

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

Monday, June 10, 2024

Council President Sgobba called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Christine Hablitz, Michael Murphy, Jayna Patel, and Christopher Vancheri. Also present were Mayor James Damiano, Township Administrator Charles Cuccia, Township Engineer Mike Kobylarz, Assistant Administrator Vincent Quatrone, Municipal Clerk Cynthia Kraus, and Deputy Clerk Melissa DePiro.

Absent: Councilmember Michael Murphy.

Township Employees present: None.

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.**

PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING PRIDE MONTH – Mayor Damiano read the proclamation recognizing June, 2024 as LGBTQIA+ Pride Month in the Township of Little Falls.

DAMIAN KRIBS- PASSAIC VALLEY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL – Mayor Damiano then honored PVHS senior Damian Kribs for his achievements as a student athlete.

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

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

No one 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, Patel, Vancheri and Council President Sgobba
 Nays: None

The Council President declared the motion passed.

ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:

MAYOR/ADMINISTRATOR:

1. RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT AND REVIEW OF THE 2023 ANNUAL REPORT OF AUDIT - Mayor Damiano explained the routine nature of this Resolution.
2. RESOLUTION APPROVING CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN FOR THE 2023 ANNUAL AUDIT – Mayor Damiano also explained the routine nature of this Resolution.
3. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE GRANT WITH THE RENTER OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT LOCATED AT 405 MAIN STREET, UNIT 440- Mayor Damiano noted the routine nature of this Resolution.
4. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AWARD OF TOWNSHIP ISSUED FIREARMS TO RETIRED POLICE LIEUTENANT AND RETIRED POLICE SERGEANT – Mayor Damiano reviewed that a Resolution is required for the Township issued firearm to be transferred to retired Police Lieutenant Prall and retired Police Sergeant Romaine.
5. RESOLUTION AWARDED CONTRACT FOR STEVENS AVENUE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - Mayor Damiano reviewed the award to AA Berms for the Stevens Avenue Improvement project.

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6. CHAPTER 159 RESOLUTION FOR ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS (EMS) GRANT- The Mayor then indicated this is excluded from the CAP and a sum of \$22,500 will be added to the General Appropriations.
7. ORDINANCE NO. 1493 – NOISE ORDINANCE AMENDMENT - Mayor Damiano noted there have been some changes to this as it was previously addressed. Council President SGOBBA reiterated one of the modifications which provided clarifications regarding what work is permitted on Sundays.
8. ORDINANCE NO. 1495- ADDING CHAPTER 152 (PEDESTRIAN PLAZAS) – Mayor Damiano discussed the intent to complete the streetscape along Stevens Avenue over the summer months and then add a pedestrian plaza along Warren Street. At this time, Mike Kobylarz, Township Engineer, presented and described in detail a proposed plan which would provide a pedestrian friendly area connecting the old municipal building to the Library. Mr. Kobylarz also discussed his evaluation of parking in the area, summarizing there would be a net increase of five parking spaces. Mr. Kobylarz further elaborated that as part of the pedestrian plaza improvements there would be improvement in the parking area around the old municipal building. Council President SGOBBA emphasized this is a proposed plan. Mr. Kobylarz responded to Council President SGOBBA that the cost has not been evaluated at this time. Also in response to Council President SGOBBA, Mayor Damiano discussed funding of the project, and emphasized that this is only a proposal and other parties would be included in consideration of the project.

ACTION ITEMS:

It was moved by Councilmember Patel, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, to approve Resolutions A through G:

Acknowledging Receipt & Review of 2022 Annual Audit

RESOLUTION [A] 24-06-20 - #1

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4 requires the governing body of every local unit to have made an annual audit of its books, accounts and financial transactions; and

WHEREAS, The Annual Report of Audit for the year 2023 has been filed by a Registered Municipal Accountant with the Municipal Clerk as per the requirements of N.J.S.A. 40A:5-6, and a copy has been received by each member of the governing body; and

WHEREAS, the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey is authorized to prescribe reports pertaining to the local fiscal affairs, as per R.S. 52:27BB-34; and

WHEREAS, the Local Finance Board has promulgated a regulation requiring that the governing body of each municipality shall by resolution certify to the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey that all members of the governing body have reviewed, as a minimum, the sections of the annual audit entitled:

General Comments
Recommendations

and, **WHEREAS**, the members of the governing body have personally reviewed as a minimum the Annual Report of Audit, and specifically the sections of the Annual Audit entitled:

General Comments
Recommendations

as evidenced by the group affidavit form of the governing body; and

WHEREAS, such resolution of certification shall be adopted by the Governing Body no later than forty-five days after the receipt of the annual audit, as per the regulations of the Local Finance Board; and

WHEREAS, all members of the governing body have received and have familiarized themselves with, at least, the minimum requirements of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey, as stated aforesaid and have subscribed to the affidavit, as provided by the Local Finance Board; and

WHEREAS, failure to comply with the promulgations of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey may subject the members of the local governing body to the penalty provisions of R.S. 52:27BB-52 – to wit:
R.S. 52:27BB-52 – “A local officer or member of a local governing body who, after a date fixed for compliance, fails or refuses to obey an order of the director (Director of Local Government Services), under the provisions of this Article, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both, in addition shall forfeit his office.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls, hereby states that it has complied with the promulgation of the Local Finance Board of the state of New Jersey dated July 30, 1968 and does hereby submit a certified copy of this resolution and the required affidavit to said Board to show evidence of said compliance.

Approval of Corrective Action Plan – Annual Audit

**TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS
PASSAIC COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
RESOLUTION [B] 24-06-20 - #2**

WHEREAS, the Director of the Division of Local Government Services has formally directed all municipalities to adopt a Corrective Action Plan as part of their annual audit process; and

WHEREAS, this Corrective Action Plan shall be submitted to the Director of Local Government Services upon adoption of the Governing Body and it shall be kept on file with the Township Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the Plan shall cover all audit findings and recommendations and be prepared in accordance with the Single Audit Act OMB Circular 128 and Local Finance Notice of 92-15; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Council hereby approves the attached Corrective Action Plan for the 2023 Annual Audit;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Clerk is hereby directed to maintain said Plan in Township files, available to the public.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution, including the Corrective Action Plan, be forwarded to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

Affordability Assistance Grant – 405 Main St. Unit 440

**RESOLUTION [C] 24-06-10 - #3
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE GRANT WITH THE RENTER OF AN
AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT LOCATED 405 MAIN ST, UNIT 440, LITTLE FALLS, NJ 07424**

WHEREAS, NIKAURY POLANCO [will rent/rents] property located at 405 Main St, Unit 440, Little Falls, NJ 07424, which property is governed by the statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations restricting ownership and use of the property as an Affordable Housing unit; and

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WHEREAS, the tenant has requested an Affordability Assistance Program grant from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund; and **WHEREAS**, the Township is willing to extend a grant to the tenant in the amount of \$1,358.00. **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** on this 10th day of June 2024, by the Township Council of Little Falls, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, that:

- 1. The Mayor, Administrator, Clerk and attorney are hereby authorized to execute an Affordability Assistance Program grant with the renter of an Affordable Housing unit at 405 Main St, Unit 440, Little Falls, NJ 07424.

Award of Firearms to Retired Lieutenant & Sergeant

RESOLUTION [D] 24-06-10 - #4

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council hereby authorize the award of a Township issued firearm (Sig Sauer P365XL SER# 66B707672) to Robert Prall in recognition of his retirement as Police Lieutenant and for his service with the Little Falls Township Police Department.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council hereby authorize the award of a Township issued firearm (Sig Sauer P320X SER# 58C409530) to Matthew Romaine in recognition of his retirement as Police Sergeant and for his service with the Little Falls Township Police Department.

Award of Contract to AA Berms for Stevens Ave. Improvements

**RESOLUTION [E] 24-06-10 - #5
ACCEPTING BID AND AWARDING CONTRACT FOR
STEVENS AVENUE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

WHEREAS, pursuant to advertising duly made, bids were received by the Township of Little Falls on June 4, 2024 for the FY2023 NJDOT MA Program Stevens Avenue Improvements Section 5 project, and the bids were opened and read publicly as follows:

AA Berms, LLC	Diamond Construction	ADP Group, Inc.
Bid: \$583,910.00	Bid: \$652,754.00	Bid: \$897,450.00

Berto Construction
Bid: \$898,948.60

and, **WHEREAS**, the Township Attorney has reviewed the bids for legal sufficiency; and **WHEREAS**, the award is subject to the Availability of Funds and certification of same in the 2024 budget; and **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls as follows:

- 1) That the bid of

AA Berms, LLC
P.O. Box 180
Belleville, NJ 07109

in the amount of

\$583,910.00

be and the same is hereby accepted; and

2) That the Mayor and Clerk be and they are hereby authorized to execute a Contract in a form approved by the Township Attorney for the designated services at the bid price hereinabove cited, subject to the successful Contractor's filing the required form of Affirmative Action compliance and Payroll Certification for Public Works Projects; and

3) That the Clerk be and he is hereby authorized and directed to return to the unsuccessful bidder(s) any Certified checks and/or Bid Bonds received from them as surety, with the exception of the surety received from the second-lowest bidder, which shall be retained for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days or until a contract in a form satisfactory to the Township Attorney shall have been executed with the low bidder, whichever shall come first.

Special Item of Revenue & Appropriation-Firefighters (EMS) Grant

**TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS
PASSAIC COUNTY NEW JERSEY
RESOLUTION [F] 24-06-10 - #6
SPECIAL ITEMS OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATION**

WHEREAS, NJS 40A:4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of any county or municipality when such item shall have been made available by law and the amount was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and

WHEREAS, the Director may also approve the insertion of an item of appropriation for equal amount;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council of the Township of Little Falls in the County of Passaic, New Jersey, hereby requests the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the budget of the year 2024 in the sum of \$22,500.00, which is now available from Miscellaneous Revenues – Section F – Special Items of General Revenue Anticipated with prior written consent of Director of Local Government Services - Public & Private Revenues Offset with Assistance to Firefighters Grant (EMS)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the like sum of \$22,500.00 is hereby appropriated under the caption:

General Appropriations	
(A) Operations – Excluded from “CAPS”	
Public & Private Programs Offset by Revenues	
Assistance to Firefighters (EMS)	
Grant EMW 2022 FG 05581	\$22,500.00

Bill List

RESOLUTION [G] 24-06-10 - #7

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.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

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NEW BUSINESS

At this time, Council President SGOBBA read a proposed change to the Ordinance prior to the public hearing. Ordinance No. 1493- The public hearing on Ordinance No. 1493, “**ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, IN THE COUNTY OF PASSAIC, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING THE TOWNSHIP CODE CHAPTER 136, NOISE,**” be and it was opened.

Mayor Damiano noted he had received Mr. May’s request to modify the Ordinance to take effect immediately, however, the Mayor explained why allowing the Ordinance to be adopted today with the 20 day waiting period would be more beneficial.

Shawn May – Questioned why the Ordinance could not go into effect immediately. Mayor Damiano reiterated the rationale for not amending the Ordinance immediately before the public hearing and adoption tonight.

As no further comments from the public were received, the public hearing on Ordinance No. 1493 be and it was closed.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

It was moved by Councilmember Patel, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that Ordinance No. 1493 be and it was adopted.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Ordinance No. 1495- The public hearing on Ordinance No. 1495, “**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, IN THE COUNTY OF PASSAIC, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO ADD TO CHAPTER 152 (PEDESTRIAN PLAZAS) TO THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS,**” be and it was opened.

Shawn May – commented on his concern that the design would impede his driveway. Mr. Kobylarz stated it is a concept plan, and that the final design would provide more than enough room. Council President SGOBBA reiterated the design was not final and that Mr. May’s comments have been noted.

John Veteri- Commented on vehicular access and expressed concern that there was no additional exit/entry to the parking lot near the old municipal building. Mr. Veteri further noted that all traffic would be routed onto Stevens Avenue and suggested having another point of entry/exit. Mr. Kobylarz explained the access points. Mr. Veteri also commented on the use of trees and benches.

Ed Rich – questioned what would occur to Mr. May’s driveway after a heavy snowstorm and commented on the location of the Farmers Market. Council President SGOBBA responded to snow removal and stated the Farmers Market may be relocated. Mayor Damiano then commented on snow removal and noted it is no different than other dead-end roads in the Township.

As no further comments from the public were received, the public hearing on Ordinance No. 1495 be and it was closed.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

It was moved by Councilmember Hablitz, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, that Ordinance No. 1495 be and it was adopted.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Councilmember PATEL announced as June is Alzheimer’s Awareness Month, the Clifton Health Department will host a free memory testing on 6/11, a program on understanding memory loss on 6/20, and a program entitled, “Essential goal of sleep and well-being,” on 7/23.

Councilmember HABLITZ announced the Library will have an author book discussion and signing with Nancy Burne and Jonathan Corcoran on 6/13, Yoga for Kids on 6/14 & 6/28, and Strength & Balance for adults on Wednesdays. Councilmember HABLITZ commented on the success of the Farmers Market, adding that Hunter Hayes will be at the Farmers Market this weekend.

Councilmember VANCHERI thanked everyone for attending the Pride Flag raising. Councilmember VANCHERI announced work on the Houston Road speed humps will commence soon. Councilmember VANCHERI then stated this Friday the annual Flag Day ceremony will be held at the American Legion. He also congratulated all the students graduating. Lastly, the Mayor and Mr. Kobylarz responded to Councilmember VANCHERI’s question on the status of PSE&G work.

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Council President SGOBBA announced five Hometown Hero banners will be going up in the Township. Council President SGOBBA then commented on the Senior Advisory Spring Fling and discussed methods to get seniors to come out to more events.

PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

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

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

No one 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, 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 Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that the meeting be and it was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Cynthia Kraus
Municipal Clerk