these services being offered under this grant program; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls desires to submit a grant application to the Department of Community Affairs for the FY2025 Recreational Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities Grant Program for approximately \$20,000; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls recognizes and accepts that the Department may offer a lesser or greater amount, therefore upon receipt of the grant agreement from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, does further authorize the execution of any such grant agreement; and also, upon receipt of the fully executed agreement from the Department, does further authorize the expenditure of funds pursuant to the terms of the agreement between the Township of Little Falls and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Municipal Council of the Township of Little Falls that:

1. The Township of Little Falls authorizes the submission of the grant for funding; and
2. These funds will be used by the Little Falls Department of Recreation to provide services for individuals with disabilities; and
3. The Municipal Council approves the allocation of the required 20% matching funds for this grant opportunity, which will be provided by the Township of Little Falls .

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the persons whose names, titles, and signatures appear below are authorized to sign the application and that they or their successors in said titles are authorized to sign the agreement, and any other documents necessary in connection therewith:

Renewal of Group Dental Benefits Program

RESOLUTION [B] 24-08-12 - #2

TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, PASSAIC COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

A RESOLUTION RENEWING THE GROUP DENTAL BENEFITS PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES AND THEIR COVERED DEPENDENTS THROUGH DELTA DENTAL OF NEW JERSEY, INC.

WHEREAS, the Township of Little Falls, hereinafter referred to as the Township, provides dental benefits coverage for eligible employees and their covered dependents as part of the comprehensive Employee Health Benefits Program; and

WHEREAS, the Township’s Health Benefits Consultant, as a matter of due diligence, examined the plan usage, claims data and network utilization and further, engaged in active negotiations for the renewal of the Township’s Dental Program, which currently consists of the Premier/Advantage and the PPO Plan, administered by Delta Dental of NJ, Inc. and,

WHEREAS, the Consultant was successful in negotiation in securing a renewal for the PPO Plan and the Premier/Advantage Plan, that:

- Provides a 24-month renewal with no increase in premium over expiring, and
- Provides for all coverages/benefits to remain unchanged from the expiring respective plans.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Mayor and Council of the Township of Little Falls, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, hereby authorize the renewal of the dental benefits contract with Delta Dental of New Jersey for the period **July 1, 2024** through **June 30, 2026**; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Governing Body does hereby authorize and affirm the implementation of this renewal, which maintains the current plan design and level of benefits; thereby ensuring the moral and contractual obligation of the Township; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the contract award for the insurance component of the Renewal Proposal is to a duly licensed and admitted Insurance Company within the State of NJ and therefore, such award is exempt from the requirements set forth by P.L. 2004, Chapter 19 (as amended by P.L. 2005, c.51) N.J.S.A.19:44A-20.5 et seq.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Township Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to execute the renewal documents in accordance with the existing terms and conditions of the Agreement with the renewal rate provisions, as promulgated herewith; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, a certified copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to PIA Security Programs, A Division of World Insurance Associates, LLC, 429 Hackensack Street, P.O. Box 818 Carlstadt NJ, Health Benefits Consultant to the Township, the Township Chief Financial Officer and Municipal Auditor.

Bill List

RESOLUTION [D] 24-08-12 - #4

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls the Council having received the Treasurer’s certification of the availability of funds for payment of all bills presented, that payment of all bills approved by the Finance Committee be and is hereby authorized, subject to the availability of funds and subject to the appropriate and available appropriation in the line item.

Meeting of August 12, 2024

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Murphy to approve Resolution C.

Denial of Chela’s Restaurant & Bar LLC Plenary Retail Consumption License Renewal

RESOLUTION [C] 24-08-12 - #3

RESOLUTION DENYING APPLICATION OF CHELA’S RESTAURANT AND BAR, LLC FOR RENEWAL OF A PLENARY RETAIL CONSUMPTION LICENSE

WHEREAS, Chela’s Restaurant and Bar, LLC has made an application for the 2024-2025 renewal term of Plenary Retail Distribution License No. 1605-33-005-011); and

WHEREAS, the Little Falls Township Clerk has received a letter of denial from the Little Falls Township Chief of Police on said application setting forth ongoing issues of the applicant’s inability to provide information sufficient to complete a proper background investigation, with numerous items requested not being supplied.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls, County of Passaic, that the application of renewal of a Plenary Retail Consumption License No. 1605-33-005-011 by Chela’s Restaurant and Bar, LLC be and is hereby denied.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

APPLICATIONS

It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Murphy to approve the following:

RAFFLE, LITTLE FALLS FOOTBALL PARENTS ASSOCIATION, OFF-PREMISE 50/50, 10/19/24, 6:00 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.

RAFFLE, PVRHS FOOTBALL CHEER PARENTS ASSOCIATION, ON-PREMISE DRAW RAFFLE, 11/24/24, 8:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

RAFFLE, PVRHS FOOTBALL CHEER PARENTS ASSOCIATION, OFF-PREMISE 50/50, 11/24/24, 12:00 P.M.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance No. 1497- It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that there be introduced and the meeting of August 26, 2024 set as the date for the public hearing of the following:

Section 1.-OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

Title

Full Time Employees:

Salary Range/ Amount

Administrator	\$150,000 - \$170,000
Assistant Business Administrator	\$90,000 - \$125,000
Township Clerk/Assessment Search Officer/Reg. of Vital Statistics	\$65,000 - \$130,000
Township Clerk’s Office/ Alt. Registrar/Bd. Of Health Secretary	\$35,000 - \$80,000
Deputy Clerk/Payroll Supervisor/Deputy Registrar of Vital Statistics	\$60,000- \$90,000
Assistant to the Chief Financial Officer	\$35,000 - \$75,000
Deputy Chief Financial Officer	\$60,000 - \$105,000
Executive Assistant to the Mayor	\$35,000 - \$65,000
Administrative Assistant	\$35,000 - \$65,000
Tax Collector /Tax Search Officer	\$75,000 - \$115,000
Administrative Assistant/ Tax Assessor Office	\$25,000 - \$50,000
Construction Code Official/Fire Sub-Code Official/Fire Official	\$95,000 – 130,000
Code Enforcement Officer	\$50,000 - \$80,000
Technical Assistant Construction Office	\$30,000 - \$48,400
Administrative Assistant/ Construction Office	\$39,000- \$46,000
Fire Prevention Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer	\$60,000-\$75,000
Administrative Assistant/ Fire Prevention Bureau	\$40,000 - \$60,000
Court Administrator/Violations Clerk	\$65,000 - \$95,000
Dep. Court Administrator/Dep. Violations Clerk	\$45,000 - \$65,000
Public Works Manager/Superintendent, DPW	\$100,000 - \$140,000
DPW Secretary/Assistant to Recycling Coordinator	\$35,000 - \$50,000
Police Chief	\$200,000 - \$250,000
Police Captain	\$195,000 - \$215,000
Supervising Communications Officer	\$70,000 - \$95,000
Police Records Clerk/Administrative Clerk	\$40,000 - \$70,000
Police Administrative Assistant	\$40,000--\$70,000
Recreation Director	\$95,000 - \$110,000
Assistant Recreation Director	\$50,000 - \$65,000
Assistant to Recreation Director	\$30,000- \$45,000
Permanent Part Time Salary Employees:	
Mayor	\$7,500 – 10,000
Council Members	\$3,000 – 5,000
Certified Municipal Finance Officer /Treasurer/QPA	\$50,000 - \$75,000
Fire Official, Bureau of Fire Prevention	\$9,100 - \$15,100
Emergency Management Coordinator	\$10,000.00 - \$12,000
Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator	\$5,000.00- \$7,500
EMS Coordinator	\$45,000- \$65,000
Tax Assessor	\$25,000 - \$40,000
Judge, Municipal Court	\$34,025 - \$56,700

Meeting of August 12, 2024

Prosecutor	\$20,000 – \$30,000
Building Sub-Code Official	\$18,000 - \$30,000
Electrical Sub-Code Official	\$18,000 - \$30,000
Plumbing Sub-Code Official	\$18,000 - \$30,000
Secretary, Planning Board	\$4,000 - \$7,000
Municipal Alliance Coordinator	\$7,500
Clean Communities Coordinator	\$7,500
Recycling Coordinator	\$5,000
Safety Officer DPW	\$2,500
CRS Coordinator	\$7,500
Planning Administrator	\$7,500

Permanent Part Time Hourly Employees:

Administrative Assistant	\$16.50 – \$25.00
Police Department Administrative Clerk	\$15.13 - \$20.00
Administrative Clerk	\$15.13-\$18.75

HOURLY EMPLOYEES

P/T Courtroom Security Attendant	\$15.13 - \$22.00
P/T Fire Prevention Inspector, Bureau of Fire Prevention	\$21.00 - \$35.00
P/T Laborer	\$15.13 - \$18.00
P/T Temporary Skilled Worker, depending on Qualifications	\$15.13 - \$50.00
P/T Temporary Unskilled Worker	\$15.13 - \$17.00
P/T Recreation Building Supervisors	\$15.13 - \$17.00
P/T Communications Officers	\$18.00 - \$24.00
P/T Clerical and Secretarial	\$15.13 - \$20.00
P/T EMT's	\$15.13 - \$18.00
P/T School Crossing Guard	\$17.99 - \$22.00
Seasonal DPW Worker	\$15.13 – \$17.00
Parking Enforcement Officer	\$15.13 - \$18.00
Temporary Sub Code Inspector	\$35.00- \$48.00

Section 2. –COLLECTIVE BARGANNING AGREEMENTS

Salaries and compensation provisions negotiated through the current Collective Bargaining Agreements for the Teamsters Local 97 DPW , the Little Falls PBA Local 346 and Public Safety Telecommunicators FMBA Local 459 are made apart of this ordinance. Employees covered by their respective Collective Bargaining Agreement shall be paid salary and compensation in accordance with those duly executed and approved agreements. All other provisions related to employees are incorporated herein from the Township’s Personnel Policy Manual.

Section 3. –LONGEVITY

Longevity has been eliminated for all employees hired after January 1, 1997.

Section 4. OVERTIME and KEY EMPLOYEE VACATION

The following provisions of the within ordinance are subject to the provisions of any applicable Federal or State statute, and to the provisions of any applicable collective bargaining agreements.

- a. Key employees: The following employees, when employed full-time, are considered exempt key employees and designated management of their departments: Township Administrator, Township Clerk, Chief Municipal Finance Officer, Construction Code Official, Superintendent of Public Works, Deputy Superintendent of Public Works, Tax Collector, Tax Assessor, Court Administrator and Police Chief. Key employees shall not receive overtime, nor any regimented compensatory time off in lieu of overtime but shall be paid on an annual salary as authorized by the Mayor.
- b. In lieu of overtime or compensatory time off they shall receive an additional vacation week annually. Overtime may be paid to key employees if an emergency is declared, and the Key Employee obtains authorization from the Mayor to work during the emergency.
- c. Non-key employees: Overtime pay may be paid to or compensatory time off may be given to non-key employees; however, compensatory time must be used within the same year and may not be carried over. Compensatory time shall commence only after the employee has worked the prescribed work week. Authorized compensatory time shall be computed at one and one-half (1½) times the hourly rate.

The hourly rate for overtime shall be computed by dividing the annual rate of pay by the number of hours in the employee’s prescribed work year. In the case of a forty-hour work week, the employee shall be paid time and one-half after the full forty hours have been worked. For employees working a thirty-five-hour week, compensation shall be at straight time for the first five hours of overtime worked; the time and one-half provisions shall take effect only after the full forty hours have been worked.

- d. Part-time employees: Part-time employees shall be paid overtime only when in a particular week they work a number of hours which under provisions of Federal or State Law requires the payment of overtime.

Section 5.

Such deductions as may be required by law shall be made from the salaries and compensation as hereinabove set forth.

Section 6.

The Township Treasurer is hereby authorized to sign payroll checks. All Permanent employees shall be paid through the direct deposit payroll system established in the Township.

Section 7. HOLIDAYS

Permanent full-time officers and employees and permanent part-time Township officers and employees who are regularly scheduled to work twenty (20) hours or more weekly for twelve (12) months a year, whether paid on an annual salary basis or hourly basis, are entitled to the following paid Holidays:

New Year’s Day	General Election Day
President's Day	Columbus Day
Good Friday	Veterans’ Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving Day
Emancipation Day	Day After Thanksgiving
Independence Day	Christmas Day
Labor Day	

One-half of the last workday preceding New Year’s Day and
One-half of the last workday preceding Christmas Day

Permanent part-time Township officers and employees who are regularly scheduled to workless than twenty (20) hours or more weekly for twelve (12) months a year, whether paid on an annual salary basis or hourly basis, shall receive holiday leave on a prorated basis of ½ the full time accrual.

Section 8.

In addition to the holidays set forth in Section 7, all full-time employees and part-time full-year employees paid by annual salary shall be entitled to two (2) personal days off each year, except as may be provided by collective bargaining contract.

Section 9.

All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 10.

This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon final passage by the Township Council, upon approval by the Mayor, and publication as required by law.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Councilmember HABLITZ reviewed Library events including the Library’s community outreach tent at the Farmer’s Market this weekend, the Yankee Stadium organist on August 20th, a Polish cultural celebration on August 23rd, and the addition of little libraries throughout Town. Councilmember HABLITZ then announced this Sunday’s Farmers Market theme will include Tie Die Sunday, Movie Nights will continue this Wednesday at Wilmore Park, and the Townwide Yard Sale will be held on September 14th.

Councilmember VANCHERI announced details of the 9-11 ceremony at Wilmore Road Park. Councilmember VANCHERI then stated he will contact the engineers for an update on the Francisco Avenue traffic light and discuss changing the speed limit on several County roads from 35 to 25 mph. Councilmember VANCHERI recalled the recent storms and OEM response, and thanked everyone for monitoring the situation including Commissioner Lazzara and Senator Corrado. Lastly, Councilmember VANCHERI commented on addressing bank stabilization of the Peckman River.

Councilmember MURPHY reported the Domestic Violence Prevention Committee will convene tomorrow night and reiterated Councilmember VANCHERI’s comments regarding OEM’s response given the latest storm.

Council President SGOBBA reviewed the ten new Hometown Hero banners that will be erected in the Township.

PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

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It was moved by Councilmember Murphy, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that the meeting be and it was opened to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Patel, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

John Veteri- commented on his attendance at a County kickoff meeting regarding the 250th anniversary of the country. Mr. Veteri further noted the Historical Preservation Committee has selected five properties to obtain bronze historical markers. Mr. Veteri stated his intention to present to the Board at an upcoming Council meeting, plans for the five properties that the Historic Preservation Commission has selected and would like the Township’s permission to proceed, at no cost to the Township. Councilmember VANCHERI suggested listing the images of the properties on the Township website.

No one further having come forward to be heard, it was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that the meeting be and it was closed to the public.

Poll: Ayes: Hablitz, Murphy, Patel, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was moved by Councilmember Murphy, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that the meeting be and it was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.