

CHESTERFIELD TOWNSHIP REGULAR SESSION MARCH 14, 2024

The Township Committee met on the above date in the Municipal Complex, 295 Bordentown-Chesterfield Road, Chesterfield, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Matt Litt at 7:00 p.m.

The Open Public Meetings Act Statement was read and compliance noted.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Present: Belinda Blazic, Shreekant Dhopte, Rebecca Hughes, Denise Koetas-Dale and Matt Litt

Also present: Caryn M. Hoyer, Township Clerk; Wendy A. Wulstein, CFO; Troy Ulshafer, Public Works Manager; Joseph Hirsh, Township Engineer and Dominic P. DiYanni, Township Attorney

AGENDA MATTER(S) REQUIRING RECUSAL(S) – None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Hughes made a motion seconded by Mr. Dhopte to approve the February 8th executive, February 15th special and February 22nd regular meeting minutes regular meeting minutes. All were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENTS PERTAINING TO MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Ms. Hughes to open the meeting to public comment for matters on the agenda. All were in favor. Hearing none, Ms. Blazic Made a motion seconded by Ms. Koetas-Dale to close public comment. All were in favor.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

AJ Redlich – 9 Alicia Drive, Allentown, NJ. He stated he belongs to Boy Scout Troop 55 Crosswicks and has been working with the Environmental Commission and Public Works for his Eagle Scout project. His project is low maintenance. It would be a kiosk made out of treated wood with cedar stain. The information can be changed periodically. The intent is to provide information on various information regarding the environment and wildlife species. Mr. Litt asked if the troop has done anything like this before and why this project. AJ replied on the building they meet at but are not put in the ground. He stated that Nancy Scarafile had contacted the Troop stating what she was looking for. Mr. Ulshafer stated it is a great project and idea. Ms. Hughes stated obtaining your Eagle Scout is a huge accomplishment and he should be proud. Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Ms. Hughes to support the Eagle Scout Project. All were in favor.

ORDINANCE FOR INTRODUCTION

Ms. Wulstein explained that each year we adopt a CAP Bank ordinance. This ordinance allows the governing body the ability to increase the final appropriations subject to the cap to the statutorily permitted 3.5%. This 1% increase in 2024 is \$40,433.02. The ordinance must be adopted in order for the Township to go before the Local Finance Board. The Finance Board will look to make sure the Township has utilized all available resources for CAP relief before making their request to the Board. Mr. Litt asked what happens if we don't approve. Ms. Wulstein stated that the State may not approve the budget because we need to do everything we can to help with the CAP issue.

Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Mr. Dhopte to introduce Ordinance 2024-6. Roll Call: YEA: Blazic, Dhopte, Koetas-Dale, Litt NAY: Hughes
The public hearing for this ordinance will be March 28th.

ORDINANCE 2024-6

AN ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK

ORDINANCE FOR PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION

Mr. DiYanni stated this ordinance will add fees for the use of the park and recreation areas. It was amended at the last meeting to better define resident. Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Ms. Blazic to open the meeting to public comment on Ordinance 2024-4. All were in favor. Hearing none, Ms. Blazic made a motion seconded by Ms. Koetas-Dale to close public comment. All were in favor. Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Ms. Hughes to adopt Ordinance 2024-4. Voice vote – All in favor.

ORDINANCE 2024-4

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 110 OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE ENTITLED "FEES" MOST NOTABLY, SECTION 110-146 ENTITLED "PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS"

Mr. DiYanni stated this ordinance adds a no knock ordinance in the Township Code which will allow residents to request to be on the no knock list which will be provided to peddlers and solicitors to advise them they are to avoid those homes. Ms. Blazic asked about the minimum fine of up to \$500. Mr. DiYanni stated that is at the discretion of the court. Mr. Litt asked about section G regarding the fine as well. It only addresses the person. Mr. DiYanni stated we could add or entity under section G. That is minor and the Township Committee could move forward with the adoption tonight.

Ms. Hughes made a motion seconded by Ms. Blazic to open the meeting to public comment on Ordinance 2024-5. All were in favor. Hearing none, Ms. Blazic made a motion seconded by Ms. Hughes to close public comment. All were in favor. Ms. Blazic made a motion seconded by Ms. Koetas-Dale to adopt

Ordinance 2024-5 with the amendment to G to include “or entity. Voice vote – All in favor.

ORDINANCE 2024-5 **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 150 OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE ENTITLED “PEDDLING AND SOLICITING” WITH THE ADDITION OF ARTICLE II ENTITLED “NO-KNOCK REGISTRY”**

RESOLUTIONS

Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Ms. Blazic to approve Resolution 2024-3-2. Voice vote - All in favor.

RESOLUTION 2024-3-2 **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUND OF PROPERTY TAX OVERPAYMENT ON BLOCK 1103 LOT 8.02**

Ms. Blazic made a motion seconded by Ms. Hughes to approve Resolution 2024-3-3. Voice vote - All in favor.

RESOLUTION 2024-3-3 **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUND OF OVERPAYMENT OF SEWER FOR 67 APPLGATE WAY**

Ms. Wulstein the total budget this year is \$7,605,000. She stated that 1.4 million included in that amount does not have an impact on the tax rate. This budget will increase the taxes \$47 annually to the average home. Ms. Hughes thinks the committee has gotten comfortable raising taxes each year. She stated the residents cannot sustain this. If there is anything we can do to make that happen, we need to consider it. She is not comfortable introducing a budget with any increase. Mr. Litt stated he is comfortable because we have all looked at each budget line item. No one came up with any ideas. He does not think there is fluff in the budget. He believes that Ms. Wulstein and the Township Committee did a good job. Ms. Hughes agrees that hours have been spent on this and everyone did their due diligence. She stated that there are things the Budget Advisory Committee recommended that are not being done. She thinks there are things that could have been cut. Mr. Dhopte stated that anything left in the budget goes back to surplus. He stated that we do not want to have a dramatic increase like there was in 2012. We have to go to the Finance Board each year for our budget approval. He stated it is wise to slowly increase the taxes to make up the difference for when we will go to referendum. If we don't raise slowly now, it will be a larger increase then. Ms. Wulstein stated that taxes were flat for a long period of time. The 2% did not apply to Chesterfield because we were under 10 cents. Surplus grew during the years of all the construction. That surplus is going away. She stated it is eventually going to go to the voters. WE are trying to cut away at that tax increase for when it does go to vote. Mr. Litt stated it is important for the Township Committee to think about way to decrease the tax burden. Ms. Wulstein stated a lot of things were brought up. We do have a deadline to introduce the

budget. There are funds put in the budget that will still require an approval from the Township Committee. If the Police Department wants to purchase a car, that needs approval. Mr. Dhopte stated we don't have revenue to help with the budget. Are we willing to cut services? Ms. Hughes asked if it is cutting services or cutting line items such as supplies, vehicles or others as well. Ms. Blazic stated that if the vehicle is not purchased that money goes back to surplus. If no surplus, then we need a referendum. By putting in surplus now it helps. Ms. Wulstein stated we seek to take more in revenue and spend less in line items. She has been doing a 10-year plan all along. Chesterfield is unique because it went from rural to suburb very quickly. She predicts 10 years out but will need to go to vote soon. If the voter is yes, then services stay. If the vote is no, then those services are lost. If we get additional revenues, that helps the surplus. She stated we have to raise taxes to the maximum until we get to the referendum. We are trying to reach that point slowly. Ms. Hughes it may lessen that spike by making some hard choices now. Ms. Wulstein stated the public hearing on the budget will be April 25th. The Local Finance Board meeting is April 10th. There are a lot of costs involved in going out to referendum. She recommends going to the maximum. Mr. Litt stated it is important what both are saying and also important to look for ways to make cuts.

Mr. Dhopte made a motion seconded by Ms. Koetas-Dale to approve Resolution 2024-3-4 with a tax rate of 42.61 cents. Roll Call: Yea – Blazic, Dhopte, Koetas-Dale and Litt Nay - Hughes

**RESOLUTION 2024-3-4 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE
INTRODUCTION OF THE 2024 MUNICIPAL
BUDGET**

Ms. Wulstein stated this resolution authorizes the application to the Local Finance Board. She will now prepare the application which is due March 20th. She stated that will know if we get approval April 11th. She will attend along with Mayor Litt. The meeting is virtual. If approved, we can move forward with the budget.

Mr. Dhopte made a motion seconded by Ms. Blazic to approve Resolution 2024-3-5. Roll Call: Yea – Blazic, Dhopte, Koetas-Dale and Litt Nay - Hughes

**RESOLUTION 2024-3-5 RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
CHESTERFIELD AUTHORIZING AN
APPLICATION TO THE LOCAL FINANCE
BOARD PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.3ee**

Ms. Wulstein stated this resolution moves money in last year's budget. This can only be done through the end of March.

Mr. Dhopte made a motion seconded by Ms. Koetas-Dale to approve Resolution 2024-3-6. Voice vote - All in favor.

**RESOLUTION 2024-3-6 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPROPRIATION
TRANSFERS**

Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Mr. Dhopte to approve Resolution 2024-3-7. Voice vote - All in favor.

RESOLUTION 2024-3-7

RESOLUTION APPOINTING MEMBERS OF THE AG ADVISORY BOARD

BILL LIST

Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Mr. Dhopte to approve the bill list. Voice vote – All in favor.

LIAISON REPORTS & DISCUSSION

Marlton Lane – Letter from ERI

Mr. Hirsh explained his memo which indicated the street does not meet the RSIS standards so he focused on Title 39 which would regulate where parking is permitted. He stated it is not a high traffic area as access is primarily for residents of Marlton Lane to access their home. If one car is parked in a legal area, another car cannot park on the opposite side of the street. Cars parked on both sides of the street opposite each other do not allow enough car width for traffic. Mr. Hirsh stated that if Title 39 is enforced then no need to put an ordinance in place. He stated there is also a similar situation on Colemantown and Berryland. Mr. Litt stated the issue is that no one knows where they can park. Ms. Koetas-Dale suggested a letter to those residents on Marlton. Ms. Litt asked how we bring this to resolution. Mr. DiYanni stated there is nothing else to do if you are comfortable with the current ordinance. The Township Committee would like to see the letter before it goes out to residents.

Engineer Cost Estimates

The Engineer cost estimate for the Emergency Sewer Pump Generators is a total not to exceed \$18,500 and Olivia Way Gazebo/Dugouts is not to exceed \$5,500. Ms. Wulstein stated there is now a process in place to have the Township Committee approve the Engineering costs. Mr. Ulshafer stated he asked the engineer to bid the gazebo and dugouts together to get the best price. Ms. Koetas-Dale asked when the dugouts would be completed. Mr. Hirsh stated it depends on the lead time. Ms. Hughes asked about what the recreation fund is. Mr. Wulstein stated the developer made contributions to the fund and spending is done by ordinance. Mr. Hughes stated that we need to make sure that all groups are treated the same because we told the Community Garden member they had to get their own funding. Ms. Koetas-Dale stated a survey was done years ago and most of those projects were completed. There was a rec committee and they met several times. We may want to do this again. Mr. Wulstein stated she will be putting before the governing body ordinance cancellation that will put money back into the rec fund for projects that are completed and came in under budget.

Mr. Dhopte made a motion seconded by Ms. Blazic to approve the engineer cost estimate for the emergency sewer pump generators in an amount not to exceed

\$18,500 and Olivia Way Gazebo/Dugouts in an amount not to exceed \$5,500.00. All were in favor.

Holi Festival at Village Square Park – April 6th

Ms. Fryc was not at the meeting so Mr. Dhopte explained this festival will be a Village Square Park on April 6th with a rain date of April 7th. The entire community is invited.

Mr. Litt reported that the HPC met on the 1st Tuesday of the month. It was a short agenda and two items were approved.

Ms. Koetas-Dale stated the Chair of the Shade Tree Advisory committee is Roseann Greenberg. They are participating in the Green Fun Fair which will be April 28th from 11 AM to 3 PM at Village Square Park.

Mr. Dhopte stated he attend the Ag Board meeting. Patty Homa will be replacing Sherry Dudas as she is moving out of state. He thanked Sherry for her time on the Ag Board and work on the Green Team as well. The Ag Board discussed special occasion events. There are guidelines on the number of people the event can have. We want to make sure the Township has an ordinance to address the events. He stated they also discussed the Community Garden and they have no objections. They think it is a great idea. Mr. Dhopte stated that there were two issues brought up. One was regarding trees on township road that need trimming. They are afraid the machinery is going to get damaged by the trees. Mr. Dhopte asked Troy to reach out to Bill Bibus and Matt Bassett. The other issue is that this is growing season. There is heavy machinery moving on the roadways and residence try to pass. It is important for residents to know they cannot pass them. Ms. Hoyer stated that once the report is received from the planner regarding the TDR restrictions and the guidelines for special events, there may be an ordinance presented to the Township Committee which will then go to the Ag Board and Planning Board for review.

Ms. Hughes stated the Environmental Commission met in February, They are almost done with the Environmental Resource Inventory. A lot of time went into this. The EC submitted for sustainable status against. They only needed 150 points but was able to complete 210. She stated the Green Fair team is looking for vendors preferably some that tie into the environmental, recycling and “green” products. Ms. Hughes stated that the letter from the EC to the Township Committee regarding the Community Gardens was not agreed upon by all the members. There was some discussion regarding the time that has gone into getting a location for the Community Garden. She also explained the DVRCP is working on the inventory of natural and historical resources. A grant was received in the amount of \$10,000 from sustainable.

REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Ulshafer reviewed his memo to the Township Committee regarding eh ambulance. He stated he looks for a 5-10 year plan. We have two ambulances. One will be retrofitted. The other was purchased from another town which had

been in a couple of accidents. Mr. Ulshafer spoke with Ms. Wulstein and they recommend using the Covid impact money to purchase another ambulance. The new ambulance would not need to purchase another one for at least 15 years. Ms. Wulstein stated there is \$480,000 left in the fund which must be spend by December 2024. They are building them as they are order so the supply line is not as bad as it was. Mr. Ulshafer stated the retrofit boxes should last 40 years, chassis only last 20 years. The second ambulance will need to be purchased in the next 5 years. Ms. Wulstein stated originally the sewer generators were going to be purchased with the Covid funds however it was decided that they only benefitted part of the town. An ambulance will benefit all.

Ms. Hughes stated she hears about new buckets of funds. She asked for a list of those funds. Ms. Wulstein stated they are listed in the Annual Financial statement which everyone received; however, she will provide a short list to the committee.

Mr. Hirsh review the status of projects since the last meeting. He stated they are working on the remaining scope of work and will provide a proposal for finalizing the update on the MSWMP. They are still waiting for comments on the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance from NJDEP. Once receive, the Township Committee will be presented with an Ordinance. He stated he will coordinate with Troy and follow up with the Contractor on the Maintenance bond repairs for Sykesville Road Phases I-III. Mr. Hirsh stated he is working on an engineering proposal for Margerum Road project. They are received information from the County that the round-a-bout project will disturb Margerum Road to the first park entrance. Mr. Hirsh stated the FY 2023 Local Recreation Improvement Grant will need to be closed out by the end of the year. He will be preparing a proposal to complete that project. The FY 2024 LRIG applicant was submitted on February 27th. Mr. Hirsh stated ERI will be moving forward with preparing the bid documents for Olivia Way Park Gazebo and Dugout at Cricket Pitch Project. He stated it appears there is no gas service at PS#1. He submitted an application on March 11th to PSEG for the natural gas hookup. The Emergency Generators at Pump Stations 1 and 2 bid has been advertised and bids are due on March 28th at 11 AM. Mr. Hirsh stated he is still waiting on the letter from DEP regarding the Green Acre limits at the municipal park before he moves forward with the public works site evaluation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Blazic made a motion seconded by Ms. Koetas-Dale to open the meeting to public comment. All were in favor.

John Chapman – 6 Marlton Lane - He stated he doesn't know where they can park. He stated if you are going to put up signs then they should be throughout the town. He stated this has been brought on by one person's view. It is not really a safety issue. He wants all roads investigated not just Marlton. He stated this is a slippery slope. Recycling and garbage trucks come through with no problem. He just wants to know where they can park. The committee asked to have the letter ERI posted on the website.

Jill Shah – 6 Colemantown Drive - Ms. Shah stated she is speaking for her father who is ill tonight. She stated that Marlton Way is governed by RSIS standards. The township needs waivers from RSIS for Title 9 enforcement. She stated they want a fair solution for all. When the cars are parked along the fence it is difficult to maintain the property. She stated that some home on Marlton Lane were originally denied a 5' high fence. She stated that vehicle park along the fence. Landscape vehicles park along the fence. Maybe there should be no commercial parking. Mailboxes could also be moved.

Roseann Greenberg – 17 Iron Bridge Road – She stated she is the Ag Board Vice Chair and they suggested the Community Garden should have a deer fence due to the high deer population. There are all kinds of parameters that went into choosing the best location for the community garden. She respectfully request the Green Team run the Community Garden like Bordentown City does. Bordentown City collects fees and gives funds to the Community Garden to purchases what is needed for the garden. If that method works for them, why not us. Ms. Koetas- dale as Ms. Wulstein if can work like the Green Team Trust Fund. Ms. Wulstein asked if the Community Garden is separate from the Green Team. She stated the Township may provide the site, water, fence, etc. If they are not the same they must be a separate. Donations could go into a trust fund specifically for Community Gardens if she receives any.

Hearing no further public comment, Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Ms. Blazic to close public comment. All were in favor.

There being no comments from the Committee, Ms. Koetas-Dale made a motion seconded by Ms. Hughes to adjourn the meeting 9:14 PM. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Caryn M. Hoyer, RMC
Township Clerk