

Minutes of the Agenda Meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Commercial held on May 13, 2024, at 6:00 P.M., at the Township Hall, 1768 Main Street, Port Norris, NJ.

Those Present:

Ronald Sutton Sr.	Mayor
Joseph Klaudi	Deputy Mayor
Mike Vizzard	Committeeman
Thomas Seeley	Solicitor
Nick DiCosmo	Engineer
Heather Miller	Township Clerk
Clint Miller	Public Works Supervisor
Robert Welch	OEM Coordinator

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 in full compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act.

Mayor Sutton introduced Todd Noon from TRIAD Associates.

Todd Noon-

- We are primarily grant writers and have been in the community development field for over 45 years. Our clients are mostly municipalities and counties.
- We know that there are a couple of projects you are interested in, and one is the reconditioning of the Bulkhead in Mauricetown.

Todd Noon- Is this primarily a bulkhead?

Mayor Sutton- Yeah, it is a riverfront park, and people fish from it. You can see in the pictures what decayed.

The Committeeman talk about the state that bulkhead in Mauricetown is in and how it affects the people in our area.

Todd Noon asks if there are any other recreation needs in the township beyond the bulkhead. Mayor Sutton stated we have a need for equipment for Public Works. We are going to need a new roll off truck, backhoe, pickup trucks, because everything is getting older. Todd Noon asked how the township feels about electric vehicles. Mayor Sutton stated he wasn't too fond of that idea, but Mayor Vizzard disagreed and was on board with electric vehicles and charging stations. Todd Noon said that the Township is USDA Eligible under rural development and we able to get a grant that help purchase vehicles up to 75 percent.

Todd Noon

- You also mentioned the need for funding for demoing derelict housing.
- Do you have a need for housing rehab money? Like to provide income eligible residents for housing?

Tom Seeley- Yeah, it's like Bayshore Housing.

Mike Vizzard- I would say yes but gear it towards septic.

Todd Noon stated that Commercial Township is eligible for this program, and we would be eligible for up to 300-400 thousand dollars to establish a housing rehab fund for the community. It will be based on the residents' needs to help get money for a new roof and bring their house up to code. The Committeeman are all in agreeance.

Todd Noon-

- There is another program that has been out for the last 2 years, it's through the DCA, The Local Recreation Improvement Grant. The max for the grant is up to 100 thousand dollars for any recreation projects in the townships. It will open again later this year.

Mike Vizzard- I just want to elaborate on the Mauricetown Park. I think it might advantage to us to look at living shores rather than a bulkhead, and redo the dock so the Meerwald can dock up to and possibly put a ramp in. We need to have a ramp in this township owned by the municipality. I think it would be a good thing if it's feasible. If it's more feasible to fix the bulkhead, then fix the bulkhead, but I'm thinking a living shores with a new dock for people to go fishing would be money well spent.

Nick DiCosmo-

- I would just like to add we attempted to find funding in different avenues.
- FEMA said it was a no go.
- There was nothing that we could find to show that it would be protecting utilities or anything like that. It was really just protecting the park.
- We tried to reach out to Corey Bookers office where the funding was ineligible.

Todd Noon- Are there any other projects that we should be keeping an eye out for you?

Mike Vizzard- The only thing I can think of is we talked about having a new park in Laurel Lake on Battle Lane last year. We need a new place for the kids in Laurel Lake to go to.

Todd Noon- And you already have space there?

Mike Vizzard- We do.

Clint Miller- Another thing you can bring up is brush chipping as become a massive spending for us as well as other little townships. I'm just thinking of the possibility of getting our own machine that we can co-op with other Townships.

Todd Noon- Do you have an idea on how much they run?

Clint Miller- They run between 350- to a million plus. I know the mayor mentioned different equipment, so just keep your eye out if there is another avenue for that.

The Committeeman thanked Todd Noon for his time.

The mayor called on Barney Hollinger for his report.

Barney Hollinger-

- The last Bayshore Council Meeting they brought up that the barges were getting stuck in the middle of the channel. They called ACE, and they will be looking further into it.
- Touched base on the working waterfront node topic.
- The State DEP contacted our area for the benefit cost analysis for the Fish and Wildlife make standing habitats for both side of river.
- Maurice River Township side is putting in an enhanced boat launching site across the bridge.
- A living waterfront will not work because the tide is so strong. Especially if we get ice, it will tear it up. If that bulkhead went, everyone on that side of the river is going to be taken out.
- I was thinking about how we have these storms, right here in town there is only one place where the water is draining and that's at the east ditch right on out. The ditch on Brown Street needs to be cleaned out.

Clint Miller – We are not allowed to clean them; we cannot go in there without a permit, and they won't issue one. We did complain about it to them, and they sent a crew down. They went down to Dickies ditch, and down to the riverbank. They said everything is flowing and working perfectly. I agree with you. They are full of trees, and debris but according to them they are working just fine.

Mayor Sutton called on the OEM Report from Robert Welch.

Robert Welch-

- We had a major power outage Friday from the solar storm. We were able to get all the power restored.
- We also got a report about flooding on Friday also by Marina in Bivalve. The causeway was pretty flooded but not to the extent that we had to close down.
- There was a house explosion today, and we will be able to give you a full detailed report by Thursday at the latest.
- Emily Manor and Adam House personnel reached out to me, and they are having the Department of Community Affairs do inspections. They reached out to me for help with the emergency response plan.
- Meeting with Clint to help with temporary embankment area that the state is requesting.

Mayor Sutton called on the Engineers report.

Nick DiCosmo-

- Port Norris River front road way Phase 3 will begin construction in the first week of July.
- The mill and overlay of Main Street drainage work is now complete, and we are waiting on some final concrete work.
- The North Avenue Pedestrian safety improvements and construction is still on going.

- The FY2024 State Aid Roadway Drainage Improvements to Whittier Drive, we have survey and base plans are complete and started the design.
- I did send a different Tree Ordinance over because I have several people in my office working on that, and we have revised it to be less intense than the original sample. I recommend we use this one, and we received confirmation that it is efficient for the DEP.
- The disclaimer FY2024 local freight impact fund for mill and overlay of Main Street phase 2, I sent a request over for authorization for preliminary engineering for 50 thousand. This will be 100% reimbursable by the grant from the Local Freight Impact Fund.
- Local Aid for Roadway Drainage and Improvements to Milbourne Drive and Dennis Lane was awarded \$475,000.00 and I did send the proposal for consideration. They said the CFO cannot certify funds at this time, but I just want to confirm how we are going to proceed with this. The preliminary phase of \$23,750.00 is 100% reimbursable to the grant. We need to authorize that to start the job.
- The other proposal that I sent is the physical of FY2025 NJDOT State Aid Applications that is on for consideration. If approved, I would just ask the Township to pick a road to apply for the funding. I would like to pick that this week so we can start the application.

Clint Miller- I have spoken to Nick, and we have never done a single road in Mauricetown. We haven't done a road there in a very long time. There are a couple of roads there that are pretty beat, but they are nowhere near as bad as the ones we have up in the Lake. It would be nice to see something get done in Mauricetown, but I think we have some really bad roads in the Lake that we need to concentrate there.

Mike Vizzard- So we can do Laurel Lake as the primary, and Mauricetown as the secondary.

The Committee has a lengthy discussion about the road conditions in Laurel Lake and Mauricetown that could be up for consideration to use for the Grant Funding. Mauricetown would benefit from just the mill and overlay, while Laurel Lake needs to focus on drainage as well as mill and overlay. Mike Noon also stated that pending on the location of the streets that need to be fixed, they may be eligible for small cities money under DCA. He suggested that once the streets are identified, he can look at the censes map to see if they are eligible.

Mayor Sutton moved to Correspondences.

- Notification received that the 2025 NJDOT Municipal Aid Program is now open. Remington & Vernick has submitted a proposal for the submission of the grant. If accepted, the Committee needs to determine project locations. Resolution for approval Thursday.
- Received a letter from NJDEP that the County and Township will need to update our Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

- Proposal from Remington & Vernick for Engineering Services for the FY2024 Local Aid Infrastructure Fund, Milbourne Drive and Dennis Lane. CFO could not certify funds at this time.
 - o We said that we can approve \$23,000.00 preliminary.
- Proposal from Remington & Vernick for Preliminary Engineering Services for FY 2024 NJDOT Local Freight Impact Fund, Mill and Overlay of Main Street – Phase 2. Resolution for approval Thursday.

Mayor Sutton moved on to Land Sale – on for Thursdays Meeting.

- Block 79, Lot 1634 known as 3850 Battle Lane. Lot size is 124x98. There is a small home on the property. The starting bid will be \$10,000.00.
- Block 138, Lot 7690 known as 325 Mulberry Road. Lot size is 40x100 and is undersized. The starting bid is \$500.00.

Mayor Sutton moved on to Resolutions.

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| 1. Resolution 2024-55 | Approving Bond Anticipation Note in the Amount of \$414,675.00 Awarded to Newfield National Bank at 4.25% Percent Interest. |
| 2. Resolution 2024-56 | Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Fiscal Grant Cycle October 2020-June 2025. |
| 3. Resolution 2024-57 | Resolution Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriations NJ40A:4-87 Recycling Tonnage Grant. |
| 4. Resolution 2024-58 | Resolution Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation NJS40A:4-87 NJDOT Transportation Trust Fund: \$475,000.00. |
| 5. Resolution 2024-59 | Resolution Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation NJS 40A:4-87 NJDOT Local Freight Impact Fund Mill and Overlay of Main Street \$1,000,000.00. |
| 6. Resolution 2024-60 | Authorizing Assignment |
| 7. Resolution 2024-61 | Amending Resolution 2023-115 Approval of 100% Exempt Veteran Block 150, Lot 1131. |

8. **Resolution 2024-62** Authorizing Tax Collector to Issue Duplicate Tax Sale Certificate for Block 86, Lot 8879-8882.
9. **Resolution 2024-63** Accepting Proposal of Remington & Vernick Engineers to Prepare and Submit Grant Applications for FY 2025 NJDOT Municipal Aid Program.
10. **Resolution 2024-64** Accepting Proposal of Remington & Vernick Engineers for Professional Engineering Design and Construction Phase Services for the Mill and Overlay of Main Street, Phase 2, in Port Norris, New Jersey.

Ordinance for Introduction.

Township of Commercial

Ordinance 2024-634

Tree Removal-Replacement Ordinance.

Mayor Sutton asked for a motion to open to the public. Motion to open was opened by Committeeman Vizzard and seconded by Deputy Mayor Klaudi.

Clint Miller- I spoke with Joe about removing the tires Battle Lane. We took away 739 tires from out of that pile. At this point right now, the county is charging us zero. I'm not sure if it is staying that way, but I'd like to have a letter sent out to the county on behalf of Tony and Jerry for helping us out with that. That property did not make the demo list, but can we add it? I collapsed the trailer down. We did have the electricity removed from there, and we are waiting on the gas. We have these other properties that we own that we are going to demo. The electricity and gas have been removed from all of them. We had to pay, and we never used to. It is around \$300.00 per property for gas. We are going to try to start getting them in line for demo. We are going to start with the property on Beaver, and then we have one on Cherry Road. I want to make you guys aware of this, there was a squatter living next door to the property on Cherry. The electric line was coming from the telephone pole passed our house, and running right over top of the house that we have to demo. So, the guy that was squatting in that house stole the meter 6 or 7 years ago and has been getting free electric. Over 2 years ago we had an onsite meeting with Atlantic City Electric to go over this meter issue to get them to remove it. They wouldn't do it as long as someone is living in the house. So, for the past two weeks I have been back and forth with Atlantic City Electric Supervisor, and he said I understand where you are coming from, but it is our motto that if someone is living it in, we won't take the power from them. So, I told him I'm not paying for my electric then! This guy has been stealing and I know that for a fact! I gave him a serial number from the box, and it came from the other side of the lake! So today they said they are going to send someone out and see what's going on. I know that guy is squatting and stole the meter. Unless they remove it, I can't demo the property because the power lines are above it. I just can't believe that. It's unbelievable. All the other properties the electric is removed. Hopefully that gets handled, and we have the house on Raymond Drive. Chris is going to do some work on that in the next couple of weeks. We also have a

house on Gooseberry Avenue that we are going to demo. Once we get the gas removed on Battle Lane, that will get demoed also.

Mike Vizzard- So, so did the electric company go to that house and put a smart meter?

Clint Miller- No, he put a chain around the meter and pad locked it so they cannot get into it. You would be shocked how many abandoned properties are in the lake with smart meters on them. We are going to start on Beaver Drive, and when Heather and I get back from that we are going to that first. We have one here in Port Norris also that we will focus on as well.

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

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

Submitted by:
Gabrielle Horseman, Deputy Clerk