

October 7, 2020
Municipal Building
121 Evergreen Road
New Egypt, NJ 08533

The Plumsted Township Committee meeting of October 7, 2020 was called to order by Mayor Marinari. 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 COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA
DEPUTY MAYOR SORCHIK MAYOR MARINARI DAVE LEUTWYLER ATTORNEY ZABARSKY
BA/CLERK WITHAM

Calling in through Zoom.com: DEPUTY MAYOR SORCHIK and TOWNSHIP ENGINEER WALT BRONSON

Chief Meroney and Lieutenant Reilly were also in attendance.

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

Marinari spoke about a document written by Committeeman Bowen regarding invocation. The committee has been dealing with invocation for many years and it is his wish that the committee come to some conclusion tonight. He asked committee members to discuss their feelings about invocation.

Committeeman Grilletto said he is in favor of having an invocation. He spoke about a petition signed by 108 people to have it. It is our tradition and custom to have it. It is necessary to have invocation.

Bowen said he supports it. He has tried to include all of the input in his proposal that he has received from the different members of the committee. In their role as committee members they have to act in the best interest of the entire community. He thinks that is why you ask for guidance beyond yourself when you begin a meeting.

Committeeman Trotta said he has discussed it through the years and has nothing to add.

Deputy Mayor Sorchik said he has discussed it in the past as well. He believes the committee is serving the public in offering a moment of silence so they can reflect on what they feel is important. If they choose to pray, they can do so at that time. He thinks that is adequate.

Marinari asked Township Attorney Zabarsky to comment on invocation.

Zabarsky said that their firm forwarded a legal analysis to the mayor and township committee in January 2020 regarding invocation. They contacted the state for information and attached a letter dated January 28, 2020 from Greg Harris, Director of Constituent Services. Harris' letter analyzes the U.S. Supreme court case Town of Greece v. Galloway and a more recent Third Circuit Court of Appeals case Fields v. Speaker of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, which applies to New Jersey.

In his analysis, Harris writes that invocation from clergy, as has been the time-honored tradition in our country, is not unconstitutional and does not violate the First Amendment in terms of Freedom of Speech of the Establishment Clause of Religion. Harris said that the Town of Greece utilized an informal method of unpaid volunteers and a list of a local directory of congregations and religious establishments to invite whoever was "willing" to be a chaplain. Those persons who accepted an invitation would be put on a list to come and give an invocation.

Zabarsky said he reviewed Bowen's letter, in which he copies language from the case law, that non-believers and religious minorities should not be denigrated. The invocation should not preach or get involved with invoking religious connotations, although it can refer to god, the lord, etc.

Zabarsky said you put the invitation out to whoever wants to come in and speak. In Greece, they opened it up to atheists and lay persons to come in and give an invocation. The Fields case said it was okay to exclude atheists because they are not clergy and do not believe in god. To be clear, the invitation goes out and whoever wants to come in and give an invocation would be able to do so.

The Township of Greece neither reviewed the prayers in advance nor provided guidance as to their tone or content. They believed that exercising any degree of control would infringe upon the free speech of the ministers and instead left the clergy free to compose their own devotions, resulting in prayers sounding both religious and civic in themes.

Content cannot be controlled and clergy cannot be told what to do. Whoever is invited would be allowed to be clergy. You cannot “pick and choose” who you want or do not want to give the invocation. Once the invitation is open, the town has to remain neutral on who is going to come in and who is not in terms of a clergy person, or whoever wants to come in and do this.

Zabarsky asked if there were any questions.

Marinari spoke about the list of clergy that was provided by Bowen and said anyone else who wants to pray would be able to come in and pray during the invocation.

Zabarsky emphasized that it has to be an open process. Whoever wants to come in and give the invocation could come in and give an invocation.

Bowen said he indicated in his report how the list was prepared and that it would be inclusive of all representatives in our faith community.

Marinari said he asked Bowen to reach out to the congregations to see if they would be willing to be on a list for invocation. He said that, previously, issues developed when the township did not have the participation of some individuals.

Marinari spoke about the history of how the committee tried to prepare a schedule that would work for everyone. Issues developed and he said he does not want to get into that again.

Bowen said he did not contact anyone about invocation prior to the meeting because he did not want to commit to any action until he received direction from the committee. He said he would be willing to contact people before the next meeting.

Marinari said he needs Bowen to do that. It can be anyone; it does not have to be on that list. Otherwise, he has a fear that it will again end up in a free for all.

Grilletto asked for a vote from the committee for the invocation. Zabarsky said it would have to be moved to the regular agenda.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN, THE VOTE CONCERNING INVOCATION BE PUT ON THE REGULAR AGENDA WAS ADOPTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES, EXCEPT NAYS BY COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA AND DEPUTY MAYOR SORCHIK

Marinari spoke about the maintenance of Colliers Mills [sic] “Ephraim Emson Preserve on Colliers Mills Rd”. The Pynes organization, Assemblyman Dancer, and Committeeman Trotta worked with Ocean County on the concept of Colliers Mills. Now it has to be maintained. Although there has not been an opening ceremony due to Covid, people are using the trails. Two families have been lost back there and people are getting hurt because the trails are not smoothed down. They are getting chiggers and other insects on them. It is open to hunting and the township does not know what hunters are there and how safe they are.

Marinari said that under the contract with the county, the township is responsible for the maintenance of Colliers Mills. He recommends that the township start by re-establishing the pathways and trails the way they should be, which should be done about four times a year. He described machinery that the township can purchase to do the work. He suggested that it be maintained one day a month by the township, maybe more often in the growing season. That way the township could maintain it for less cost than paying an outside company to do it.

Grilletto asked about how the trails are identified. Marinari said it is done by blazes. Grilletto spoke about the need for directional signs. He suggested the township have a contract with the county to maintain the area, rather than purchasing equipment. Grilletto recommended that signs be made stating that these are not paved trails and that this is an environmental area.

Councilman Trotta said the project goes back three mayors. It took a long time to get it going. The county was slow in getting it done, but they were very clear that if it was done, the township would be responsible for maintenance. Since it is a county park, the county would have to put signs up. The

township decided to go forward with the project. It was never decided by the township whether maintenance would be in-house or if the township would hire someone to do it.

Marinari suggested the township speak to the county to see if they will do the maintenance and the township will reimburse them. If not, the township can proceed to do the maintenance in-house.

Trotta said if the county is agreeable to maintaining it, the township will have to get it back to its original condition.

Marinari requested that the mercantile license ordinance be tabled since there is not a consensus to move forward with it.

Marinari reviewed the agenda. He said the second reading and public hearing for Mercantile Ordinance 2020-10 is going to be tabled.

There is a resolution amending the closing costs for the purchase of 6 Evergreen Road. The salary resolution is being amended tonight, which is usually done each year. There are several resolutions for refunds: an employee health insurance contribution, a construction permit fee that was received in duplicate, off-duty police fees that were not used due to the pandemic, and some tax overpayments.

There will be a discussion about filling the Downtown Economic Development position. There was a resolution awarding the snowplowing/salting contract to Vernon Dancer. Earlier today, Mr. Dancer advised the township that he has decided not to move forward with the contract. Marinari thanked Mr. Dancer for the work he has done for the township in the past. He said the township will need to go out to bid for snowplowing with a bid opening on November 10th, 2020. Marinari requested that a special meeting be scheduled on Tuesday, November 17th, 2020 at 6:00 pm to award the snowplowing contract.

Other resolutions include the purchase of 9 portable and 9 mobile police radios for the Police Department, as well as a fingerprinting machine for the police department. There are resolutions for the energy grant and an agreement for upgrading the lighting, HVAC and boiler in the municipal building. Also there is a resolution upgrading the door system access into the municipal building. Witham asked about pulling the door system resolution. She said the Chief requested a similar system at the police department and it might be advantageous for the township to get a quote for both at the same time.

Marinari said there is a resolution replacing outlets on some utility poles on Main Street so the township can hang the snowflake holiday lights this year. It was necessary to replace 8 of the outlet boxes for safety reasons; the snowflake lights would not have been able to be hung without the replacement boxes. There was a discussion about the cost of hanging the snowflakes. He said the township is doing the best it can with the money it has. The township received \$34,000 in CDBG grant money to pave the parking lot at the softball field recreation area on Pine Street.

Marinari asked for discussion or comments from the township committee.

Trotta commented on the resolution for the police radios and fingerprinting machine. He is pleased to see that the township continues to provide the police with all of the equipment they need and that it can afford to buy. It has been a delicate balance throughout the years.

Sorchik said he has sent in the first CARES Act submission for reimbursement. It covers township expenses up until August 30, 2020.

Grilletto said that Township Engineer will be speaking about the I-Bank tonight. He reminded everyone about the celebration on October 17, 2020 of the 175th incorporation of the township.

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

Attorney Zabarsky read Resolution No. 2020-283, authorizing the convening of an executive session. The following matters will be discussed: personnel; contractual with regard to public grounds maintenance; litigation with regard to Block 44, Lot 26.02, Block 30, Lot 19, and Block 27, Lot 6.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN, RESOLUTION NO. 2020-283, 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. Mayor Marinari called the Regular Session to order.

MINUTES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR APPROVAL:

There is one set of minutes up for approval tonight.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN, THE WORKSHOP/EXECUTIVE/REGULAR SESSION MINUTES OF AUGUST 5, 2020 WERE APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES WITH COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA ABSTAINING.

There is no correspondence, presentations or proclamations at this time.

ORDINANCE – SECOND READING/PUBLIC HEARING/ADOPTION:

Marinari said Ordinance 2020-10 is up for second reading and public hearing tonight and requested that the ordinance be tabled.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, ORDINANCE NO. 2020-10 – AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 27 OF THE GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED, ENTITLED “LICENSING,” SO AS TO CREATE NEW SECTION 27.1 ENTITLED “MERCANTILE LICENSE” WAS TABLED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

There are no ordinances tonight for introduction.

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. 2020-282- AMENDING 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. 2020-284 – AMENDING RESOLUTION 2020-210 OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, DESIGNATING EMPLOYEE SALARIES FOR VARIOUS POSITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SALARY ORDINANCE FOR THE YEAR 2020

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-285 – AUTHORIZING THE REFUND OF HEALTH INSURANCE CONTRIBUTION TO PATRICIA STARZYNSKI

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-286 - AUTHORIZING THE REFUND OF AN ELECTRICAL PERMIT FEE TO JOSE RECENDE

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-287 – AUTHORIZING THE PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP CONSTRUCTION OFFICIAL TO WAIVE THE COLLECTION OF A ZONING PERMIT FEE ON BLOCK 24, LOT 7 (2 MEADOWBROOK LANE – AMERICAN LEGION)

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-288 – AUTHORIZING THE PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP CONSTRUCTION OFFICIAL TO WAIVE THE COLLECTION OF FEES ON BLOCK 14, LOT 8 (38 NORTH MAIN ST – UNITED METHODIST CHURCH)

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-289 – AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP CLERK TO ADVERTISE FOR THE RECEIPT OF PROPOSALS FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR 2021

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-290 – TO EFFECTUATE THE RENEWAL OF A CONTRACT TO PROVIDE 2020-2021 SNOWPLOWING/SALTING SERVICES FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED TO VERNON E. DANCER

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-291 – AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 2020-259 APPOINTING SHARON GOWER AS CLEAN COMMUNITIES COORDINATOR

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-292 – APPOINTING ERVIN OROSS AS THE DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-293 – AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF A CHECK FOR THE REDEMPTION OF TAX SALE CERTIFICATES

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-294 – AUTHORIZING DEWBERRY ENGINEERING, INC., TOWNSHIP ENGINEER AS PROJECT ENGINEER FOR THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION GRANT FY2020 MUNICIPAL AID PROGRAM OR IMPROVEMENTS TO TOWER ROAD

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-295 – AMENDING RESOLUTION 2020-136 APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-296 – AUTHORIZING THE REFUND OF AN OVERPAYMENT FOR OFF-DUTY POLICE EMPLOYMENT TO LAURITA WINERY

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-297 – AUTHORIZING THE REFUND OF OVERPAYMENT OF TAXES DUE TO TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN EXEMPTION

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-298 – AUTHORIZING THE REFUND OF OVERPAYMENT OF TAXES DUE TO TAX APPEAL

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-299 – CANCELLING PARTIAL 2020 3RD QTR, 4TH, AND 2021 1ST AND 2ND QTR PROPERTY TAXES DUE TO TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN STATUS EFFECTIVE 7/13/20 FOR ROBERT W. ANDERSON (BLOCK 75.02, LOT 1)

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-300 – AWARDING A CONTRACT TO MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS FOR 9 PORTABLE AND 9 MOBILE POLICE RADIOS THROUGH NEW JERSEY STATE CONTRACT #83909

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-301– AWARDING A CONTRACT TO IDEMIA IDENTITY & SECURITY USA, LLC FOR A FINGERPRINTING MACHINE AND PRINTER THROUGH NEW JERSEY STATE CONTRACT #T3083

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-302 – AWARDING A CONTRACT TO SECURITY INSTRUMENT CORP. TO PROVIDE A DOOR ACCESS SYSTEM FOR THE PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-303 – APPROVING AN AGREEMENT WITH JCP&L FOR THE USE OF UTILITY POLES WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISPLAYING HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-304 – AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 2020-229 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE PSE&G ENERGY EFFICIENT UPGRADE AGREEMENT

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-305 – REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR THE INSERTION OF A SPECIAL ITEM OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATION PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A.40A:4-87 (COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT – FY2020)

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-306 – AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER TO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO NEW JERSEY I-BANK (NJIB) FOR INTERIM AND LONG-TERM FINANCING FOR NJDOT LOCAL AID PROJECTS

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-307 – AWARDING A CONTRACT TO JCP&L (FIRST ENERGY CORP.) TO REPLACE EIGHT (8) HOLIDAY OUTLETS ON THE TELEPHONE POLES IN DOWNTOWN NEW EGYPT

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-308 – AUTHORIZING THE REFUND OF INSPECTION ESCROWS TO LENNAR PLUMSTED URBAN RENEWAL

Marinari said that Resolution 2020-290 is being pulled from the Agenda.

Grilletto asked for details about the door access system in Resolution 2020-302. Leutwyler responded that he would have to speak with CFO Madden to confirm the details. Witham asked that the resolution be pulled from the agenda until the November 2020 meeting so the details can be clarified before it is voted on by the committee.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO THE AFOREMENTIONED RESOLUTIONS 2020-282 AND RESOLUTIONS 2020-284 THROUGH 2020-

308 ON PAGES 2 AND 3 OF THE CONSENT AGENDA, WITH RESOLUTION 2020-290 AND RESOLUTION 2020-302 BEING PULLED, WERE APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES, EXCEPT COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN VOTED NAY ON RESOLUTION 2020-284, RESOLUTION 2020-292 AND RESOLUTION 2020-304.

Witham said there is an add-on resolution. She read a letter of resignation received today from Electrical Subcode Official Marcel Renson in the Construction Department effective Thursday, October 15, 2020. Ralph Rosamilia is the Alternate Electrical Subcode Inspector. Glenn Riccardi spoke with him and he has agreed to take Renson's place. The add-on resolution would appoint Ralph Rosamilia as Electrical Inspector.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN, RESOLUTION NO. 2020-309 – APPOINTING RALPH ROSAMILIA AS THE ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED WAS ADOPTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

Witham asked about voting on a resolution regarding invocation. Marinari asked if there was any discussion. Bowen asked if he should provide a list of people to appoint first. Marinari said that he believes that trouble was caused by having holes in the previous list and not having people scheduled. We are not going to be prejudiced against anybody. There was a discussion about voting on it today or in November's committee meeting.

COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO MADE A MOTION TO GO FORWARD WITH A RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE A LIST OF PARTIES TO PROVIDE INVOCATION AT THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETINGS. THERE WAS NO SECOND.

COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN MADE A MOTION TO TABLE THE RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE A LIST OF PARTIES TO PROVIDE INVOCATION AT THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETINGS UNTIL THE NOVEMBER 2020 COMMITTEE MEETING. THERE WAS NO SECOND.

Attorney Zabarsky said that since there were no seconds, the resolutions are deemed as not being acted upon.

MOTION TO CONSIDER: ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN, THE FOLLOWING RAFFLES AND BINGO LICENSES WERE APPROVED: RAFFLES LICENSE NO. 2020-21: ON PREMISE 50/50 10/24/20-11/29/20 FOR NEW EGYPT FOOTBALL, DANCE AND CHEER. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES

REPORTS OF DEPARTMENTS AND PROFESSIONALS:

Mayor Marinari asked if there were any comments on the Amended Bill List for September 2, 2020; there were none.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN, THE AMENDED BILL LIST OF SEPTEMBER 2, 2020 WAS APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

Mayor Marinari asked if there were any comments on the Bill List; there were none.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN BOWEN, THE BILL LIST OF OCTOBER 7, 2020 WAS APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR COMMITTEE REVIEW: TOWNSHIP ENGINEER REPORT – October 7, 2020; CONSTRUCTION REPORT – August 2020; TAX COLLECTOR REPORT – August 2020; FINANCIAL REPORTS – Revenue Summary by Month August 2020; Abbreviated Summary Budget Account Status August 2020; Treasurer's Report August 2020; Memo re: September Note Sale; Memo re: October Note Sale (MUA); POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT – August 2020; PLUMSTED BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT #1 MEETING MINUTES – August 3, 2020; PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP MUA MINUTES – July 21, 2020 and August 18, 2020.

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

Grilletto spoke about the finance committee meeting with Bronson and Madden concerning I-Bank financing referenced in Resolution No. 2020-306. He thanked Bronson for bringing it forward to the township.

Marinari asked if there was any old business from the committee.

Bowen asked if a meeting has been scheduled with JCP&L. Witham said the county is holding a meeting with JCP&L and will be sending an invitation to the township to participate. Ron Crocker, our representative at JCP&L, said that he would be able to meet with individual towns after meeting with the county.

Bowen asked about referring the question of the old township building to the Preservation Committee. Witham said that the township is waiting for the Downtown Economic person to start and then get him involved as well.

Witham said that Ron Crocker also advised that JCP&L has some money to donate to different towns for certain events. She sent him a letter requesting a donation to sponsor some township events, i.e. the Christmas tree lighting. She received notification the next day that JCP&L is donating \$1000 to Plumsted Township to be used for our events.

Marinari asked that Witham send a thank you letter from the committee to JCP&L and a letter to Vernon Dancer formally thanking him for all of years of service to the township.

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

Trotta asked if the township is moving on the September 29, 2020 letter from the Ocean County Engineer regarding the generator bypass for certain intersections. There is a cost involved to the township. Witham said that CFO Madden and Assistant Treasurer Gower have been looking into it. Some of the intersections are only in Plumsted, while others involve two counties and more than one municipality. Gower recommended that the township consider approaching them about sharing the costs. Trotta said that the township also needs to check who pays for the traffic light.

Meroney said that after the last storm, he submitted a requisition for a portable generator to use when the power goes out and causes traffic lights to go out. He said that the Plumsted Township Police Department takes care of all of the stop lights that are listed, even if they are partially located in another county or municipality. The portable generator would be needed until the generator bypasses are operational sometime next year.

Grilletto asked about a resident's request to find out the types and number of calls the police department respond to monthly, as well as the number of traffic tickets that are written. Witham said that anyone can submit an OPRA request to the Municipal Clerk's Office for the information.

Trotta spoke about a Berkeley Township resolution urging maximum penalties for crimes against police officers. He thinks the committee should consider a similar resolution. Grilletto said he agrees with Trotta. It was decided that the resolution would be added to November's meeting agenda.

Sorchik said that the Office of Emergency Management has two generators available for the police to use.

Bowen asked for an update on opening the playgrounds. Witham spoke about what is being done to prepare the playgrounds to be opened. The goal is for them to be opened on the weekend of 10/17/20. An announcement will be made on the website when they are ready to open.

Bowen talked about ideas for a safe option for the tree lighting ceremony. He emphasized the importance of social distancing. They will be doing trial runs and have a presentation for the November 2020 meeting.

Marinari asked if there was any other new business. There was none.

Mayor Marinari opened up the meeting for public comment.

Marc Russo, 7 Alton Street, Plumsted, NJ, said he represents a volunteer organization called "Plumsted for Progress." Their goal is to make the township a welcome place for everyone. He said the group submitted a resolution to the committee rejecting white supremacy and violence committed in its name. They were disappointed to learn that it was not considered for a vote by the committee at tonight's meeting. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security just released a report that China, Russia and white supremacy are the biggest threats to our country's national security. The New Jersey Department of Homeland Security has upgraded the terror level threat of white supremacy from moderate to high. He said according to the last census, the demographic makeup of the township is 94% white. He has lived here his whole life and has heard fellow residents use racial slurs, seen the Confederate flags and heard coaches and teachers promoting white supremacy and degrading minorities. He spoke about other municipalities that have passed similar resolutions. He asked why the resolution was not considered by the committee. He said their group believes it is important for

the township to condemn white supremacy and violence in an official capacity before something tragic happens in Plumsted. They would welcome any feedback from the committee.

Bowen said that the committee passed an excellent resolution at its August 2020 meeting. He thinks Resolution 2020-256 strongly states the committee's position. It is a universal resolution that covers any subset of the issue, including white supremacy. Marinari said the resolution was voted on unanimously. Russo said the resolution does not condemn white supremacy. Bowen said it does not use those exact terms, but the language that is in there clearly states that the township has zero tolerance. Russo asked the township committee to make a comment tonight condemning white supremacy. Sorchik said he believes the committee has already done that. As an individual, he condemns extremist groups and he knows his fellow committee members feel the same way. He has read the document from Homeland Security and he believes the committee's original resolution says that it objects to any organization or process that discriminates against people based on race, color, creed or nationality, sexual orientation or gender. He feels it has been addressed by the committee already, even before the document was released by Homeland Security. Russo invited committee members to attend the group's next meeting. He would like to work with the committee to keep marginalized people in the community safe.

Pastor Zoon said she woke up one morning with the thought that we really do need to specifically condemn white supremacy. She grew up in small town. White was normal. It was not questioned. She came to some new understanding very gradually in the seminary while working with one of the professors. It made her aware of structural racism. She thinks we are often blind because we are so used to the way things are and being white is normal. Being male is normal. She can speak more to what it is like to be a woman in management in AT&T. It was not easy because there were so many things that would get in the way. She is proud that the Presbyterian Church USA put out a condemnation of white supremacy in 2017. Scripture has been used to justify racism and white supremacy. We need to be aware of that. She said she does not know if it is as important for the committee to issue a statement as it is to have a continuing dialogue. She knows that some people do not agree that there is such a thing as white supremacy. She thinks it is important during this time of great division in our nation to bring people together and talk about some of these things and where we can agree and support each other.

The committee thanked Pastor Zoon for her comments.

Marinari asked if there were any other public comments. There were none. Public comments were closed.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN TROTTA, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, THE OCTOBER 7, 2020 MEETING WAS ADJOURNED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Witham, RMC, CMR
Municipal Clerk