

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Commercial,  
Held on April 18, 2024, at 6:00 P.M., at the Township Hall at 1768 Main Street, Port Norris, NJ.

Those Present:

Ronald Sutton Sr.	Mayor
Joe Klaudi	Deputy Mayor
Mike Vizzard	Committeeman
Heather Miller	Township Clerk
Thomas Seeley	Solicitor
Clint Miller	Public Works Supervisor

Absent:

Nick DiCosmo	Engineer
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Mayor Sutton 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 compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act.

Mayor Sutton asked the attendees to join him in the Flag Salute and Lords Prayer.

Mayor Sutton asked for the Officials Report from the State Police.

The State Police-

- Doesn't have a whole lot to report, but we are cleaning things up in the Lake.
- We have a lot of documentation with all the Animal Controls to make them do what they are tasked to do since we are all paying for it.
- There will be another HELO Trooper set up in Bridgeton that will help Officer Shropshire with the animal cases. Officer Shropshire will still be at the Port Norris barracks.
- The ARRIVE Program deals with assisting people with more of an altered state of mind and have two troopers going to training for it this week.

Mayor Sutton asked if there was anyone from the public that had questions for the State Trooper.

Robert Welch – I do have one question for you, for Thursday night and Friday morning, I had to close the causeway down, I had contacted the barracks and they said yes we are sending people out to close it down. I sat there for 45 minutes until the County Road department got there and I did not see any State Police there to assist me with that.

State Trooper- I'll find out why.

Robert Welch- Thank you sir.

Mayor Sutton thanked the State Trooper for his time.

Mayor Sutton called on Robert Welch, Township OEM, for his report.

Robert Welch, Township OEM-

- First thing, we have a meeting this week with the county and the state. The state has contacted a company IEM that works with all municipalities to update their EOPs. This company will update the language and improve the emergency operation plans.
- The Bayshore Council has a meeting for next week on Wednesday at 5:00 P.M.

Mayor Sutton approves the minutes for the following minutes.

- Agenda meeting, March 18, 2024
- Regular meeting, March 21, 2024
- Special meeting, March 14, 2024
- Special BRIC meeting, April 1, 2024, 2pm.
- Special meeting, April 1, 2024, 4pm.

Mayor asked for a motion to approve. Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Klaudi and seconded by Committeeman Vizzard. Roll call vote, all were in.

Mayor Sutton asked the committee for consideration of the bill list for the month of March as prepared by the Chief Financial Officer. Mayor Sutton asked for a motion to approve. Motion was made by Committeeman Vizzard and seconded by Deputy Mayor Klaudi. Roll call vote, all were in.

Mayor Sutton moved on the Engineers Report.

Engineer Nick DiCosmo was not in attendance but gave the Committee a report in his absence.

Mayor Sutton reviewed the Correspondence.

1. Received a notice through PMRS that the Township was awarded \$1,000,000.00 for the 2024 Local Freight Impact Fund for the re-paving of the remaining portion of Main Street from Strawberry Avenue to the township border.
2. Received notice through PMRS that the Township was awarded \$475,000.00 for roadway drainage improvements for Milbourne and Dennis Lane.
3. Received a letter for appreciation from Shane Godshall of the American Littoral Society for assistance provided by the Commercial Township Public Works Department.
4. Correspondence from Giulia Schiavoni of Beril, LLC requesting lien assignment for all 4 properties.
  - Block 100, lot 8741, Known as 7501 Doris Drive.
  - Block 102, lot 10967, Known as 551 Mistle Road.
  - Block 115, lot 6893, Known as 334 Ridge Road.
  - Block 122, lot 9423, Known as 439 Palm Road.

Mayor Sutton asked the committee for a motion to approve. Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Klaudi and seconded by Committeeman Vizzard. Roll call vote, all were in favor.

5. Received a letter from the Cumberland County Department of Planning. The State is updating the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The County Department of Planning will be a negotiating entity for Cumberland County. The Land Use Board will play a primary role in this process. They are asking the Township for the following:
  - a. A letter of participation by May 15, 2024
  - b. A list of cross-acceptance representatives who will serve as the municipalities liaison(s) who will speak on behalf of the Township to be provided by May 15, 2024.
  - c. Review relevant municipal planning documents.

Mayor Sutton asked the committee for a motion to approve. Motion was made by Committeeman Vizzard and seconded by Deputy Mayor Klaudi. Roll call vote, all were in favor.

6. Received a letter from Jean Smith, Commercial Township School Superintendent. She is asking if the Township will again be willing to sponsor an award. Last year the Township sponsored two children for \$100 each. Total sponsorship will be \$200.

Mayor Sutton asked the committee for a motion to approve. Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Klaudi and seconded by Committeeman Vizzard. Roll call vote, all were in favor.

Mayor Sutton moved on the Resolutions.

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| 1. <b>Resolution 2024-48</b> | Authorizing the 2024 Municipal Budget to be read by Title Only. |
| 2. <b>Resolution 2024-49</b> | Resolution for Local Examination                                |

Mayor Sutton asked for a Motion for the Committee to approve both Resolutions 2024-48 and 2024-49. A motion was made by Committeeman Vizzard and seconded by Deputy Mayor Klaudi. Roll call vote, all were in favor.

Mayor Sutton moved to the Budget Public Hearing.

A motion was made to open by Committeeman Vizzard and seconded by Deputy Mayor Klaudi.

Mayor Sutton asked if any of the public wanted to come forward to speak out the Townships budget.

Judd Moore from Mauricetown asked about the tax increase for this year. Mayor Sutton stated we are looking at around 4.25 % for insurances purposes that the Township could not control. It stated it was going to be 5 cents, but we sat down and were able to make a couple of cuts.

Mayor Sutton asked for a motion to close the public portion of the Budget Hearing. A motion was made by Committeeman Vizzard and seconded by Deputy Mayor Klaudi.

3. **Resolution 2024-50** Adoption of the 2024 Municipal Budget
4. **Resolution 2024-51** Accepting the Resignation of Pamela Humphries, Township CFO and QPA
5. **Resolution 2024-52** Cancellation of Eagles Lake Reserve, LLC Performance Bond Guarantee in the amount of \$12,480.00.
6. **Resolution 2024- 53** Authorizing Solicitor to Commence Demolition Proceedings
7. **Resolution 2024- 54** Authorizing Professional Service Agreement with TRIAD Associates for Grant Writing and Consulting Services in 2024.

Mayor Sutton asked the Committee for a motion to approve all Resolutions from 2024-50 through 54. A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Klaudi and seconded by Committeeman Vizzard. Roll call vote, all were in favor.

Mayor Sutton moved to the Ordinance for Second Reading and Adoption.

**Township of Commercial  
ORDINANCE 2024-633  
AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCIAL,  
COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND, STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
AMENDING ORDINANCE 2007-487 DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION ORDINANCE  
AMENDIGN ARTICLE VII, SECTION C, ITEM 3  
REDUCING SET BACK FOR PERMINENTLY INSTALLED GENERATORS**

Mayor Sutton asked for a motion to open this portion to the public. A motion was made by Committeeman Vizzard and seconded by Deputy Mayor Klaudi.

Committeeman Vizzard- Just some background this, there was a misprint on the exciting ordinance on this. It says that all generators have to be 100ft off the property line, and it actually has to be 10ft.

Mayor Sutton asked for a motion to close this portion to the public. A motion was made by Committeeman Vizzard and seconded by Deputy Mayor Klaudi.

Mayor Sutton asked for a motion for this ordinance to be adopted. Committeeman Vizzard by a motion and Deputy Mayor seconded. Roll call vote, all were in favor.

Mayor Sutton asked for a motion to open the meeting to the public. A motion to open was made by Deputy Mayor Klaudi and seconded by Committeeman Vizzard.

Dave Adams, Port Norris- We lost access to last good fishing spot within walking distance of our village. The Peak of the Moon state owns the land, but it is surrounded by private property. At this point, we do not have access anymore to fish. The public dock is heavenly used by commercial fisherman, as it should be, but conflicts arise but nothing major. The other public land we can access the Maurice River is in the marsh by the clam plant and not really accessible. Until recently we have been free to walk out to the peak of the moon to catch fish, and the fishing is fair there. It is my understanding that the person that owns the private lane that has access to there does not want people to walk on his lane under threat of prosecution which is absolutely his right. You don't want people to walk on your land because they can get hurt and sue you. What I'm asking the Township is try to find some way to secure to access to the Peak of The Moon for fishing. This is a fishing village where you cannot fish unless you have a dock or a boat. If you could just consider that, that would be very kind of you.

Commiteeeman Vizzard- I can help answer this a little bit for you. We are waiting for the state to determine if they want to have people back there. The state owns that property. They are reviewing it, and I have been in contact with them. They haven't decided because it is not a stable wharf. People can get hurt on the loose rocks, it's not like it is a built jetty. They are just concerned that people can get hurt. That's the property owner's concern. May 6ish is the determination meeting on that and we will know better than exactly what they are going to allow us to do.

Dave Adams- Thank you. Provided that fails, can the township provide some kind of access to the river for our citizens who don't own a boat or dock to fish.

Mayor Sutton- We don't own too much land that we can put something. Everything is privately own.

Commiteeeman Vizzard- the only thing I can think of is Mauricetown Bridge, and that is in pretty bad shape too. There is a right of way on the other side of the property. I'm not exactly sure that right of way goes, but again the state is going to decide if they are going to want people back there. The township maintains that right away and that is why the township maintains that dike to makes sure it stays intact. Like I said, we are just waiting for the state to come back to us to allow us what they want us to do.

Dave Adams- Who in the state is responsible for making those decisions?

Committeeman Vizzard – Fish and Game.

Dave Adams- Thank you.

Mayor Sutton- Anyone else wish to speak?

Patty Gilmore – Hi my name is Patty Gilmore and this is Rebecca Parish. We are part of the Recreation Committee and one of our members works at the South West Council and presented this sign for us to see fi we can spread the word in the Township and other locations. Its called Breathe Easy Signage and it includes cigarettes, electronic and cannabis with this updated and free sign that helps spread aware that use is strictly prohibited in public areas included parks and beaches per the NJ Smoke Free Air Act. With this signage, we would like to spread awareness to

those who do not know of this law and as well as protect those who might be subject to secondhand smoke or aerosol chemicals produced by vaping. It is free from the state of NJ to have this and in addition like to plan events where we are able to bring our youth group and committee members to assemble the signs at our parks and beaches. Example Lake Audrey. Breathe Easy is an act from 2006 that ensures workers a smoke free workplace and nonsmokers including children and seniors can breathe in smoke free areas.

Patty Gilmore continues to talk about the Laws Prohibiting smoking and the signage needed in public areas.

The Committee is all for the idea.

Committeeman Vizzard- My question is do we need to pass an ordinance for it?

Solicitor Seeley- I don't think so. I just think you should at least make the committee aware of how you are going to secure them, so they don't expose the township to liability.

Patty Gilmore- we are going to make sure that the areas are acceptable so that we see if they can go on a building or post outside. We want it secure.

Solicitor Seeley stated the committee is on board, but they just need to know the exact location and plans for each sign posted. Committeeman Vizzard mentioned that Patty would need permission from the State to put a sign up at Lake Audrey.

Patirica, Laurel Lake – I was just concerned about the RL property on Battle Lane between Shell and Mist. He has a bunch of tires, and it is really an eye sore.

Mayor Sutton- That is being worked on, it is in the county's hands. They don't want us to remove it because it is under investigation. They know who did it, and they are just going through the process.

Mayor Sutton asked if anyone else wishes to speak.

Valerie Corson-Rios, Port Norris – I just wanted it to be on record that the water litigation on Bacon and Walnut, the road there at the intersection has no drainage. Approximately 11 years ago that was repaved, and the pitch changed. All the homes there do have a basement and it does flood. Year round that standing water is horrible and I have seen cars come to stop and keep sailing in the winter.

Clint Miller - Yeah it did change after that road was paved a little bit. Its one of those corners where we have drainage where it doesn't go anywhere.

Valerie Corson-Rios - and I believe there is drainage going in now main street?

Clint Miller- They are just repairing what is in place. Nothing has been extended to except that. There is something on our radar in our future drainage issues.

Valerie stated she gets water in her basement after it rains, and people trying to stop at that intersection slide through it when it gets icy. She also mentioned that in regard to the work on Main Street, she did speak to someone early and that there was no communication that it was being done. Clint apologized and stated the company did put papers out letting the residents know work was being done but he believes they put the notices out when there was terrible wind. The used papers instead of door knockers and thinks the wind took them. Valerie said her property is a field so there is no way for them to get a paper notice to her, but she appreciates everything. Valerie said the crew was very nice, and she has no issues with her property.

Valerie Corson-Rios - That brings me to final point, is there any plans on the agenda or budget to make the website more robust for people that cannot attend these meetings?

Valerie stated that other municipalities have better websites and with everyone doing basic things electronically, more basic communication would be helpful. There would be more awareness and less social media noise.

Committeeman Vizzard- So you are suggesting televising the meetings?

Valerie- Not specifically but that isn't a bad idea. I was thinking more splash pages, just information things, online calendars, and maybe submissions for questions.

Committeeman Vizzard agrees.

Mayor Sutton asked to make a motion to close the public portion. A motion was made by Deputy Man Klaudi and Committeeman Vizzard.

Mayor Sutton asked the Committee for any additional considerations.  
There were none.

Mayor Sutton asked to make a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Committeeman Vizzard and seconded by Deputy Mayor Klaudi.