

June 3, 2020  
Municipal Building  
121 Evergreen Road  
New Egypt, NJ 08533

The Plumsted Township Committee meeting of June 3, 2020 was called to order by Deputy Mayor Sorchik. Due to the emergent situation with COVID-19 and the municipal building being closed, the meeting was conducted through Zoom.com for the public to participate.

**STATEMENT:** "This meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act." It was presented for publication to the Asbury Park Press and posted on the Bulletin Board.

**THOSE OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

In the Meeting Room:

COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO    DEPUTY MAYOR SORCHIK    DAVE LEUTWYLER  
CLERK WITHAM

Calling in through Zoom.com:

COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN    COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA    BA PRIVETT  
ATTORNEY ZABARSKY    ATTORNEY STIEBER

Mayor Marinari was excused.

Chief Meroney and Lieutenant Reilly also called in through Zoom

Township Engineer Walter Bronson was unable to call into the meeting today.

Deputy Mayor Sorchik asked everyone to rise for the flag salute followed by a moment of silence.

Sorchik reviewed the agenda. He noted that there are no ordinances up for first or second reading tonight. There is a resolution regarding the Second Amendment; a resolution authorizing employees to utilize unused vacation time from 2019 because of restrictions implemented due to coronavirus. There is also a resolution awarding a contract to Earle Asphalt to pave Loveman Road and a resolution authorizing a refund for bingo/raffle license fee; and a resolution authorizing the township to go out to bid for snow plowing and salting services.

Sorchik said he attended the Fire Commissioners meeting Monday night and will continue to meet with them on a periodic basis.

BA Privett spoke about the energy grant. She said she wants to be sure that the township is ready to go forward with it. She is waiting to hear from CFO Madden about the financial part of it. Leutwyler said the CFO has not indicated if the township will utilize a payment plan or a bond to pay for it.

Sorchik asked Leutwyler about the status of the clock repair on Main Street. Leutwyler said he has only been able to find one company to repair it. He spoke about the cost and a possible maintenance agreement. There was a discussion about the particulars of the maintenance agreement, the reputation of the company and the work that needs to be done.

Sorchik provided an update on the sidewalk issue for 37 Magnolia.

Sorchik talked about the capital bond ordinance. Grilletto and Trotta spoke about possible changes to the ordinance. Grilletto suggested that the amount of the bond be reduced. Sorchik said the bond ordinance will be modified from \$2,646,000 to \$2,500,000. The amount of the capital bond is not the amount of money that the township intends to borrow. The bond obligates the money and makes it available to the township for emergencies. Committeeman Bowen said he is fine with \$2,500,000. Trotta requested that road construction be listed as "road construction and sidewalks."

Sorchik asked if Grilletto had anything he would like to discuss. Grilletto said that he and Bowen had a phone conference with the auditors about the township audit. It is scheduled to start on June 8 and will take about three weeks. The report should be issued by September.

Grilletto asked about the appraisal for the Welcome Center. Clerk Witham said that nothing has been done due to the pandemic.

Sorchik asked Bowen if he had any comments. Bowen said there was a positive report from the tax collector regarding May taxes. He would like to thank everyone for paying their taxes, particularly in these uncertain times. It allowed the township to meet its financial obligations. To pay the fire district and the school district and keep people employed.

Bowen spoke about the additional expenses incurred by the township for building maintenance related to COVID-19. He said the township was able to cover the expenses and get everything in place quickly to keep everyone safe. The township will request reimbursement of those costs.

Bowen said that he and Mayor Marinari met with Superintendent Jerry North and Business Administrator Sean Gately to discuss possible savings to the township from the shortened school year. The township was hoping to get some money back from the school for courtesy busing. North and Gately reported that, unfortunately, Trenton has required school districts to pay the full amount of their busing contracts, as well as some other contracts, so there will be no return of money to the township.

Bowen would like to congratulate the eighth grade graduates, as well as the senior graduates this year. He would also like to congratulate their families on a job well done and Superintendent North as he finishes his tenure with our school and heads toward retirement. He thanked North for his service.

Grilletto said he met with the construction supervisor at Lennar who indicated that Lennar intends to restart construction next week.

Sorchik asked Chief Meroney if he had any comments. Meroney spoke about the changes being made in the police department as restrictions are being lifted. They are back to regular staffing and each squad now has three officers. During COVID, he had officers limit their contact with residents. He is slowly allowing more police contact with residents. He has started to rescind some of the orders he put in place for the public. He continues to monitor the COVID situation around the State and track protests occurring in the State and the local area due to the unfortunate situation with Mr. Floyd in Minnesota.

Sorchik asked Committeeman Trotta if he had any comments. Trotta spoke about Resolution 2020-205, which is the award of the contract for Loveman Road. Because the bid came in well under the amount we received, he asked the township engineer if the project could be expanded and still stay within state guidelines. The engineer said he will be able to expand the project a little bit further so that we use as much of that grant money as possible.

Trotta spoke about his opposition to Assembly Bill 4175, which allows the state to borrow \$5 billion and forces municipalities add a surcharge to property taxes to pay it back. Trotta said he is against any state surcharge on our property taxes. We already pay enough in property taxes and in his opinion the state needs to cut spending instead. He said the Mayor agrees with him and asked the committee to consider adopting a resolution by title today opposing Assembly Bill 4175.

Grilletto said he agreed that it is bad legislation. The legislators will drive people out of the state if they continue to pass legislation like this.

Bowen said he also opposes the bill.

Sorchik said since everyone agrees, a resolution will be introduced by title tonight opposing Assembly Bill 4175.

Sorchik asked if there were any other comments. There were none.

Attorney Zabarsky read Resolution No. 2020-194, authorizing the convening of an executive session. The following matters will be discussed: personnel; contractual with regard to redevelopment, professional services-IT Security; litigation with regard to Block 58, Lot 13.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTТА, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, RESOLUTION NO. 2020-194, AUTHORIZING THE CONVENING OF AN EXECUTIVE SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT WAS ADOPTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

The committee returned from Executive Session. Deputy Mayor Sorchik called the Regular Session to order.

Sorchik said there are two sets of minutes to approve.

**MINUTES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR APPROVAL:**

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, THE WORKSHOP/EXECUTIVE/REGULAR SESSION MINUTES OF 4/22/20 WERE APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, THE WORKSHOP/EXECUTIVE/REGULAR SESSION MINUTES OF 5/6/20 WERE APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Committeeman Grilletto said he has exceptions to Resolution 2020-197 on the consent agenda, which supports Assembly Bill 397 and Senate Bill 2475 authorizing the issuance of relief bonds by municipalities and counties due to COVID-19. He is against the bill because he believes it allows municipalities to spend what they want and then issue another bond for that spending. Sorchik said there will be a separate discussion on Resolution 2020-197, and it will be removed from the consent agenda.

**THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS ON A CONSENT AGENDA ARE CONSIDERED ROUTINE AND SHALL BE ENACTED BY ONE MOTION. SHOULD ANY MEMBER OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE SEEK SEPARATE DISCUSSION OF ANY ITEM, THAT ITEM SHALL BE REMOVED AND DISCUSSED SEPARATELY. THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WILL BE VOTED ON IN ONE VOTE.**

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-195 - AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2020 BUDGET TO ALLOW FOR THE CHANGE IN TEXT OR TITLE PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:4-85 (SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITIES GRANT #20-1523)

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-196 - TO SUPPORT THE PRESERVATION OF THE SECOND AMENDMENT

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-198 - AUTHORIZING PAYMENT TO SURETY TITLE AGENCY COASTAL REGION FOR THE PROVISION OF TITLE SERVICES RELATIVE TO THE PURCHASE OF 6 EVERGREEN ROAD, BLOCK 19, LOT 10, IN THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-199 – AUTHORIZING ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES TO UTILIZE UNUSED VACATION DAYS FROM 2019 DURING THE LAST SIX (6) MONTHS OF THE YEAR

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-200 - AUTHORIZING MEMBERS OF THE PLUMSTED POLICE DEPARTMENT TO UTILIZE UNUSED LEAVE TIME DURING THE LAST SIX (6) MONTHS OF THE YEAR

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-201 – AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 2020-30 DESIGNATING EMPLOYEE SALARIES FOR VARIOUS POSITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SALARY ORDINANCE FOR THE YEAR 2020

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-202 - AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF A CHECK FOR THE REDEMPTION OF TAX SALE CERTIFICATES

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-203 - AUTHORIZING THE REFUND OF OVERPAYMENT OF TAXES DUE TO TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN EXEMPTION

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-204 - AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 2020-29 APPOINTING MARCEL RENSON AS THE ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-205 – AWARDING A CONTRACT TO EARLE ASPHALT COMPANY FOR THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FY2019 MUNICIPAL AID ROAD PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS TO LOVEMAN ROAD

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-206 - AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 2020-116 APPOINTING OFFICERS TO THE PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS FOR THE YEAR 2020

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-207 - AUTHORIZING THE REFUND OF A BINGO AND RAFFLES APPLICATION FEE TO NORTH HANOVER UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTO

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-208 - AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP CLERK TO ADVERTISE FOR RECEIPT OF BIDS FOR SNOWPLOWING AND SALTING SERVICES WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-209 - REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR THE INSERTION OF A SPECIAL ITEM OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATION PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A.40A:4-87 (SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITIES GRANT #20-1523)

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, THE AFOREMENTIONED RESOLUTIONS 2020-195 THROUGH 2020-196 and RESOLUTIONS 2020-198 THROUGH 2020-209 ON PAGES 1 AND 2 OF THE CONSENT AGENDA WERE APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

Sorchik introduced the discussion on Resolution 2020-197 regarding Assembly Bill No. 3971 and Senate Bill No. 2475.

Grilletto said he read the entire bill and basically what it is saying is that you can issue bonds to make up for the financial effects of the Coronavirus on the township. He does not believe that there will be that many unreimbursed expenses. He believes it is a ticket to spend money and then issue a bond. He looked at who voted in favor of it. He is completely against it. The bill is against his principles. It is a ticket to issue and raise money and raise taxes. This bill allows bonds at the local level. It is similar to Assembly Bill 4175, which is statewide.

Trotta said he generally agrees with what was just said by Grilletto. He also looks at the bill another way. Several years ago everyone was appealing their taxes and the township committee was still liable to pay the school, the county and the fire department their full tax dollars. He said that the township had a good tax quarter this May, but what if August and November are not so good and the township still has to make payments to the other entities. If the township ends up having to borrow money to do that, it is responsible for paying all of the costs. He thinks there should be something in the bill that states if the township has to borrow to pay these other entities, then they should have to pay part of the costs. It is not fair that the township has to pay all of the costs. Trotta said he plans to vote no on the resolution tonight. He said the bill has already passed the Assembly and is currently under consideration by the Senate.

Bowen said he does not think Plumsted Township would take advantage of the bill. He spoke about the current financial uncertainty and other towns possibly needing to use the bill. He said it provides a mechanism for those municipalities that need money. He does not know if he would object to other towns utilizing the bill if it is needed. It seems in these times if it is going to be used, each county and municipality is going to have to take responsibility for how it is used. He would not object to giving them this vehicle if they desperately need it.

Grilletto spoke about sole proprietors and loans provided by the CARES Act for salaries and rent.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, RESOLUTION NO. 2020-197 - SUPPORTING ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 3971 AND SENATE BILL NO. 2475 TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF CORONAVIRUS RELIEF BONDS BY MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES WAS NOT APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL NAYES, EXCEPT COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN VOTED AYE.

Sorchik said there is a resolution by title. It will be Resolution 2020-210 regarding Assembly Bill No. 4175. He asked Trotta to speak about it.

Trotta said Resolution 2020-210 would state the township's opposition to State Assembly Bill No. 4175, which is the New Jersey COVID-19 Emergency Bond Act.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, RESOLUTION NO. 2020-210 – OPPOSING ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 4175 WAS ADOPTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES

Sorchik said there is an add-on resolution for fireworks at the New Egypt Speedway on July 4. He spoke about why the resolution was kept separate. He said the township does not approve events. It will be made clear to the Speedway that it is up to the governor's office whether or not they can have an event. The township's resolution only facilitates the ability of the fire marshal to conduct a fireworks inspection.

Sorchik asked if there were any questions regarding Resolution 2020-211.

Bowen asked if the fire marshal reviews the current directives with them. Sorchik said no. The township asks them to prepare a plan for their event, which is given to Chief Meroney. He then forwards the plan to the appropriate agencies for their approval.

Meroney said that the Speedway had no answer to their plan as of this afternoon. If they are allowed to open, it will only be for drivers.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN, RESOLUTION NO. 2018-211 – APPROVING THE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF FIREWORKS AT THE NEW EGYPT SPEEDWAY FOR JULY 4, 2020 WAS ADOPTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES

#### **REPORTS OF DEPARTMENTS AND PROFESSIONALS:**

Deputy Mayor Sorchik asked if there were any comments on the Bill List.

Bowen said he had a comment. The township received a March 13, 2020 letter from the Township Engineer regarding P.O. 2020-0069 recommending that the township obtain a couple of more items before the bill is paid. Bowen recommends that the township adopt the recommendations in his letter before making final payment.

Trotta spoke about two bills on the list that were paid for by employees and included sales tax. The Finance Department does not make reimbursement for sales tax. These were two things that had to be done immediately for the good of the township. He believes the two reimbursement checks should be revised to include sales tax. The township would not be having tonight's meeting if Zoom had not been purchased by an employee. Meetings have to be held to run the township. There was no way to get a sales tax certificate in advance. The employees should not be penalized in this case. These were extraordinary circumstances that had to be done immediately.

There was a discussion about the possibility of going back to the companies and asking for a refund of the sales tax and whether to issue new checks to the employees or reimburse them the difference in July. It was decided to approve the current bill list and direct the CFO to make up the difference next month.

Deputy Mayor Sorchik asked if there were any other comments on the Bill List. There were none.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, THE BILL LIST OF JUNE 3, 2020 WAS APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

**REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR COMMITTEE REVIEW:** ENGINEER'S REPORT – June 2020; CONSTRUCTION REPORT – April 2020; TAX COLLECTOR REPORT – April 2020; FINANCIAL REPORTS – Revenue Summary by Month April 2020; Abbreviated Summary Budget Account Status April 2020; POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT – April 2020; PLUMSTED BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT #1 MEETING MINUTES – April 6, 2020; PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP MUA MINUTES – April 14, 2020 and May 6, 2020

Sorchik asked if there were any questions about the reports; there were none.

Leutwyler thanked the committee for the tax reimbursement and asked a question about the capital bond ordinance.

Sorchik asked if there was any old business from the committee. There was none.

Sorchik asked if there was any new business from the committee.

Sorchik said he would like to recognize township employees for the work they have been doing at this time. Not only are they working from home, they are coming in to pick up stuff. They are working unusual hours. It has definitely affected their family lives. He spoke about first responders. He said that there has not been one time he has called Chief Meroney's cell phone that he did not pick it up and answer questions. EMS has been extraordinary. Working with a shortage of equipment and taking extra steps to protect themselves. He thinks it is appropriate to recognize township employees for all of the hard work they have done.

Sorchik said he is proud to be in a town where people understand the need for the township to do what it has been doing. Business owners have had incredible hardships trying to keep going. He thinks people have been tremendous about being compliant and working with first responders.

Grilletto said he agrees and commends the people of the township for cooperating in this time with all that is going on. He also mentioned the riots that have been occurring.

Sorchik asked if there was any other new business from the committee. There was none.

Deputy Mayor Sorchik opened up the meeting for public comment.

Larry Jones, 14 Oakwood, New Egypt, had a question about baseball. He is on the board and is under the impression that the governor will open non-contact organized sports on June 22. He asked if Plumsted will have organized practice baseball at the recreation fields. Sorchik said that he has asked any entity that wants to do something in the town to submit a plan showing what it intends to do and their safety protocols. Chief Meroney will forward it to find out if the activity will be allowed. The township did not make the rules. He thinks it is imperative that the governor's representative decide how this is going to be enacted. The township would be more than willing to accept a plan from Jones.

Jones complimented the EMTs on a call that occurred about a month ago. Everything is fine now and he just wanted to thank the EMTs. He also thanked the police department. It is sad for him to see people take advantage of, or bash, police around the country. Some people think that all police are bad. But they are not. It is just like thinking all protestors are bad. He said it is a shame.

Sorchik asked if there were any other comments from the public. There was none. Sorchik closed public comment.

Chief Meroney said he wanted to provide the latest information about Mr. Jones' baseball requirements. As of late yesterday, the plan is to allow baseball, but there will be guidance coming out from the Attorney General and the Governor about attendance by fans and spectators.

Sorchik asked if there were any other comments. There were none.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, THE JUNE 3, 2020 MEETING WAS ADJOURNED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Witham, RMC, CMR  
Municipal Clerk