

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

Monday, November 18, 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 Attorney Carol Marquez, Administrator Vincent Quatrone, Municipal Clerk Cynthia Kraus, and Deputy Clerk Melissa DePiro.

Absent: None.

Township Employees present: Police Chief Bryan Prall.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG – Following the Salute to the Flag Council President SGOBBA requested a moment of silence to recognize the passing of former Mayor Rick Ricciardelli.

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.**

ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION – At this time, Mayor Damiano then read the Proclamation recognizing November 2024 as Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month in the Township of Little Falls.

EPILEPSY AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION – Mayor Damiano then read the Proclamation recognizing the month of November 2024 as Epilepsy Awareness Month in the Township of Little Falls.

MAYOR’S REPORT

DISCUSSION OF BEST PRACTICES INVENTORY- Mayor Damiano reported on the Best Practices Inventory.

DISCUSSION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING MANDATES (MUNICIPALITIES VS. STATE OF NJ) – Mayor Damiano announced the new housing obligation number has been released. The Mayor elaborated on his belief that the 285 additional affordable unit obligation is unattainable by the Township and further explained why he urged the Council to join the class action lawsuit as an actual party. Councilmember MURPHY, Councilmember VANCHERI, Councilmember HABLITZ, and Councilmember PATEL agreed the Council should consider joining the class action lawsuit. Council President SGOBBA requested the Clerk to arrange for the Council to move on participation in the lawsuit at the next Meeting.

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 Murphy, 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 Hablitz, seconded by Councilmember Patel, 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 CANCELLING 2025 PRELIMINARY TAXES AND REFUNDING 2024 PRO-RATED 3RD QUARTER TAXES DUE TO PROPERTY EXEMPTION- Mayor Damiano reviewed the routine nature of the Resolution.

Meeting of November 18, 2024

- 2. RESOLUTION APPROVING CHANGE ORDER RESOLUTION FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO MOZART AVENUE AND CHERRY STREET – Mayor Damiano explained the nature of the change order.
- 3. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 1505 – PRIVATELY OWNED SALT STORAGE – Lastly, Mayor Damiano explained the introduction of this Ordinance to meet State requirements.

ACTION ITEMS:

It was moved by Councilmember Vancheri, seconded by Councilmember Patel, to approve Resolutions A-C:

Cancellation of 2025 Preliminary Taxes & Refunding Pro-Rated 3Qtr Taxes due to Property Exemption

RESOLUTION [A] 24-10-07 - #1

CANCEL 2024 PRO-RATED TAXES, CANCEL 2025 PRELIMINARY TAXES AND REFUND 2024 PRO-RATED 3RD QTR TAXES DUE TO PROPERTY EXEMPTION TO ST JOHN THE BAPTIST RUSSIAN ORTHODOX GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH OF SINGAC

WHEREAS Saint John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of Singac, NJ (hereafter referred to as “St. John”) owns the land and premises commonly known as 18 Weaver Street, Block 35, Lot 17; and

WHEREAS 18 Weaver Street is occupied as a parsonage by St. John in accordance to N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.6; and

WHEREAS pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.6c, a Municipality may by appropriate resolution return all taxes collected on property owned by an association or corporation organized exclusively for charitable or religious purposes which would have been exempt had proper claim in writing been made; and

WHEREAS the property tax exemption attached from July 1, 2024; and

WHEREAS upon review of the documents submitted, the Township Tax Assessor, John H. Bang, had approved request on or about August 19, 2024;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Little Falls, County of Passaic and State of New Jersey, that the property tax exemption applied for by St. John be effective as of July 1, 2024; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Tax Collector hereby authorized to **cancel** the prorated taxes in the total amount of **\$4,389.04** on qtrs. 3rd and 4th of 2024 and 2025 Preliminary taxes in the total amount of **\$4,353.26**; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Tax Collector hereby authorizes our Township Treasurer to **refund** the account of St. John for said time in the amount of **\$2,179.75**; and

WHEREAS the Tax Collector is requesting that the Township Council direct the Treasurer to refund said amounts overpaid listed below due to taxes being overpaid; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Little Falls that copies of this resolution be provided to the Tax Collector, Treasurer and Tax Assessor.

Change Order for Improvements to Mozart Avenue & Cherry Street

RESOLUTION [B] 24-11-18 - #2

RESOLUTION AWARDED CHANGE ORDER TO DLS CONTRACTING, INC. FOR THE IMPROVEMENTS TO MOZART AVENUE AND CHERRY STREET CONTRACT

WHEREAS, the Township Council has received a recommendation from the Township Special Project Engineer, Boswell Engineering, regarding the contract for the Improvements to Mozart Avenue and Cherry Street to change contract items as listed in the original specification; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council has considered this recommendation in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-1 et seq. and the Local Public Contracts Law; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council has a contract with DLS Contracting, Inc. for Improvements to Mozart Avenue and Cherry Street, which were awarded by public bidding under the Local Public Contracts Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council authorizes a change order to DLS Contracting, Inc. decreasing the contract amount in the amount of \$43,885.30, making the revised contract amount \$195,483.70.

Bill List

RESOLUTION [C] 24-11-18 - #3

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.

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

APPLICATIONS

NJ STATE FIREMEN’S ASSOCIATION APPLICATION, BRIAN E MISTRETTE, LITTLE FALLS FIRE DEPARTMENT

NJ STATE FIREMEN’S ASSOCIATION APPLICATION, DANIEL I. HUNTER, LITTLE FALLS FIRE DEPARTMENT

RAFFLE, OUR LADY OF THE HOLY ANGELS CHURCH, SEVERAL DATES FROM DECEMBER 25, 2024 THROUGH MARCH 11, 2025, 10:00 A.M., 645 MAIN STREET, LITTLE FALLS, NJ

RAFFLE, OUR LADY OF THE HOLY ANGELS CHURCH, DECEMBER 8, 2024, 11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M., 237 LONG HILL ROAD, LITTLE FALLS, NJ

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

Meeting of November 18, 2024

CORRESPONDENCE

REQUEST FROM LADY OF THE HIGHWAY KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FOR PERMISSION TO HOLD A CAN SHAKE ON SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2025 AND SUNDAY, APRIL 6, 2025 FROM 9:00 AM.M – 5:00 P.M. AT THE INTERSECTION OF OF ROUTE 23 AND MAIN STREET AND MAIN STREET AND UNION BOULEVARD

REQUEST FROM LITTLE FALLS FIRE DEPARTMENT SINGAC FIRE COMPANY 3 FOR PERMISSION TO HOLD A COIN TOSS ON NOVEMBER 29, 2024 FROM 10:00 A.M. UNTIL DUSK ON MAIN STREET AT THE INTERSECTION OF ROUTE 23, WITH A RAIN DATE OF NOVEMBER 30, 2024.

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance No. 1505 - It was moved by Councilmember Patel, seconded by Councilmember Hablitz, that there be introduced and the meeting of December 9, 2024 set as the date for the public hearing of the following:

ORDINANCE NO. 1505

ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS, IN THE COUNTY OF PASSAIC, AMENDING CHAPTER 218, STORMWATER MANAGEMENT, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LITTLE FALLS

SECTION I. Purpose:

The purpose of this ordinance is to prevent stored salt and other solid de-icing materials from being exposed to stormwater.

This ordinance establishes requirements for the storage of salt and other solid de-icing materials on properties not owned or operated by the municipality (privately-owned), including residences, in the **Township of Little Falls** to protect the environment, public health, safety and welfare, and to prescribe penalties for failure to comply.

SECTION II. Definitions:

For the purpose of this ordinance, the following terms, phrases, words and their derivations shall have the meanings stated herein unless their use in the text of this Chapter clearly demonstrates a different meaning. When consistent with the context, words used in the present tense include the future, words used in the plural number include the singular number, and words used in the singular number include the plural number. The word “shall” is always mandatory and not merely directory.

- A. “De-icing materials” means any granular or solid material such as melting salt or any other granular solid that assists in the melting of snow.
- B. “Impervious surface” means a surface that has been covered with a layer of material so that it is highly resistant to infiltration by water.
- C. “Storm drain inlet” means the point of entry into the storm sewer system.
- D. “Permanent structure” means a permanent building or permanent structure that is anchored to a permanent foundation with an impermeable floor, and that is completely roofed and walled (new structures require a door or other means of sealing the access way from wind driven rainfall).
 - A fabric frame structure is a permanent structure if it meets the following specifications:
 - 1. Concrete blocks, jersey barriers or other similar material shall be placed around the interior of the structure to protect the side walls during loading and unloading of de-icing materials;
 - 2. The design shall prevent stormwater run-on and run through, and the fabric cannot leak;
 - 3. The structure shall be erected on an impermeable slab;
 - 4. The structure cannot be open sided; and
 - 5. The structure shall have a roll up door or other means of sealing the access way from wind driven rainfall.
- E. “Person” means any individual, corporation, company, partnership, firm, association, or political subdivision of this State subject to municipal jurisdiction.
- F. “Resident” means a person who resides on a residential property where de-icing material is stored.

SECTION III. Deicing Material Storage Requirements:

- A. Temporary outdoor storage of de-icing materials in accordance with the requirements below is allowed between October 15th and April 15th:
 - 1. Loose materials shall be placed on a flat, impervious surface in a manner that prevents stormwater run-through;
 - 2. Loose materials shall be placed at least 50 feet from surface water bodies, storm drain inlets, ditches and/or other stormwater conveyance channels;
 - 3. Loose materials shall be maintained in a cone-shaped storage pile. If loading or unloading activities alter the cone-shape during daily activities, tracked materials shall be swept back into the storage pile, and the storage pile shall be reshaped into a cone after use;
 - 4. Loose materials shall be covered as follows:
 - a. The cover shall be waterproof, impermeable, and flexible;
 - b. The cover shall extend to the base of the pile(s);
 - c. The cover shall be free from holes or tears;
 - d. The cover shall be secured and weighed down around the perimeter to prevent removal by wind; and
 - e. Weight shall be placed on the cover(s) in such a way that minimizes the potential of exposure as materials shift and runoff flows down to the base of the pile.
 - (1) Sandbags lashed together with rope or cable and placed uniformly over the flexible cover, or poly-cord nets provide a suitable method. Items that can potentially hold water (e.g., old tires) shall not be used;
 - 5. Containers must be sealed when not in use; and
 - 6. The site shall be free of all de-icing materials between April 16th and October 14th.
- B. De-icing materials should be stored in a permanent structure if a suitable storage structure is available. For storage of loose de-icing materials in a permanent structure, such storage may be permanent, and thus not restricted to October 15 -April 15.
- C. **All such temporary and/or permanent structures must also comply with all other local ordinances, including building and zoning regulations as per Chapter 280, Zoning.**
- D. The property owner, or owner of the de-icing materials if different, shall designate a person(s) responsible for operations at the site where these materials are stored outdoors, and who shall document that weekly inspections are conducted to ensure that the conditions of this ordinance are met. Inspection records shall be kept on site and made available to the municipality upon request.
 - 1. Residents who operate businesses from their homes that utilize de-icing materials are required to perform weekly inspections.

SECTION IV. Exemptions:

Residents may store de-icing materials outside in a solid-walled, closed container that prevents precipitation from entering and exiting the container, and which prevents the de-icing materials from leaking or spilling out. Under these circumstances, weekly inspections are not necessary, but repair or replacement of damaged or inadequate containers shall occur within 2 weeks.

If containerized (in bags or buckets) de-icing materials are stored within a permanent structure, they are not subject to the storage and inspection requirements in Section III above. Piles of de-icing materials are not exempt, even if stored in a permanent structure.

This ordinance does not apply to facilities where the stormwater discharges from de-icing material storage activities are regulated under another NJPDES permit.

SECTION V. Enforcement:

This ordinance shall be enforced by the **Construction Official or Code Enforcement Officer** during the course of ordinary enforcement duties.

SECTION VI. Violations and Penalties:

Any person(s) who is found to be in violation of the provisions of this ordinance shall have 72 hours to complete corrective action. Repeat violations and/or failure to complete corrective action shall result in fines according to **Chapter 1** of the Township Code.

SECTION VII. Severability:

Meeting of November 18, 2024

Each section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase of this Ordinance is declared to be an independent section, subsection, sentence, clause, and phrase, and finding or holding of any such portion of this Ordinance to be unconstitutional, void, or ineffective for any cause or reason shall not affect any other portion of this Ordinance.

SECTION VIII. Effective Date:

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption and any publication as may be required by law.

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

The Council President declared the motion passed.

COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

At this time, Mayor Damiano then gave tribute to former Mayor Rick Ricciardelli.

Council President SGOBBA reviewed the following additions to the Hometown Heroes program:

- LITTLE FALLS HOMETOWN HEROES PROGRAM
- RAY MARTIN – EN 3 – U.S. NAVY
- STELLA FALCONES – ACTIVE DUTY – U.S. AIR FORCE
- JOHN JOSEPH MCNAMARA – CHIEF RADIO OPERATOR – U.S. NAVY

Council President SGOBBA then announced a Senior Holiday luncheon will be held on December 18th.

Councilmember HABLITZ reviewed Library events including an exhibition featuring the private collection of Abe Vigoda, and an author reading by John D’Amore. Councilmember HABLITZ then provided details for the upcoming Light Up Little Falls house decorating contest. Lastly, Councilmember HABLITZ provided an update on the status of the Township calendar.

Councilmember PATEL announced a Lung Cancer Assessment will be held on 11/19, and a breast cancer seminar will be held on 12/11. Councilmember PATEL noted that Health Department reports are available on the Township website.

Councilmember MURPHY provided an update on the Township calendar noting advertisement spots are still available.

Councilmember VANCHERI reported on the upcoming tri-town holiday parade. Councilmember VANCHERI provided an update on changing the speed limit on county roads to 25 mph and on retouching county road lines.

Chief Prall reported AAA will be awarding the Township a traffic safety award for 2023 on December 3rd. Chief Prall then reported on a recent on-site inspection for accreditation and provided a history on the Police Department’s accreditations.

PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

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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 Hablitz, 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 Patel, seconded by Councilmember Vancheri, 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 Patel, that the meeting be and it was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Cynthia Kraus
Municipal Clerk