

## CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES

April 4, 2023

5:00 P.M.

\*\*\*MEETING WAS HELD VIA "ZOOM" APPLICATION WITH MEETING ID 349 802 0449

Mayor Jakubowski called the meeting to order.

**MAYOR'S STATEMENT:** "Notice of this meeting has been provided in a legal notice published in the Courier Post and the Retrospect; and posted in accordance with Title 10 of the New Jersey Statutes Annotated, specifying a 5:00 p.m. meeting time; and that formal action may or may not be taken at all Caucus and Commissioners meetings. Please be advised that this meeting is not being videotaped tonight."

Those in attendance were Mayor Jakubowski, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Whitman, Borough Administrator David Taraschi, Solicitor Jennifer McPeak, Borough Engineers Steve Bach & Craig Reilly, Kurt Bicking, OEM, Jean Philips, Court Administrator, Danielle Ingves, Municipal Clerk, Rec Center Director & Library Trustee, Brian Conte, EMS, Fire Chief Pat Slemmer, Megan Giordano, Tax Collector, John Dymond, Tax Assessor.

Mayor Jakubowski led the audience in the Flag Salute.

Commissioner Lee made a motion to approve meeting minutes of March 21, 2023, seconded by Commissioner Whitman. All in favor-motioned carried.

### RESOLUTION 2023-67 AUTHORIZING APPLICATION TO BE FILED WITH THE CAMDEN COUNTY OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, FARMLAND, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION TRUST FUND

The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Whitman, seconded by Commissioner Lee. All in favor-motion carried.

### RESOLUTION 2023-68 AUTHORIZING A SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH THE BOROUGH OF MOUNT EPHRAIM FOR AMBULANCE SERVICES

The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee, seconded by Commissioner Whitman. Unanimous roll call vote.

## Department Reports:

**Borough Administrator /DPW Superintendent** – It's a busy time for Public Works and all our offices everyone is working hard. We worked hard for the budget introduction, which is always a tough time, and look forward to the budget hearing. Follow up on conversation about the lead certification required. The ordinance was updated and sent over to Sal's office for review. Solicitor's office responded to Mayor Jakubowski question stating that they anticipate that it would be ready for first reading this month.

**Chief Finance Officer** -No Report other than the budget coming up for public hearing.

**Borough Clerk**- It is Financial Disclosures filing time. The State has not opened that up for filing just yet. I will send out an email with instructions as soon as I receive the green light. Please look out for that email. The standard deadline is April 30. No word if that will be extended or not.

**Tax Collector** – See attached report. Everything is running smoothly despite staffing concerns this week.

**Tax Assessor** – Five appeals have been filed. The deadline was yesterday afternoon. The market is strong. A good indication of that is the number of appeals.

**Construction Code/Zoning Report**-Report attached.

**Library** – Still waiting on one more estimate for the HVAC unit. Hoping to have that replaced in the Spring. The Library wants to thank Jim Whalen, PW, for helping with the lights beside the Library on the way back to the parking lot. The staff is very appreciative. New programs are being added weekly. Please check out the social media and their website. Also, we wanted to remind the public that our board meetings are the last Monday of every month and are open to the public and we welcome the public. Mayor Jakubowski added that there is a new book club that now meets at Red, White and Brew for those that might be interested.

**The Recreation Center**- Report attached. The YMCA is working hard to get the word out regarding their summer program. So far only nine (9) have signed up, but we hope to watch those numbers increase. They will be putting out some yard signs and will have flyers on Audubon Day. They will be doing a walk through of the space next week to map things out. I will personally escort them. The interest is high. March – Three (3) non-private events. Haviland & Manion PTAs used the outside bathrooms and grounds for their 5K fundraising events. April - Four (4) parties scheduled, and Audubon Day will be taking place on Saturday, April 29.

**Police Chief**- Report attached. Verbal report presented by Commissioner Lee. There is nothing out of the ordinary in his report. On behalf of the Commissioner and the Police Chief, they are 100% aware as a municipality as to the condition of the roads. Many complaints are received daily, and they are doing everything they can to have that rectified. Now that the weather has broken, we anticipate seeing the resurfacing begin. Dave Taraschi has not received an update yet.

School is on spring break next week. So, word of caution for residents, the kids will be out on their bikes during the day in the streets. Please be extra vigilant next week and every day, please.

**Fire Chief** – Report attached. Twenty-five (25) alarms in March for Audubon. Alarms answered to date: 90.

**OEM**- Report attached. Flood Control Ordinance; received feedback from the Engineers and it looks like we are not going to be going with the strict restraints on the flood ordinance. I should have that ready and have that to the solicitor by the end of the week. We can then get it to the State for their review by June 17. We will have to act on that when we get it back. If we get it back by May, we should have plenty of time to get that on the schedule for adoption with the two meeting requirement by July 17. Engineer, Steve Bach, recommends moving forward with adoption even if we don't get it back from the State on a timely basis. This way no one will be in jeopardy of being denied flood insurance.

**EMS Report**- Report attached. Audubon 108 calls. Thank you for your continued support and passing that resolution today.

**Municipal Court**- Report attached. Nothing else to report. We are just waiting on Haddonfield.

**Engineer**- We submitted our written report. The resolution on the agenda tonight for open space is for playground equipment more specifically some emergency vehicle rockers to place over at the Audubon family park. The second item is the municipal road projects are ongoing. For Merchant and Pine, the contractors have completed flat work. We expect them to be paving in a couple of weeks. The 2022 project is currently being reviewed by DOT. The review for that is in the second phase for Pine. For the 2023 fiscal year project, we have the base survey and are working on the base BID documents to have out for a late summer/early fall BID. Third, the fiscal years 2018, 2020, 2021 and 2022 is the path over at Audubon Family Park and the hockey rink. We were notified by the Borough of Bellmawr that they plan to be over there the week of May 1 following Audubon Day. Lastly, the fiscal year 2021 CDBG project at the Senior Center

remaining funds; pre-construction meeting was March 15, 2023 and the notice to proceed will be issued with the PO. Per Dave Taraschi the demolition of the ceiling was performed as requested. Steve Bach commented that all funding for the path and the hockey rink will be funded by the remaining open funds from 2018, 2020, 2021 and 2022 and will pay for the path and the hockey with the understanding that the Borough of Audubon will cover the costs of the basketball courts but will confirm the number with Bellmawr. This is why we are adding equipment at the park instead of the path.

Pickle ball options were questioned by Commissioner Lee. Installing a pickle ball court, it will be very cost prohibitive was the Mayor's understanding and per Engineer, Steve Bach, the hockey rink will not work as far as measurements go. A discussion was had about installing a pickle ball court, but the sound could also be an issue per Commissioner Whitman. Per the engineers, the cost for a pickle ball court, brand new \$250,000-\$500,000 for six courts. We would need a two-court minimum. Fencing and lighting are needed and those are both very expensive as well.

Haddon Heights requested to Camden County Commissioner if County Parks could recommend the addition of pickle ball courts on the old ball fields on the other side of Kings Highway. There is no significant ball play at that location, and it would provide a centralized area at a Camden county parks. No word on that yet.

**Solicitor** – Jennifer McPeak reported that she received the Lead ordinance from Dave Taraschi and Dani Ingves, and she will review and get to us for a first reading by end of the month. She will turn around the flood plan review as well.

**Sustainable Audubon**- Report provided by Mayor Jakubowski. Next meeting is tomorrow, Wednesday, April 5, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Senior Center. Last week they had a discussion/meeting regarding trees that had about thirty (30) people in attendance. One of the members of Sustainable Audubon is a certified horticulturalist. Many people are passionate about trees, but some came and wanted to have their trees removed. One of our PW guys attended on his own time as well to add to the discussion from his perspective. Thank you to Sean for your time. A county commissioner was in attendance, and they shared that the earmark that we were applying for from Norcross and Booker is to try to get trees. We approved it last month. There are a few more workshops coming up. Please look out for information on social media and their website. Earth Day activities/events will be taking place as a partnership with the Library and William Penn Bank. The flyer will be circulated on social media soon as well as the Sustainable Audubon's website.

**Open Session:** Commissioner Whitman made a motion to open the meeting to the public; seconded by Commissioner Lee. All in favor; motion carried.

Being there was no discussion, Commissioner Lee made a motion to close the meeting to the public; seconded by Commissioner Whitman -All in favor; motion carried.

### **Board of Commissioners Reports:**

**Commissioner Whitman**- Reiterated what Commissioner Lee said about getting beat up with emails about the condition of the roads. We are doing everything we can to speed this along. There are many meetings and conversations going on at the back end that the public is not aware of, but we are constantly working on it.

The NJ Anchor Program was brought up several times in the last month. The checks are starting to go out. So, if you haven't received your check yet, please keep an eye out.

White Horse Pike between Sunoco and the gully area is a complete mess. Concerned about people walking there especially the handicapped. Asked Dave Taraschi about the status. Dave walked around the area to evaluate. There are about 9 blocks from the existing sidewalk to Nicholson Place that need to be replaced. He met with a local contractor to have repairs completed. We don't own right of way, but DOT's position is that sidewalks on ground we own, are our responsibility.

**Mayor Jakubowski**- While sitting here, I have received an email from Senator Booker that he will be sending our earmark to the committee for consideration on the senate side.

Reminder that Audubon Day is coming on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Last year due to the volume of people at our event as well as placement of our emergency services, we once again partnered with the Division of Senior Services at the County and approved by County Commissioners to provide transportation for residents from Borough Hall to the FJW Rec and Com Center during our day festivities. The bus will run back and forth from Borough Hall and FJW Rec Center.

National Volunteer month is this month. So many things have happened in our town because of our volunteers; PTA, soccer, softball, Little league, youth basketball, civic organizations, celebration committee which puts on parades and entertainment for fireworks as well as Audubon Day. They are entirely run by volunteers, and I am looking right at Pat Slemmer, Fire Chief. They are all run by volunteers. April should be volunteer month. Thank you to all our volunteers. We appreciate all our volunteers, and they don't get enough credit.

**Commissioner Lee**- Additional notes for D. Taraschi, Public Works. There are some bulbs out in the alley way from merchant street to the parking lot. Also, voiced his concern to Dave and Mayor in the past about Nelson Tree Co. It seems they are being a little more aggressive on the tree trimming than they need to be. He understands the distance variance and four-year window of trimming, but in my observation they are being a little aggressive. Driving through Haddonfield, he didn't notice any V shapes on their trees. Asked the Mayor to reach out again to his contacts. The Mayor confirmed that has happened and the regional representative is trying to connect them with Director of Forestry and trying to set up a meeting. His ask is for the aggressive nature of cutting to be better. We understand completely regarding the power outage and this is why we have agreed to a substation in our town. We do not want a power outage in our town or region. However, they have taken down so many trees that maybe they should give us some funds to plant some new trees.

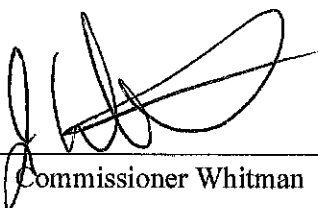
Dave Taraschi asked for clarification on lighting in the alley way. He elaborated that box lighting is controlled inside the restaurant and the restaurant hasn't provided a tremendous amount of cooperation in the past.

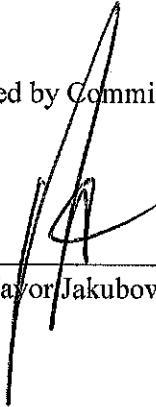
The Borough expended a significant amount to update the acorn lighting on the sidewalk to LED.

The new restaurant is looking good, and it looks like he updated some brick work in that alley way. Hopefully, they will be opening soon after the long wait.

Commissioner Lee made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Whitman. All in favor; motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:34 P.M.

  
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Commissioner Whitman

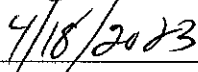
  
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Mayor Jakubowski

  
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Commissioner Lee

ATTEST:

  
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Danielle Ingves, Municipal Clerk

DATE APPROVED :

  
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4/18/2023