

Minutes of the Agenda Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Commercial, held on November 16, 2015 at 6:00 P.M., at the Township Hall, 1768 Main Street, Port Norris, NJ

Those present:

Judson Moore	Mayor
Fletcher Jamison	Committeeman
Ronald Sutton Sr.	Committeeman
Thomas Seeley	Solicitor
Hannah E. Nichols	Township Clerk
Edward Dennis	Engineer
Clint Miller	Road Supervisor
Heather Sparks	Deputy Clerk

Mayor Moore presided and called the meeting to order with the announcement that the meeting had been advertised, it was being electronically recorded and being held in full compliance of the Open Public Meeting Act.

Mayor Moore called upon Engineer, Edward Dennis, for his report.

Mr. Dennis said application had been filed for Phase III Laurel Lake Drainage in the amount of \$380,000. Also NJDOT grant applications filed for Raymond Drive Phase III and Samuel Drive Phase II. Mr. Dennis said the following projects are in closeout process: Laurel Lake Drainage Phase II, Raymond Drive Phase II, Miller, Ogden and Berry Avenues. Mr. Dennis said on the Bivalve Station Shore Protection Improvements he had met with NJSP on August 26, 2015 to review design and coordinating permits with NJDEP. He stated township will be accepting solar power bids on township owned facilities on November 24th.

Mayor thanked Mr. Dennis and asked Solicitor Seeley for his report.

Mr. Seeley said he did not have a lot to add at this meeting, that they had completed three foreclosures, that they had over 300 properties, that they are down to 180 and that tax collector is working on another list at present. He said he had just received final judgment on the last one. Mr. Seeley suggested that housing officer inspect and take pictures before property is considered for land sale list so that we do not run into serious problems. He said we need to know if property is occupied and get the people evicted before we put it up for sale. He said all of the monies have been collected for the land sale, he said we had two properties that were sold but man has informed us that he does not want them and they are the Carmichael property on Main Street and the Emerson Blizzard property on North Avenue. Mr. Seeley said buyer has forfeited his down payment, but everything else has been paid and all monies have been turned over to the township. Mr. Seeley said Mr. Talbot has not vacated as yet, but problem is when you do get him out, and he doesn't have anywhere to take his property, you will have to store it, and if he thinks trash is worthwhile, you'll have to store that too.

Committeeman Sutton said we need to evict Mr. Talbot, give him a specific amount of time and then give him ten days after that to get out his belongings. Mr. Sutton asked about tenant in Port Norris.

Clerk stated that Mr. Gerbereaux has vacated and lives with his mother in Mauricetown. Mr. Sutton said we need to put padlock on the doors so nobody can get in there and get hurt.

Committeeman Jamison said he would tell road supervisor to lock it up.

Clerk stated that there is one other property with occupants and that is the house that was owned by Collins, which all of her certified notices have come back unaccepted. Collins

was renting to a couple with children. They were told by Mr. Dean that they had to vacate when he posted the property. As far as we know they are still there, this is Block 33, Lot 5344, 105 Quail Road, Laurel Lake.

Mr. Seeley said they were given notice and I guess we'll have to take them to court.

Committeeman Sutton said we need to check this out.

Mayor thanked Mr. Seeley for his report and said we have several items for discussion.

Mayor said we have a letter from Georgetown Investing, they are interested in purchasing our Post Office. Decision: Mayor said he would give them a call.

Mayor said we have a letter from Cumberland County Positive Youth Development Coalition. They want the township to adopt a resolution declaring the month of June 2016 as Gun Safety and Violence Awareness Month. They also have requested to attend our January 18th, 2016 meeting to do a presentation. Decision: Mayor said to contact them and have them attend the January meeting.

Mayor said we have a letter from Union City, Hudson County, requesting Southern New Jersey Municipalities adopt a resolution urging Mayors and Committee's to provide Leadership in Ending Human Trafficking At the Local Level. Decision: Mayor Moore asked solicitor to review the information provided and put on the agenda for December.

Mayor said we have a letter from SPCA with Animal Shelter Services Contract for 2016. Decision: Mayor said to put contract on for December meeting but also put on Reorganization Meeting.

Mayor said committee has received letters from Michel Gruccio, Attorney for Unimin and US Silicia whose mining permits will expire before the land use board meets again in January. Mr. Gruccio asked to extend one permit until March and one until June 2016. Decision: Mayor and Committee approved extension until June 1st 2016 if necessary. If Land Use Board approves prior to June 1st, sand mining license will be issued as of the expiration date of the current license. This was to be put on the agenda of the regular meeting as a motion.

Mayor said on the Tower Alliance agreement it was determined by the committee that the current contract be extended and renewals of same every five years for 30 years, a monthly increase of \$423.00 and a 3% annually will be paid to Commercial Township. This was approved at the October 15, 2015 regular meeting. Contract has been sent.

Mayor said we have a letter for Sharon Porter, Commercial Township PTA, requesting donation for their Saturday with Santa on December 5th, 2015 affair. Mrs. Porter said they have an attendance of 500 participants. Decision: Mayor and committee said to put \$500 donation on the agenda of the regular meeting.

Mayor Moore said we have memo from David Dean regarding Block 36, Lot 5529. Mayor stated that Mr. Dean had spoken to him about the property and the buildings on same and it is a matter that the owner of the neighboring property said they would be willing to tear the building down, clean it up, if we turned the property over to him.

Mr. Seeley said the committee cannot do that.

Mayor Moore said what could happen if we allowed him to do that and he gets hurt, plus we would have to have a title search. Decision: Mayor said our decision is just say no and to tell Mr. Dean to send the property owner a violation notice to tear it down and if he doesn't tear it down, take the owner to court.

Committeeman Sutton said he would contact Mr. Dean.

Mayor Moore said we have items for discussion and the first one is street lights and the electric company has sent me a letter and they have fine tuned the numbers of the amount of lights that we have. He said they have also told him of some new towns that have gone into the program, Upper Pittsgrove, Waterford, Gloucester Township, Winslow Township. He said I suggested spending up to \$400,000. out of our surplus money of one point seven million and pay it back over the eight year period. We won't have to borrow the money and we will save a tremendous amount of electric on our electric lights, almost \$40,000 a year, then at the same time we could probably add another 50 lights for problem areas throughout the township. I would just like to know if we could go forward with a proposal, I'm not looking for a vote tonight but if we can continue this discussion. If you go down to Brown and Byron Street we had that light put up, where it is a LED light you can see the difference but to spend \$60,000 when we could be spending about \$17,000 a year is a big, big savings over the long haul. Mayor asked Ed Dennis, Engineer, if he had any towns or anything that you work with.

Mr. Dennis said Atlantic City.

Mayor Moore said I know Atlantic City is the big one and I think they got like between six and seven million dollars, they got a little state money to do this project.

Mr. Dennis said it is a lot different than here but they are converting a lot of lights.

Committeeman Sutton said I just don't think that we should be the first one to do it in Cumberland County or Salem County. We need for someone else to do it, that is a lot of money, it is a big ticket item.

Mayor Moore asked Committeeman Sutton if he would be willing to do a fourth of it.

Committeeman Sutton's response was no, and if you do it, do it all at once.

Committeeman Jamison said it is a lot of money, we're always crying broke and then we go out there and spend \$400,000 for one project.

Mayor Moore said it is a lot of money but we have a lot of money in surplus that the tax payers have given to the town through taxes that is sitting there and not doing anything.

Committeeman Jamison said I'll say this, as long as I have been on this committee, we've been trying to get a light over here on Cherry Street and we couldn't get that light, now up talking one light and now you're talking about spending \$400,000. to convert all of the lights and we only wanted to put up one light which was really needed for the kids who were walking down that dark road. I am surprised that something didn't happen over the years but to spend \$400,000

Mayor Moore said to put up one light was very expensive, \$800 and that is why I said with the savings we could add up to 50 lights that will take care of problem areas such as that and why not put up a LED light instead of an old type light.

Committeeman Jamison said I've been trying to get a light back there for the past ten years and was always told we don't have the money to do that, but at this present time I think it's too much money for the town to spend when we keep saying how poor we are. If you can spend \$400,000. for lights that's not showing that you are poor, that's just my opinion, if the majority says yes, then I'll not have a problem but this is just my opinion.

Committeeman Sutton said while we're talking about lighting, I was going to bring something up later but I'll bring it up now while we're talking about lighting. During my campaign, it came to my attention and I have to agree with them, they are one hundred percent right, Port Norris has got their lights, Laurel Lake got their main street lights and

Mauricetown does, the Haleyville people told me that they never get anything but how come we don't finish from the Bypass Road to the blinker light with their decorative lights and they have a good point and I think we need to look into it if we can get a grant Ed, to finish that portion. I think they well deserve it because we never give Haleyville anything anyway. I had to agree with them, it is one area that we forgot after we did them.

Mayor Moore said I don't think we forgot we just didn't have the money and nobody screamed anything load enough in Haleyville because I don't know of anyone up there that ever asked me about a light for up there. Mayor said I went door to door and no one

Committeeman Sutton said it was brought to my attention and it would be from the Bypass to the blinker light on Highland Street.

Mayor Moore said if Ed can find a grant so be it but to go out and put capital money for decorative lights when we aren't even going to take care of the lights that we have now.

Committeeman Sutton said it is something that has not been finished, it is one small area, and we should do everything in our power to finish it.

Mayor Moore said I'm going to give it some thought myself, you guys don't want to move on the street lights, so be it.

Mayor said our next item is the municipal street lights, there are 122 decorative lights and to convert one of them is \$210, I'd like to start on a program where we don't have the money to do it all but I asked the CFO to see if she could find \$10,000 in the budget within utilities and start on a section of it because obviously they are all tied into power source that we pay directly for and they are constantly going out, it is the nature of the light the ballist, they are just like any other street light and there's one or two out on Main Street now but to convert them over it is \$210 bucks and that includes the labor too and I'm just throwing out a number of \$10,000 or \$15,000 and let's start on them and phase it in slowly and convert all those lights over to LED's. He asked for the committee's thought on that?

Committeeman Sutton said I'll be in agreement with that but at that same time we're going to finish the Haleyville section.

Mayor Moore said if you can find grant money to finish it, then go to it, I'm not going to spend \$60,000 to \$80,000 for decorative street lights for Haleyville.

Committeeman Sutton said but you'll spend \$350,000

Mayor Moore said I'll spend \$350,000 because that effects every tax payer, it effects our bottom line bill in the municipal budget it would go from \$63,000 down to \$17,000 and this is numbers by the board of public utilities, this is not some salesman trying to sell something here, these are official numbers that you cannot deviate from, these are set fees.

Committeeman Sutton said we could help the tax payers by lowering their taxes with it also, it's not like we're holding it away from them.

Mayor Moore said Ron that's one of the thoughts that I had.

Mayor Moore said next item is Municipal Court, at this time we don't know if we have a judge and we won't have a prosecutor, I'd like to discuss this in executive session.

Committeeman Jamison said I don't have problem with that.

Mayor Moore said Tax Assessor, I told Mr. Jamison that I met with Jim Quinn, Commissioner in Millville and I met with Millville Tax Assessor and Municipal Clerk and I also called Pat Belmont, Administrator Cumberland County Board of Taxation. He said as you know

our tax assessor is out until December 31st. He said tax collector has brought some items that have to be done, duplicate books have to be done, change orders, farmland assessments, the county came down and took some records and we haven't heard from them since and I left a message for Pat on Friday and said we're going to move forward with this deal with Millville if you don't get back to me. Mayor said just so you know we're going to hire someone to run the office, the office duties are mandated by the state and the board of taxation so anything that happens we must have their approval on it. The lady in the county who works for the state but oversees all taxes is very comfortable with the Millville Tax Assessor and he's a very truthful guy and was here before but he's right next door to us and can give us some help but in the meantime it is a temporary thing probably. Mayor said he works for three other towns but he has already said he can do it but I have to make sure that Pat Belmont is okay with it, now she's already given me her blessing and said it was fine with her. Unfortunately Brian is on vacation and won't be back until next Thursday, but we have to get somebody in there to go over the records and doing the change orders, working with the tax duplicates and working with Pat Belmont, we just can't wing this thing for a couple of months.

Committeeman Jamison said didn't you tell me that he would be doing this on his own time.

Mayor Moore said we would be hiring him direct not through the City of Millville, when I started out I said the City of Millville and I thought that it could be a temporary thing done through his office but he said because it is only a temporary thing they would prefer that we just pay him on a temporary basis, as a fill in, and should something happen after the first of the year or whatever, we can talk about issues then, but this is for now until December 31st.

Committeeman Sutton said it will give us a chance to see if we like him.

Mayor Moore said I just want to keep the office going.

Clerk said there have been two applications for property owners within 200 feet and Patty Belmont said she could not do that and would I be willing. I said I would help but I would need to call Frank DiDomenico and see what would be required. Mr. DiDomenico said I would have to be designated as deputy assessor. Will the assessor from Millville be willing to provide the property list.

Mayor Moore said he will be willing to do anything that we ask him, yes he would do that. Mayor said he would call the assessor and see if he would be willing to do that and he would let her know.

Committeeman Sutton said he will be filling in for the same rate that we were paying?

Mayor Moore said no it will be a lot less.

Shop Stewart Clint Miller said that is in the union contract.

Mayor Moore said no this is just a temporary thing.

Mr. Miller said he is not taking her place,

Mayor Moore said no.

Mayor Moore said we already talked about we extended both sand mining permits to June 2016. He said on vacation/sick and personal days, he'd like to discuss that in executive session.

Mayor said on the Recycling Loan from CCIA. He said we need to decide if we want to accept the loan or just give it back. He said it is a no interest loan of \$90,000 and we have to pay it back over five years. He said he has been making inquiries if the recycling cans are going

to work, that we have a lot of renters in Laurel Lake who according to the trash guys don't recycle, what happens when they move out and take the can with them, we won't have the money to replace the cans.

Committeeman Sutton said then why did we go through all of this, and as far as tenants taking recycling cans, it will be up to the landlord to see that they don't take them and if they do they have to buy another one when he rents the property out again. He said the landlord is only going to let that happen to him once if he has to buy a can each time. The landlord is running a business. Mr. Sutton said we need to sit down and work on a new landlord tenant ordinance to make the landlord responsible for his rental in keeping it clean, recycle bins, has to get a dumpster when someone moves and he is cleaning the property out, no more bringing the stuff to the landfill. Mr. Sutton said I have already met with Dave Dean and told him that in 2016 I want at least five to six violators taken in to court, each court night. I intend to talk to judge that there will be no extensions, no another 30 days to comply with the cleanup.

Mayor Moore said I think maybe it is something we should just put aside and not take the loan. Mayor asked Clint Miller his opinion.

Mr. Miller said he is against it because he doesn't think the residents will participate. He said the containers will be used as storage containers, will be stolen, be a big problem.

Mayor Moore said from experience in Franklin Township and from information from City of Bridgeton, both of these areas increased tremendously in recycling, it does work and as far as trash contractor, this should make things easier than what they are doing now. Mayor said that was why I wanted to phase in the program and not do the whole township.

Committeeman Sutton said you got the \$90,000 loan, get the containers. He said I am not for buying a few and giving them out, if you're going to get them, do it for the whole township. Do it all or nothing.

Mayor asked what's the problem with just buying 200 of them and giving them out.

Committeeman Sutton said because the rest of the residents are going to be mad because they didn't get one.

Mr. Russell Stormes said your seniors are going to have a serious problem in getting these containers out to the roadside. Also the lids to these containers are going to be thrown on the ground, run over by trash truck, serious problems with it.

Mayor Moore said I think I want to table this right now and then I'll talk with Clint.

Committeeman Jamison said I agree with that.

Mrs. Carol Hickman said you people are borrowing \$90,000 to buy these containers?

Mayor said Ron suggested that we go to the Cumberland County Improvement Authority to borrow the money from them, they are not charging us interest, but we have to pay back over five years. Mayor Moore said I'll call them and tell them to hold it for now.

Mayor Moore said on the Laurel Lake Community Center when is the carpet coming.

Mr. Miller said he doesn't meet with them until Friday, the 20th. He said Mike will be starting on the construction but at this time his mother is very ill and there may be interruptions in his work schedule. I told him to start on the inside and get done whatever he can, also to get all the ADA requirements completed.

Mayor Moore said where just about finished, we have the carpet and the railings. He said can we get it open by January 1st.

Mr. Miller said absolutely, I don't see any reason why we couldn't.

Mayor Moore said we will have two ordinances for second reading and public hearing.

ORDINANCE 2015-571

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCIAL
ADOPTING A FEE FOR ALL LAND DONATIONS

ORDINANCE 2015-572

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCIAL
SETTING FEES FOR COLLECTION BY COMMERCIAL
TOWNSHIP TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE

Mayor Moore said we will have a resolution for Budget Line-Item Transfers.

RESOLUTION 2015-118
Budget Transfers

RESOLUTION 2015-119

Approving Purchase of 2009 Ford Escape In The Amount
Of \$7,700 For Office Of Emergency Management

Mayor said we have an executive session to discuss personnel, appointments
Landsale fees, medical family leave.

Mayor asked for reports and being none asked for motion to open meeting to the
public. No comments were made and a motion was made and seconded to go into executive
session.

RECONVENE

Solicitor Seeley said we approved medical leave for one of our employees, bought
property back from Steve Fleetwood which has bike path on it for amount paid \$700 and
decided to cancel landsale for January until all properties to be sold have been investigated
by Mr. Dean. Committee will appoint professionals and clerk is to advertise for prosecutor and
forester.

Mayor asked for motion to adjourn and it was so moved.

Hannah E. Nichols, Township Clerk