

**WORK SHOP MEETING MINUTES
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF OCEANPORT
December 14, 2017**

The Workshop Meeting of the Oceanport Mayor and Council was called to order on December 14, 2017 at 7:08 P.M. with the Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act given by Mayor Coffey.

"Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by notice to the Asbury Park Press and The Link News on January 2, 2017, and by the posting of same on the municipal bulletin board and Borough Web Site."

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Coffey led the audience and members of the Council in the flag salute.

INVOCATION: Borough Chaplin Stacy Deering gave the invocation

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilpersons Cooper, Gallo, Irace, Kahle, Proto (entered 7:17 pm), Solan (entered 7:17pm) and Mayor Coffey

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Borough Administrator Raymond Poerio, Borough Clerk Jeanne Smith, Borough Attorney Scott Arnette

Mr. Poerio introduced Mr. Doug Becker, a property owner with a proposal for vacating a street.

PRESENTATION: Mr. Becker made a presentation regarding his request for street vacating and the failing bulkhead issue at the terminus of Deal Ave. With Council's permission, he presented a PowerPoint, describing the area abutting his property as an eyesore, filled with trash, tires and debris, a sinkhole and a failing bulkhead. He reviewed the dead-end streets in the Borough, and suggested the Borough review these areas and take the opportunity to improve and beautify the neighborhoods. He stated the Borough could save maintenance costs by vacating such streets and pointed out the potential benefits. There was discussion regarding the length of the existing bulkhead.

Mr. Poerio stated that after a review, the bulkhead is scheduled for replacement in the 2018 budget. He advised that it is the Council's decision whether to bear the cost to the bulkhead replacement or reach an agreement with Mr. Becker to take ownership and responsibility for the bulkhead. Councilwoman Cooper asked the size of the property. Mr. Poerio explained that is another decision for the Council and outlined different options available. He will ask for comments from Borough Engineer, Bill White and Chief Kelly for traffic input and present the information to Council. There was discussion regarding its use as a kayak launch. Mr. Poerio asked Mr. Becker to provide specific details of his plan, such as distance/length of the street vacation.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Mr. Poerio reported that both the bulkhead improvement project and Shore Rd. drainage project were completed under budget and the change orders require approval of the Governing Body. Mr. Poerio reported that after meetings with the Mayor, Councilwoman Cooper, Ms. Smith, Planning Board Secretary, the recommendation is to award a contract to Clark Caton Hintz to prepare a new Land Use & Development Ordinance. He reported on agreements with the YMCA for the Oceanport Pool and Eatontown for brush compost services. Mr. Poerio stated the Borough received a \$127,714 CDBG grant, which will be used for roadwork on Milton Ave.

As part of the 2017 Road Program, Bridgewaters, Eliot, Arcana and Elizabeth Drive have been substantially completed; hot patches on Shore Rd., Deal Ave and Allenhurst. The remainder of the Road Program will resume in the spring of 2018. For the 2018 budget, Mr. Poerio recommends that engineering work and work associated with preparing the 2018 budget. He suggested including

engineering in the 2019 budget. He explained the benefits of including the engineering work, which would allow for an earlier start on road work.

Mr. Poerio reported that all asbestos work at old Borough Hall and the 4 buildings on former Ft. Monmouth is complete. Demolition of old Borough Hall will commence Tuesday. Discussions with FMERA regarding utilities have been challenging. Mr. Poerio thanked the Public Works Department for working overtime daily and last weekend doing leaf collection, which will be completed next week. The new brining system was applied prior to the last snowfall, which meant the roads were cleared more quickly. The railing at Blackberry Bay Pavilion is complete. He thanked the Seniors Club for inviting him to their annual Christmas Luncheon. Mr. Poerio stated that Officers Svenson and Ruane have completed their probationary periods and a resolution will be prepared to confirm their permanent status, and asked Chief Kelly to convey congratulations to them.

The Borough is transitioning from the Edmunds financial system to MSI and training will be conducted. A new agenda scheduling software has been implemented, which means an automatic posting of the agenda to the Borough's website. In addition, the new software will record discussions at meetings and assist in generating minutes. Mr. Poerio thanked Councilwoman Cooper and Councilman Solan for their efforts instituting the new broadcasting system. In all likelihood, the 2018 Reorganization Meeting may be broadcast live. OPTV will be on Channel 28 on Verizon Fios.

Mr. Poerio stated that Courtney McDonnell was offered the job to fill the administrative assistant vacancy created by Linda Landrigan's resignation. He wished Ms. Landrigan well in her new position as a full time TACO in the Township of Ocean.

Mr. Poerio announced that the Borough received an Open Space grant in the amount of \$200,000 for renovation of the new Senior/Recreation center on former Ft. Monmouth. He expressed thanks to all of the Freeholders, in particular, Freeholder Tom Arnone, who has been a champion for Oceanport, and Freeholder Lillian Burry, chair of the Open Space Committee.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Teen Advisory Council – Councilwoman Kahle encouraged the concept of having students from Maple Place and Wolf Hill schools, and possibly Shore Regional, form an advisory council to provide information about township events and for them to provide information back to the Council. It provides an opportunity to develop as leaders and become involved in community decisions.

MAYORS REPORT: Mayor Coffey advised that he attended the annual Seniors' Christmas party and answered their questions about the new municipal complex and the recent revaluation. He thanked Mr. Poerio for getting the railing installed at Blackberry Bay Pavilion. Mayor Coffey reported that the sports betting case was presented to the Supreme Court on December 4th. If the Court rules in favor of the State, Monmouth Park Racetrack will be ready. Mayor Coffey also reported that FMERA needed approval to borrow \$5 million from the EDA. He explained FMERA's financial situation, where they are running low on funds because of slow sales of former Ft. Monmouth properties. An initial \$1.8 million loan will be secured by properties outside of Oceanport. The remaining \$3.2 million would be a second lien against properties in Oceanport. He explained the approvals required to access the \$3.2 million. NJ American Water will be installing a water main line down the length of County Rt. 537, allowing new owners to tap into it. Lastly, Mayor Coffey advised that FMERA's Chairman Jim Gorman stepped down and nominated Vice Chairman Lucky to fill the position until Governor-elect Murphy appoints 3 new members.

Mayor Coffey expressed sorrow at the loss of John Gasparini. Mr. Gasparini was a frequent attendee at Board of Education and Council meeting. He was heavily involved with the Borough's soccer program. The Mayor requested prayers from residents. Councilwoman Kahle asked if perhaps a bench could be placed at the soccer fields in his memory. Mayor Coffey will speak to Keith Uklist and Mike MacStudy.

Mayor Coffey noted that this will be Councilwoman Kahle's last meeting. He expressed his gratitude to

Councilwoman Kahle for her 15 years of dedicated service towards the betterment of Oceanport. He presented a plaque to her in appreciation for her commitment toward the residents. Councilwoman Kahle thanked the residents for putting their trust in her. She expressed appreciation for Barbara Silkworth for mentoring her, the support of Mike Mahon. She thanked the Mayors and Borough employees she worked with through the years. She was grateful for the opportunity to work with the many volunteers on committees, project and other events. She wished the Council much success in the challenges facing them. She thanked Councilwoman Cooper for being the sole woman on Council and wished her continued success. She expressed sincere thanks to her family for their support.

PUBLIC:

Mayor Coffey then opened the meeting to anyone from the public who wished to be heard.

Jeff Oakes, 60 Pemberton Ave, brought up discussion on use of the Oceanport Residents' Facebook page showing himself in front of the Community Center using medical marijuana, the large response, and his purpose to send the message that using medical marijuana is not shameful. There was lengthy discussion about the use of the FB page, its administration, that its where residents can find useful information but is not a governmental page. Discussion topics also included the use of the page by township officials, questions of censorship and the use of social media as a useful tool.

Patricia Mazza, 469 Branchport Ave., asked questions about the tax appraisals and the Realty Appraisal Company. She expressed displeasure with the way her appraisal visit was conducted and having to allow a strange man in her home. Mayor Coffey explained that the State mandates reassessments every 10 years and the procedures for conducting the revaluations. He stated that the average increase was 24.5%.

Karen Long, 32 Revere Dr., stated she agreed with Ms. Mazza. She also expressed concern about allowing a strange person in her home and her opposition to the reassessment. Mayor Coffey explained that the Borough had no choice but to perform the reassessment, and agreed with Ms. Long about being uncomfortable. There was additional discussion regarding tax appeals. Ms. Long asked if anyone has been contacted by the Census Bureau, which no one had. Ms. Long presented a letter for Mr. Arnette and Mayor Coffey to review. Mr. Arnette replied that the letter was not from the Census, it was from the Dept. of Commerce asking for personal income and expenditures, which had nothing to do with the reassessment, and she was not required to participate in that.

Roseann Letson, 37 Morris Pl., stated that she did not have a problem with her assessment and discussed how her last assessment was determined. She stated properties are being assessed based on the value of your dirt.

As no else one from the public wished to be heard, the Mayor closed that portion of the meeting.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m. on a motion by Councilman Irace seconded by Councilman Proto and approved by Council.

Respectfully submitted,

JEANNE SMITH, RMC
BOROUGH CLERK