

Minutes of the Regular meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Commercial held on August 18, 2022, at 6:00 P.M., at the Township Hall at 1768 Main St. Port Norris, NJ

Those Present:

Mike Vizzard	Mayor
Fletcher Jamison	Deputy Mayor
Joseph Klaudi	Committeeman
Thomas Seeley	Solicitor
Heather Sparks	Township Clerk
Clint Miller	Public Works Supervisor
Nick DiCosmo	Engineer

Those Absent: Edward Dennis Engineer

Mayor Vizzard 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 Vizzard asked that attendees join him in the flag salute and the Lord's Prayer.

Mayor said that no state police were present for presentation.

Mayor asked Robert Welch if he had anything to report since he was in attendance. He did not.

Mayor moved on to approval of meeting minutes for previous meetings of July 18, 2022, and July 21, 2022. Mayor asked for a motion and second for approval.

Motion made by Committeeman Klaudi and seconded by Committeeman Jamison. Roll call, all were in favor.

Mayor asked for consideration to approve the bill list for the month of August as prepared by the Chief Financial officer.

Motion was made by Committeeman Jamison and was seconded by Committeeman Klaudi. Roll call, all were in favor.

Mayor Vizzard asked Nick DiCosmo to present the Engineers report.

1. All the closeout documents have been received and approved by the DOT for Port Norris Riverfront Roadway improvements. That final approval is for \$876 thousand and change. Pam should receive that in the coming weeks.
2. Riverfront phase III is, we are moving through the permitting process. USC has everything they need so they are reviewing their portion now. We are getting DOT a few additional requested information.
3. Reconstruction of Brown Street, contract was awarded to APS. Tentatively scheduling the pre-con for the 30th of August.

4. Survey has been completed for the reconstruction of Yock Wock and High Street. Going to get started on design shortly.
5. The Main Street survey is still pending. Nick sent updated cost breakdown to the County to work on the shared service agreement with them. Still waiting to hear back.
6. Nick is still looking into funding for the Mauricetown park to replace the bulkhead.
7. All applications for the 2023 State Aid have been submitted to the DOT. Expect to hear something by fall.
8. Inspections will be done for additional repairs requested of the gas company on Magnolia and Cherry. They posted additional escrow to cover that. We heard from them this week. They have some other work they are wrapping up in the next couple of weeks so they will probably get around to that sometime in September.
9. Nick RSVP for the MS4 webinar

Mayor Vizzard had an update on the search for funding of the Mauricetown park repairs. Jerry Velazquez of the Authority got a hold of Tammy Wetzel from Triad. They were looking into Historic resources for the bulkhead because it is a historic area, but she replied saying that it is unlikely that historic resources can be used for the bulkhead but depending on the reason for the bulkhead improvements, there may be other funding, DCA, small communities' grants, FEMA mitigation grants, NJ OEM has hazard mitigation grants. \$200 million dollars is going to be released sometime in the fall for the OEM hazard mitigation grant.

Robert Welch spoke saying that the Hazard Mitigation plan we have been working on was just approved by the state, so it is going to come down to the municipalities to approve and put out a resolution. Once I get that information, I'll get it to you ASAP.

Mayor Vizzard said it was left with Jerry Velazquez to get a hold of Tammy at Triad to discuss what exactly will be involved with the repairs.

Mayor went over correspondence --

1. Correspondence from Cindy Tawes who was approached by the Cumberland County Library about the installation of a "Book Locker". The locker would be free of charge to the township and would be the responsibility of the County. Cindy would like to have the locker placed at the Senior Center as there isn't the room for it at the library. The Township Committee had no problem allowing.
2. Correspondence from Eduard Gilbert Renart. At last month's meeting Mr. Renart requested the purchase of several tax liens for properties with trailers. Mr. Renart has submitted another list with two properties. Only one of the properties listed would be eligible for lien purchase. The tax lien for purchase would be on property at 7061 Charles Place, Laurel Lake. The Township Committee will allow. Motion was made to accept by Committeeman Jamison and seconded by Committeeman Klaudi.

3. Correspondence from Natalya. Referred to us by Mr. Eduard Renart, also for the purchase of tax liens for property with mobile homes. 10 Properties were identified in the request. In review, appears only 6 may qualify for tax lien purchase. Mayor said he would like to deny. He would consider one lien, same as they did with Mr. Renart. Committeeman Klaudi agreed. Clerk stated she would notify her to pick one property. A motion was made by Committeeman Klaudi and seconded by Committeeman Jamison to deny list of 10. Will only accept one.
4. Correspondence from Gerald Hall. Would like to purchase township owned adjoining properties. Properties of interest are 6300 & 6306 Magnolia Dr. Block 48, lots 6137 and 6139. Mr. Hall is offering \$2,000 for the purchase of both lots. Lots combined would be 100 X 100. If accepted, sale would be in October. Committeeman Jamison made a motion to accept the offer and was seconded by Committeeman Klaudi.
5. Correspondence from Rev. Anthony Elliot of the Apostolic Lighthouse Church on Battle Lane. He is interested in the purchase of two township owned property at 227 and 235 Fern Rd. Mr. Elliott is offering \$400.00 for each lot. Both lots combined would be 120 X 100 in size. If accepted, the sale would be in October. Solicitor Seeley asked if these are also adjoining properties. Clerk stated the properties do not adjoin the church property he currently has but the two lots he wants to buy are adjoining each other and together make a buildable lot. Mayor questioned if sold to the church, would it be tax exempt. Solicitor Seeley said it would not be taxable. Mayor asked if we know why he wants to buy it. Solicitor Seeley suggested getting more information on his intentions. Committeeman Klaudi said the letter indicates they intend to buy the whole block. The Committee decided to table and ask Mr. Elliot to attend the next meeting so they get more information.
6. Correspondence from Beverly Stokes. Would like to purchase township property at 236 Iris Rd a 60 X 100 lot. Ms. Stokes owns property on both sides of this vacant township property. Ms. Stokes is offering \$750.00. Mayor suggested they accept. Motion was made by Committeeman Jamison and seconded by Committeeman Klaudi to accept.

Resolutions –

Resolution 2022-82
Resolution for Lease Agreement with Kyocera for printer/copier

WHEREAS, the lease agreement with Ricoh, Inc./De Lage Landen, Inc. is expiring on 12/31/2022 for the (RICOH) printer/copier.

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Township of Commercial to enter into a new lease agreement for a printer/copier.

WHEREAS, after soliciting other quotes it has been determined that the best option as to cost and requirements is with Kyocera. (Attached to this resolution is a comparison of a new lease with Ricoh, Inc., and with Kyocera.)

WHEREAS the terms of the lease agreement with Kyocera are as follows:

- Monthly lease price: \$219.00
- Cost per copy rate: \$0.008 Black & White and \$0.035 Medium Color and 0.065 High Color
- Cash rebate: \$1,063.12
- 60-month operating lease
- Includes all service calls, on-site training, and all supplies, except for, staples and copy paper.

WHEREAS the Kyocera proposal states that it will buy out the old lease with Ricoh, Inc./De Lage Landen, Inc. for the remainder of 2022 that will allow the Township of Commercial to enter into a new lease agreement with Kyocera to be effective 9/1/2022.

WHEREAS the current printer/copier lease is \$265.78 monthly. The funds for a copier lease for the remainder of 2022 were previously budgeted in the Current Fund under:

Service Contracts Account # 2-01-20-140-059 Current Balance in account: 8,405.00

THEREFORE, the Chief Financial Officer is Certifying that the funds are available to enter into a new printer/copier lease agreement to be effective 9/1/2022 with Kyocera.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCIAL COMMITTEE, COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND, NEW JERSEY, as follows:

1. That entry into a contract between the Township of Commercial and Kyocera, Inc. is hereby approved and effective 9/1/2022.
2. That this resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage and shall continue in full force and effect until modified, revoked, or replaced.

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 2022-83
TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCIAL
CUMBERLAND COUNTY**

**RESOLUTION AWARDING A CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF ONE (1) NEW
2022 INTERNATIONAL CV515 CAB AND CHASSIS
FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

WHEREAS the Township of Commercial participates in the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing System Contract #081716-NVS with Hunter Truck Sales & Service for the purchase of one (1) new 2022 International CV515 cab & chassis; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Commercial is permitted to participate in national cooperative purchasing agreements under the authority of N.J.S.A. 52:34-6.2(b)(3); and

WHEREAS Hunter Truck Sales & Service is an authorized dealer of the International Chassis; and

WHEREAS total cost delivered for the one (1) new 2022 International CV515 Cab and Chassis is \$111,496.50.

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that funds in the amount of \$95,099.00 are available in the 2022 Capital Budget line item #C-04-55-944-000, entitled Bond Ord. 2020-603 Wheel Loader and (2) Dump Trucks and \$21,950.00 is available in Trust Account for Storm Recovery.

Account #:	C-04-55-944-000	
Account Name:	Bond Ord.2020-603	
Current Balance in Account:	\$95,099.00	
Amount Certified:		\$95,099.00
Remaining Balance in Account:	-0-	
Account Name:	Storm Recovery Trust	
Current Balance in Account:	\$21,950.00	
Amount Certified:		\$16,397.50
Remaining Balance in Account:	\$5,552.50	
Total Amount Certified:		\$111,496.50

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Commercial, County of Cumberland, State of New Jersey that Hunter Truck Sales & Service of 2320 High Hill Road, Logan Township, N.J. is hereby awarded the contract for the purchase of one (1) new 2022 International CV515 Cab and Chassis.

**Commercial Township
Resolution 2022-84**

Resolution Opposing the Proposed Increases to the State Health Benefits Program

WHEREAS, the State Health Benefits Program (SHBP), governed by N.J.S.A. 52:14-17.25 et seq., offers medical, prescription drug, and dental coverage to qualified State and participating local government public employees, retirees, and eligible dependents; and

WHEREAS, all SHBP plans are self-funded meaning that the money paid out for benefits comes directly from a SHBP fund supplied by the State, participating local employers, and member premiums; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Pensions and Benefits is responsible for the daily administrative activities of the SHBP, the State Health Benefits Commission is the executive organization responsible for overseeing the SHBP; and

WHEREAS, the State Health Benefits Commission, comprised of state officials and union representatives, annually consider the calendar year premium levels for the Local Government Employer Group of the SHBP based on recommendations found in the Rate Setting Recommendation Analysis of the Local Government Employee Group; and

WHEREAS, the preliminary rate increase for the 2023 Local Government Employer Group is 22.8%, which includes a 21.6% increase for Active, a 13% increase in Early Retiree, and a 0.7% increase for Medicare Retiree; and

WHEREAS, subsequent news accounts has Department of Treasury noting “rates for active members and early retirees would likely be increase between 12-20% across the various plans for the upcoming year”; and

WHEREAS, such proposed exorbitant rate increases will fall upon the local property taxpayer along with the local public employees at a time where there is record inflation, and

WHEREAS, the proposed premium increase for most active employees will take thousands more out of their paychecks annually and lead to huge costs for local governments that will translate into higher property tax bills for struggling families; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the governing body of the Township of Commercial in the county of Cumberland call up the State Health Benefit Commission to reconsider the rate increase and strike a rate increase that is appropriate in the current economic conditions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOVLED, that the governing body of the Township of Commercial in the county of Cumberland urge the legislature to adopt legislation expanding the composition of the State Health Benefits Commission to include representatives from both municipal and county government management; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Murphy, State Treasurer Muoio, Senate President Scutari, Assembly Speaker Coughlin, Senator Testa, Assemblyman Simonsen, and New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

**RESOLUTION 2022-85
AUTHORIZE ELECTRONIC TAX SALE**

WHEREAS, NJSA 54: 5-19.1 authorizes electronic tax sale pursuant to rules and regulations to be promulgated by the Director of the Division of Governmental Services.

WHEREAS, the Director of the Division of Local Governmental Services has approved NJ Tax Lien Investors/Real Auction.com to conduct electronic tax sales, and

WHEREAS, an electronic tax sale is innovative and provides a greater pool of potential lien buyers, thus creating the environment for a more complete tax sale.

WHEREAS, the Township of Commercial wishes to participate in an electronic tax sale.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the governing body of the Township of Commercial, New Jersey, that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to participate in an electronic tax sale and submit the same to the Director of Local Governmental Services if necessary.

**RESOLUTION 2022-86
AUTHORIZING THE CANCELLATION OR REFUND OF PROPERTY TAXES TO
APPROVAL OF 100% DISABLE VETERAN’S APPLICATION**

WHEREAS, on July 5, 2022, a claim for Property Tax Exemption on dwelling house of Disabled Veteran or surviving spouse, civil union partner/surviving domestic partner of disabled veteran or serviceperson was filed, along with all supporting documentation on behalf of Russell J. Stormes for Block 78, Lot 1575 located at 3860 Battle Lane and,

WHEREAS, after proper review of the application and all supporting documentation by the Tax Assessor, it was determined that Mr. Stormes met all requirements to receive 100% permanently disabled veteran benefit pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54-4-3.30 et seq. (Supporting exemption approval attached) and approved the same on July 5, 2022. Said exemption approval was retroactive to March 9, 2022, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Tax Collector is authorized to cancel taxes for the last half of 2022 in the amount of \$1,720.46 and the first half of 2023 in the amount of \$1,693.73. It is authorized to refund the amount of \$1,000.32 which represents an overpayment of the pro-rated amount of 2022 paid by the mortgage company.

**RESOLUTION 2022-87
APPROVAL TO REMOVE ERRONEOUS IMPROVEMENT VALUE**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 54:4-9-91.01 requires the Tax Collector to report any property taxes she believes are uncollectable, and

WHEREAS, the Tax Assessor reported an erroneous assessment was placed upon property known as Block 47, Lot 6056, assessed to Beverly Stokes, in the amount of \$50,700 (\$20,600 land and \$30,100 improvement) for the tax year 2022. And

WHEREAS, the Tax Assessor has indicated that a demolition of the improvement on this parcel was concluded in 2021 and that the improvement value of \$30,100 was not removed along with the land value dropping to \$11,700 from the assessment and MOD IV for 2022, and

WHEREAS, the Tax Assessor reports the correct assessment for 2022 is \$11,700, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of Commercial Township,

1. That the governing body acknowledges the Tax Collector's report of uncollectable.
2. That the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to cancel the 2022 tax in the amount of \$1,140.34 and the 2023 preliminary tax in the amount of \$570.19 due to the erroneous assessment.
3. That \$383.23 which represents an overpayment made by Ms. Stokes for 2022 taxes be refunded or credited to future quarters.

**RESOLUTION 2022-88
AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF OVERPAYMENT TO OTHER TAX YEARS OR
REFUND OF OVERPAYMENT TO OWNER, PAYER OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVE**

WHEREAS, it was discovered after downloading the 2022 MOD IV, receiving a County Board of Taxation appeal judgement and/or during the preparation of the tax bills that there were several overpayments existing on numerous line items. The overpayments were created due to reduction in the tax assessments, the recent Homestead Credit Benefit, combining of lots, change in lot number, removal of assessment, approved deductions, duplicate payment or pursuant to a successful appeal filed with the County Board of Taxation lowering said assessments, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to statute, said overpayments will need to be refunded to the owner, person who made payment or their representative. With said overpayments exceeding \$10.00, approval from the Commercial Township Committee is required before action can be taken, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Leslie Kraus, Tax Collector for Commercial Township is authorized to submit a voucher for refund of existing overpayments along with interest pursuant to statute, when required, as listed below. It is further requested that the Chief Financial Officer be authorized to refund as indicated by voucher.

<u>Block</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Reason</u>
48	6082	Syntax Services. LLC	2022	\$48.89	Refund Overpayment Due to Appeal
36	5498	Susan McIwee	2022	\$72.03	Refund-Corelogic 100% exempt vet
36	5501	Susan McIwee	2021-2022	\$2,332.40	Refund Corelogic 100% exempt vet Error- Should have not been billed
237	10	Federal National Mortgage	2021	\$2,282.88	Cancel Credit- Unable to locate payer to refund.

**TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCIAL
RESOLUTION 2022-89
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
CONTRACT WITHOUT COMPETITIVE BIDDING TO GENERAL CODE LLC TO PROVIDE
CODE PUBLISHING AND CODIFICATION SERVICES FOR COMMERCIAL TOWNSHIP**

WHEREAS, there exists a need for professional codification services to prepare and publish the Code of the Township of Commercial;

WHEREAS, the Township of Commercial has previously contracted with General Code LLC in 2006 for the codification services to prepare and publish the Code of the Township of Commercial;

WHEREAS, the Township of Commercial and General Code LLC 2006 contract has been updated and requires authorization of a new 2022 contract by the Mayor and Township Committee to close the outstanding amount of \$7,200. and to include additional work to restart the project and interpolate ordinances through Ordinance No. 2022-612, adopted May 19, 2022.

WHEREAS, General Code LLC has provided a contract for the Codification Services to prepare and publish the Code of the Township of Commercial (see Exhibit A); and

WHEREAS, the Township wishes to retain General Code LLC to perform such services; and

WHEREAS, the maximum amount for services under the contract shall not exceed \$17,045 without further approval by the Township Committee; and

WHEREAS, this contract is intended to be awarded as a “non-fair and open contract” pursuant to and in accordance with the Local Unit Pay-to-Play Law;

WHEREAS, funds are available for this purpose; and

Account # 2-01-20-120-029	\$21,500
2006 Project Completion	\$ 1,257
2007-2022	\$ 8,588
Remainder of 2006 Contract	\$ 7,200
Remaining Balance in Account	\$ 4,455

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. §40A:11-1 et seq.) requires that the Resolution authorizing the award of contracts for "Professional Services" without competitive bids be available for public inspection.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Commercial, in the County of Cumberland, and State of New Jersey, as follows:

Section 1. The contract with General Code LLC is awarded without competitive bidding as a "Professional Service" in accordance with N.J.S.A. §40A:11-5(1)(x) of the Local Public Contracts Law because the contract is for services performed by a company authorized by law to practice a recognized profession that is regulated by law.

Section 2. General Code LLC shall provide professional publishing and codification services to the Township as set forth in the proposal of August 16, 2022 (Exhibit A).

Section 3. A notice of this action shall be published as required by law.

Section 4. A copy of this Resolution shall be provided to the Chief Financial Officer and to General Code LLC for their information.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

**RESOLUTION 2022-90
Executive Session**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee to go into executive session

Immediately following the regular meeting to discuss personnel.

**RESOLUTION 2022- 91
Hiring of Shane Berry as Laborer C In
Public Works Department**

WHEREAS, a vacancy has occurred in the Public Works Department for a full time position of Laborer C; and

WHEREAS, position was advertised, applications taken, and interviews held.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Commercial that Shane Berry of Port Norris, New Jersey, was hired to fill the full time Laborer C Position on August 15, 2022, at an hourly rate of \$20.00, 40 Hours Per Week.

RESOLUTION 2022-92
Approving A Solicitor's Permit For Holly Arthur To
Sell Buddy Rows BBQ & Mickey D's Soul Food from Food Truck

WHEREAS, Holly Arthur, 1598 North Avenue, Port Norris, NJ has filed an application with the Township Committee for a solicitor's permit: and

WHEREAS, Ms. Arthur will offer Buddy Row's BBQ and Mickey D's Soul Food products from food truck throughout Commercial Township streets; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Commercial that a Solicitors Permit will be issued to Ms. Holly Arthur, 1598 North Avenue, Port Norris, NJ for a period of 90 days, with option to renew license for an additional 90 days, in order to sell Buddy Row's BBQ and Mickey D's Soul Food to residents of Commercial Township.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that permit will be for 90 days, commencing August 18, 2022, to November 16, 2022.

RESOLUTION 2022-93
AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF
ELECTRONIC SIGN FOR THE TOWNSHIP HALL

WHEREAS, The Township Committee of Commercial Township would like to upgrade the Township Hall sign to an electronic sign and

WHEREAS, quotes were solicited for the replacement sign by KC Signs for \$22,995.00, Stewart Signs for \$21,084.00, Speed Pro for \$21,750.00, and Archer Awnings & Signs for \$28,000.00.

WHEREAS, Speed Pro's quote came in as the second lowest quote but is able to offer a shorter lead time for delivery and is offering a better product, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that Speed Pro be awarded the contract for a new electronic sign to be placed at the Township Hall.

RESOLUTION 2022-94
ENDORING CHAMBER BY THE BAY FIREWORKS SHOW
OCTOBER 1, 2022, COMMUNITY DAY

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Commercial that the committee endorses a Chamber by the Bay Fireworks Show on October 1, 2022, for the Commercial Township Community Day; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that funding for the fireworks show will come from donations collected by the Chamber by the Bay in the amount of \$3,000.

CERTIFICATION

I, Heather Sparks, Clerk of the Township of Commercial hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of a Resolutions adopted by the committee at their regular township meeting held on August 18, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. at the Township Hall, 1768 Main Street, Port Norris, NJ

Heather Sparks, Township Clerk

Mayor asked for a motion to approve resolutions 2022-82 thru 2022-94. A motion was made by committeeman Klaudi and seconded by committeeman Jamison. Roll call, all were in favor.

Reports of officials –

Committeeman Jamison reported the public works department has been working on Pauly's Park and the park in Laurel Lake. I appreciate all that they do and accomplish around here.

Committeeman Klaudi had nothing to report.

Mayor Vizzard wanted to acknowledge the public works department. They have taken down several buildings and they have done a great job. There are three more buildings in Laurel Lake that we plan to remove and a couple down here in Port Norris. Kudos to the road department.

Mayor asked for a motion to open the meeting to the public. Committeeman Jamison made the motion and was seconded by Committeeman Klaudi.

Carol Lawson, 2727 Lakeshore Dr. - First wanted to start by thanking the committee for getting some of the abandon buildings knocked down. Stated that Laurel Lake could be a beautiful area if it wasn't for all the rift raft. She has never done this before going to a town council, but she was told this would be her last resort. She doesn't know what else to do. This all started back in 2018. Because of the pandemic and everyone's hands are tied and I'm being sent all around. There is a property next to her property. Since 2018, the people have moved out but before they left, they smashed every window in the house, ripped the siding off, they totally destroyed the house. Trash piled fence high all the way around the property and tires. They were renters. Solicitor Seeley said so there is an owner that is still responsible. Ms. Lawson said she assumes so, but he doesn't live in this state and is hard to get a hold of. The property in question is 2705 Lakeshore Drive, it adjoins the back of her property. Ms. Lawson had pictures that were presented to the committee. Ms. Lawson believes the house was condemned. The electric has been ripped off the meter all the way out to the pole.

Solicitor Seeley asked who condemned it.

Ms. Lawson said the township did. A long time ago. Ms. Lawson continues by saying there is a travel trailer on the property now. Ms. Lawson says she spend hundreds and hundreds of dollars on trying to keep the bugs under control. The bugs are coming from that property. There is now electricity or running water on that property. From what I was told, this was supposed to be a temporary situation. When this woman moved there, she said the owner of the property, Craig Bessinger is renting to her. The trailer that is covered in tarps, she is living in that and is paying Craig Bessinger rent.

Clerk indicated she thought Steve had called the Health Department and they said there was nothing they could do.

Solicitor Seeley asked if her property adjoins this property, Ms. Lawson said it does.

Mayor asked the woman's name.

Ms. Lawson said she had no idea; she doesn't want anything to do with her. She tried to contact Craig Bessinger; you can't get him to come here to do anything. She has tried to talk to him.

Mayor Vizzard said if the township condemned this two years ago why can't code enforcement get him out of there?

Solicitor Seeley said he can.

Ms. Lawson said he is renting to her and making money.

Mayor said I don't care, she must leave.

Solicitor Seeley said we have to have would need to have a hearing or pass a resolution to have a condemnation hearing.

Mayor Vizzard wants to know why this wasn't done already.

Ms. Lawson said will the trailer or the house be condemned? Do you have to condemn the trailer to get her out of there? It's a travel trailer, the kind you go camping with.

Mayor Vizzard said you not supposed to be living in that anyway.

Ms. Lawson asked if the taxes were paid and asked if she could pay them. I see all these people buying properties on tax liens.

Solicitor Seeley said he can check to see if it on the foreclosure list. I know there is a lot of problems with these properties but each one that you tear down, it cost a lot of money.

Mayor Vizzard said we wouldn't be able to tear it down if we don't own it. If we foreclose on it and we take possession of the property, then we could do what we need to with it. It could take a year or two for that to happen.

Ms. Lawson said but, in the meantime, what can be done? Anything? Because I have already been dealing with this for years.

Mayor said we are going to try to address it.

Solicitor Seeley said you have to understand there are multiple properties in Laurel Lake like that. For the township to do all of this at once, it would be such a financial burden

Mayor Vizzard said with that being said we aren't saying we won't do anything. We will get a hold of Steve and have him go out there.

Ms. Lawson said if there are taxes owned, she will pay them and but her own money in to have it demolished.

Solicitor Seeley said it would still take you two years before you could own the property and foreclose.

It is the mayor's top priority to deal with the squatters, the derelict housing and I am looking at it ever day at every angle as to how we can deal with it.

Ms. Lawson said I don't know if she is a squatter or if she is paying rent. She has told another lady living next door that she pays rent to live there. I don't know how you pay rent to live somewhere that doesn't have electricity, no running water, no bathroom. I didn't think she would make through the winter, but she survived, and I don't think she is going anywhere.

Solicitor Seeley said the mayor has made it his absolute priority.

Ms. Lawson said I just hope something will be done, get it cleaned up or something, I can't live like this. At one point I looked to sell but anyone that was interested in my property, and they look over there and want to know what is going on.

Solicitor Seeley said If I want to keep my job, I have to figure out how to fix this problem.

Joann Wiederhold, 102 Olive Rd. - She is also familiar with the property being discussed. I live a couple blocks away. I contacted Steve over two years ago about this property. They were burning leaves to stay warm, no bathing facilities or nothing and it smells.

Mayor asked has she been living there for two years.

Mrs. Wiederhold said Steve told her the committee was aware of it and that letters had been sent to the owner with no response. That you guys are taking her to court. This is what Steve told her personally.

Mayor Vizzard and Committeeman Klaudi agreed they were going to have to speak to Steve. Committeeman Klaudi said he would do it first thing in the morning.

Ms. Lawson said Steve told her that Mr. Bessinger keeps have court postponed for health issues. Ms. Lawson said the lady living next to her used to have a house in Port Norris and she had a house fire. Then she moved to Laurel Lake next to her, she is also renting from Craig Bessinger. She told her that within a month of the fire, she was being sent letters from the township saying we are going to start fining you per day. Can't you do that? Start fining him?

Mayor Vizzard said I believe you have to have issued citations; I believe Steve has done that, then it goes to court, then the judge fines him, not us.

Solicitor Seeley said that what he is saying is that if he keeps postponing it, that is what is postponing the fines.

Ms. Lawson said It's also postponing cleaning the place too.

Member of the public spoke out saying that the taxes are paid.

Clerk responded by saying there is a Municipal lien, and the taxes are not paid.

Ms. Lawson asked if she buys the lien, can she buy the property.

Solicitor said no, it would take you two years to do a personal foreclosure.

Member of the public asked if the camper can be taken out of there.

Mayor Vizzard said the township can't do it but it is not supposed to be there so we can push to have it removed.

Solicitor Seeley said, again, if he's not showing up for court, the Judge could order all this stuff but if they keep granting him postponements, then without a court order, the township can't do anything.

Ms. Lawson said can't you talk to the judge and ask him to stop postponing it?

Mayor said we will talk to Steve about doing that.

Ms. Lawson suggested maybe she could send a letter to the Judge.

Mayor said any help we can get would be great.

Ms. Lawson said I was told you guys are my last resort. I don't want to leave here empty handed.

Mayor said I will promise you it will get addressed. I can't promise you how far it will go but we are going to do something.

Robert Welch spoke wanted to make a recommendation. If you see them burning, immediately call the 911. It is illegal to burn anything in the Lake without a permit from the state fire service. By calling you get the fire company and the state police involved which puts more pressure on that person at that residence because if they can't burn it will make it harder for them to live there.

Solicitor Seeley said they know they aren't living there legally.

Ms. Lawson said the last thing I want to mention is there are 7 dogs there.

Mayor asked if animal control was called.

Ms. Lawson said its probably the only ones I haven't called because that was the least of my worries.

Someone from the audience said they would call.

Ms. Lawson thanked the Committee.

Warren Wiederhold, 102 Olive Rd. – Mr. Allen is still repairing tri-axle dumps, tractors, everything on his property.

Solicitor asked for the address. Mr. Wiederhold said 129 Palm. His name is Ed Allen.

Mr. Wiederhold said he has spoken to the zoning officer since 2019 about this and we have gone nowhere.

Solicitor Seely asked if anyone came out.

Mr. Wiederhold said he just tells me he will take care of it. I had pictures in my phone from 2019 to 2021, he didn't want to look at them. Mr. Wiederhold continued to describe some of the activity on the property describing auto and equipment repair shop. No garage just out in the open. There is no accountability as far as him coming back to check on properties.

Solicitor asked Mr. Wiederhold if he knows Mr. Allen. Mr. Wiederhold said oh yes, remember the bamboo? I brought that up to the zoning guy too. It's in his front yard and that's not bothering me, but it will eventually end up in your road.

Mr. Wiederhold said when I come in to pay taxes, I stop in and see him and tell him and he'll say oh, it wasn't resolved? I tell him No! nothing is being done.

Committeeman Klaudi said we will talk to him and have him write some citations.

Mr. Wiederhold said If you can't do anything, I need someone to tell me because then I'm going to hit it from another angle. The trucks are overweight. Battle Lane is a 44 hundred lb. weight limit road.

Mr. Wiederhold spoke of a previous incident where Mr. Allen's shed blew over and oil spilled on the ground. He called the health department, but they said it was antifreeze. He has numerous sheds on the property and then just put a deck on the front.

Mayor wanted to confirm with the clerk that the properties there are not to have businesses. Clerk said they are not.

Mr. Wiederhold said his business is a mobile repair business.

Committeeman Klaudi said we will get Steve out there and have him issue citations and keep the pressure on him.

Mayor said we will do what we can.

Genevieve Lutz, 2309 Lakeshore Dr. — She is also having a problem with the same person. He came into her yard and put a fence up. He said it was his ground. I spent \$800 for an assessor, and he put that fence in my yard. The assessor said he was going to send him a letter this week.

Mayor said he shouldn't have put a fence up without a zoning permit.

R. Rhubart, 6823 Brown St. and Rita Hoffman of 2406 High St.-

Ms. Rhubart asked first, what is going on with animal control? She called because the Pierce house, he died, she went into a nursing home and the house was sold. 50 to 70 cats were left behind.

Rita Hoffman said they have dwindled down some because they have all gone through the area.

Ms. Rhubart said I have dealt with these cats for 30 some years. When I do yard work I wear gloves, I change as soon as I come in and I felt bad because they were old people and I dealt with it. Now they are gone, and these cats are everywhere. She calls animal control, and she tells her to trap them, then take them in her vehicle and take them to Vineland. Ms. Rhubart said she told animal control that is their job, and she is not touching these cats that don't have any shots, some of them have puss coming out of their face.

Rita Hoffman said she has been working with them, but they will only come on Friday to pick them up, 3 cats at a time. She has been feeding them in their zone to try to keep them in that area.

Solicitor asked if you stop feeding them, will they just go.

Mrs. Hoffman said no then they end up into everyone's trash.

Mayor gave a quick synopsis of what is going on with animal control. Basically, the state police have taken over those duties. Animal control is upset about that. Citations have to come from the state police. State police really don't want anything to do with this either. Animal control feels if they sit back and do nothing that eventually it will turn around and come back to them. And actually, they don't get paid to take the cats to the SPCA.

R. Rhubart said then what do they get paid to do?

Mayor said if there is a sick animal or something, they get paid to handle that. Mayor asked clerk if we recently received a bill from the animal shelter.

Clerk didn't know when the last bill came in.

Ms. Rhubart said so they charge you for each cat that is taken up there?

Mayor said they get paid \$1,200 a month to be animal control but they are limited as to what they can do.

Rita Hoffman said so the 6 cats that I have already collected, they are charging you for.

Mayor said yes. But just keep doing what you are doing

Clerk asked if the cats will be released back into the area after they are fixed.

Mrs. Hoffman said no they were not getting fixed, and they are going. But you can't do this in 90 degrees. It is going to take a long time. Now the property has been sold.

Clerk asked if anyone has moved in there.

Ms. Rhubart said they come there and take stuff out and put it in a pile in the yard. Not in bags, in the driveway. All the years living there, I never saw lights in the house. Now its lite up like a Christmas tree but they are not there, they are from New York.

Mayor said next time call the state police and ask for the HELO. The HELO officer is the one in charge of the animals.

Mrs. Hoffman said then there is the Cobb store and house next door. As she was feeding them, and she spoke to committeeman Jamison about this before, it was boarded up but now the boards are gone and I don't know if kids are going in there or what is happening. The public works to mow around it so at least now we can see what's going on.

R. Rhubart said so this is a township property since 2017. What is going to happen now.

Mayor Vizzard said it's coming down.

R. Rhubart said and the store?

Mayor said yes.

Committeeman Jamison said Mrs. Hoffman has 3 traps, can you get 3 traps?

Ms. Rhubart said no I'm not touching those cats.

Committeeman Jamison was suggesting if there were more traps, maybe animal control can take all the cats trapped and not just 3.

Mr. Rhubart said there is another neighbor on Pearl St. that is also feeding these cats.

Mrs. Hoffman said she told animal control, and they are aware of a feeder on Pearl.

Ms. Rhubart said none of these cats are fixed and they are all nasty looking. A lot of kittens now.

Committeeman Klaudi said he has 4 traps he can loan to them for this situation.

Mrs. Hoffman accepted that offer and asked if he could drop them off.

Ms. Rhubart said she had one more thing. The school. She understands the township doesn't have anything to do with the school, it's the school board but if that becomes a facility to sell marijuana, do you have guidelines you are going to set a head of time?

Mayor said there will be guidelines, but I do not believe it is going to be anything that has to do with marijuana.

Ms. Rhubart heard from the school board that this guy has big bucks and that he will get it.

Solicitor said what ever they do there, it will be under a contract.

Mrs. Hoffman said I was told it would get fenced in but that's an eyesore right in the middle of town.

Solicitor Seeley said everything will be negotiated and spelled out IF it even happens.

Ms. Rhubart said don't get me wrong, I hate to see empty buildings especially that because its historic. I would like to see senior housing.

Mayor said because it is historical, I really don't know what is allowed there.

Mayor asked if there was anyone else.

Woman from the public asked if she needs animal control should she call the state police.

Mayor said I tell people to call both.

Ms. Lawson said with all these properties that you're taking over and foreclosing on, and all this property you have. We have a lot of kids in Laurel Lake that have no where to go and nothing to do. That's why they are breaking into houses, starting fires, smashing windows. Anyone ever think of a community center?

Someone from the audience said Laurel Lake does have a community center.

Ms. Lawson said she did not know about it and that people that she has talked to aren't aware of it either.

Mr. Wiederhold said with the renters, they rent to people coming into Laurel Lake. Are they given any sort of notice, when trash pick up is, when recycle is picked up.

Solicitor Seeley said if we know they are renting. We have registered renters then there are sneaky renters.

Mayor said yes, when they register, they are given pamphlets, letting them know when dump day is and what the requirements are, if they are registered.

Mr. Wiederhold said too many were bought for cash and turned into flip homes.

Mayor said we have been discussing some changes for landlords, so we are going to work on that.

Solicitor Seeley said unfortunately, Laurel Lake is one of the poorest towns in the County and the State.

With no one else from the public, the mayor asked for a motion to close the meeting to the public. Motion was made by Committeeman Klaudi and seconded by Committeeman Jamison.

Mayor said additional considerations --

Mayor asked Solicitor if now would be good to go into executive session.

Solicitor Seeley said yes, we can do that and asked the public to leave until the meeting is re-opened.

A motion was made by Committeeman Klaudi to reopen the meeting and was seconded by Committeeman Jamison.

For the Record, Solicitor Seeley announced that the executive session was to discuss the slight increase in pay for the electrical inspector for the township to be effective in 2023.

Mayor Vizzard asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by committeeman Klaudi and seconded by committeeman Jamison.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Sparks, Township Clerk