

February 3, 2022
121 Evergreen Rd
New Egypt, NJ 08533

The Plumsted Township Committee meeting of February 3, 2022 was called to order by Mayor Bowen.

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 Trenton Times and posted on the Bulletin Board.

THOSE OFFICIALS PRESENT:

COMMITTEEMAN CALABRESE COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI
MAYOR BOWEN ATTORNEY ZABARSKY CLERK WITHAM

Committeeman Cuzzo was not yet in attendance but joined the executive session.

Attorney Zabarsky read the committee into the executive session. ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, RESOLUTION NO. 2022-103 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 Bowen called the Workshop/Regular Session to order. He asked everyone rise for the flag salute and invocation by Reverend James Gutacker.

A second roll call was taken; all committee in attendance. Mayor Bowen advised there is a new meeting format this year with the executive session starting at 6 pm. We will be going into a second executive session later this evening.

Clerk Witham read the following statement regarding remote meetings:

Please be advised that this meeting is being held remotely according to DLGS guidelines as presented in Resolution No. 2020-351 that was adopted at the December 28, 2020 Township Committee meeting. Participants' audio will be muted until the public comment portion of the meeting. We ask that each participant mute themselves as well to avoid any interference in the recorded meeting.

There will be an opportunity for public comment during the regular session of the meeting which shall be limited to 5 minutes per person. At the time you wish to make public comment, you may unmute yourself accordingly.

Should there be any disruption from the public during the remote meeting, they will be warned and should the conduct continue, they will be muted or removed from the public meeting.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Mayor Bowen spoke about snow removal; the events we had this year so far and the new contractor for 2022. He mentioned that the overnight parking restrictions was suspended to allow overnight parking and allow the plows to clear the roads.

Bowen then discussed EMS and the progress that has been made to date. We are still in discussions with all parties to determine how best to move forward with offering EMS to our residents. We are pulling Resolution No. 2022-112 and will consider it at the next meeting in March. Bowen then reviewed the agenda. There are three resolutions carried over from the last

meeting. Deputy Mayor Marinari discussed public grounds. Since our contractor was unable to fulfill the responsibility this year as he moved out of state, we looked at other options. It was decided to go out to bid again for a contractor. We did have the first public hearing for the CDBG last month and the second public hearing will be tonight.

Bowen asked for any comments from the committee. Committeeman Cuozzo is happy with the new format for meetings. No committee reports were discussed. Committeeman Calabrese said that we have a LUB member that is willing and able to help with the audio for our meetings to tie in to the microphones we have. It should help to hear the meetings better on Zoom.

Committeeman Grilletto spoke about the Annual Debt Statement. It is broken down with gross debt, school debt, and the rest are bonds we have. Page 8 shows the amount of money we have in reserve. The statement will be posted on our website.

There was discussion with reintroducing invocation at the January meeting. It has been referred to counsel. Zabarsky didn't have any comment as the resolution was approved. Committeeman Cuozzo explained what the workshop session involved and he is happy with having the invocation and a resolution for it. He would like to consider an ordinance as well.

Mayor Bowen read the resignation letter from Officer Nani. Chief Meroney said that K-9 Lock retired as well. There will be a resolution for Lock's retirement next month.

Chief Meroney came forward to receive his certificate of appointment as Public Safety Director.

Municipal Drug & Alcohol Alliance coordinator Ann Funck came forward to speak about the Alliance. Funck has been on the Alliance for 15 years. She went through their vision, what they do and how they function. They are funded through the Governor's Council on Drug Abuse, through drug fines. Several state departments are represented in that alliance. There are also county departments that they interact with as well. Pre-pandemic their DDER funding was \$24,000; post-pandemic it is \$7,800. Funck spoke about the grant process. Local, county and state partners are always included in their needs assessments. They work with Plumsted businesses and the schools. Their focus is community development and they attend all Township events, back to school nights, did training at Laurita and utilize the website. Karen Brown and Tom Chemris came forward to speak about the school alliance. She discussed programs that are held in the school district for children and the families. Chemris spoke about the middle and high school programs regarding prevention education. Chemris talked about the Heroes and Cool Kids peer mentor program. Funck thanked the committee for their interest and support since 1989. She congratulated the Ocean County Volunteer of the Year Tom Chemris. Finally, Funck thanked the members of the Alliance for their dedication to the community.

Committeeman Calabrese thanked the Alliance for this very important program. Committeeman Cuozzo asked about the number of volunteers. Funck said the committee has been steady. If there are functions in the school, teachers are first in line to help. Funck would always welcome volunteers at any of their functions. Cuozzo asked about involvement in community events. He asked if she has noticed any change in the attitudes of youth regarding the change in legalization of recreational use of marijuana. Funck said it is illegal for anyone under 21. It hasn't affected anyone in the school due to their age under 21. Cuozzo asked about assemblies in the schools. Funck said that they are able to do that but there are strict grant guidelines. So where it fits in, they are able to do that. Chemris has gotten fantastic speakers in the past; always one the day of the prom for juniors and seniors.

Grilletto thanked Ann Funck for the program, as well as Linda Leutwyler for their dedication. Deputy Mayor Marinari said this is a vitally important group. He mentioned that there are also many important programs for adults as well. Mayor Bowen asked about how to get in touch with the Alliance. Bowen asked about the cut in funding. The Alliance has had to cut many programs due to the lack of funding. It was important to keep Heroes and Cool Kids peer leaders as it reaches all of the schools. Grilletto asked more about the legalization but Funck hasn't been notified of anything different with that. Calabrese asked if she saw any funding coming back. Funck doesn't know but they are hopeful.

John Neyenhouse, Chairman of the Environmental Committee came forward. Neyenhouse said that the commission has been in effect since 1990. It was changed to a committee because they were down to three members and didn't meet the requirements of the commission. They consistently meet monthly, they even met in the parking lot during the pandemic. There are about 12 active participants now; there is a lot of interest. They work for the EPA, DEP, Save Barnegat Bay, Watershed, etc. They all moved to Plumsted due to the outdoors and what the community has to offer.

Neyenhouse spoke about the things they do. One is to review LUB applications and one member sits on the LUB as well which is required. Neyenhouse has lived here about 20 years and has been on the EC for 12 years. PYNE started with their group; he spoke about different programs they provided. They participate in the tree seedling program, provided the signs at Paradise Park. New Egypt is part of the coastal divide – half of the water flows to the Barnegat Bay and the other half to the Delaware River. They provide educational outreach to the community through events including stormwater management, composting, water quality studies, making bird feeders. They do provide insight into the township master plan and an environmental resource inventory (wetlands, plant species, etc). We are a Tier B town for stormwater management so they provide educational materials and resources for the town; they have been instrumental in the town reaching the necessary points for this program. They have a Facebook page to inform residents about events, they work with local Scout troops, they worked to create the Emson Preserve walking trail, they helped start a community garden in 2016 which included educational information, they work with AmeriCorp and Watershed ambassadors, and many other things to assist the community.

Neyenhouse is concerned that the committee was hesitant to appoint members to the committee. He feels that with the sewer project, it has increased the number of LUB applications for their committee to review. They are a critical group for the town. Bowen asked about the difference with the commission and committee but Neyenhouse said that he is mostly concerned with at least keeping the committee. A commission would give them additional opportunities for funding with an ANJEC membership. ANJEC is a state program that offers many grants. They could be useful for fixing certain issues in town, such as the Oakford Lake Dam. They would also like to get back to working on the Sustainable Jersey certification.

Calabrese commented that he doesn't think anyone wants to disband the committee; they just needed more time to research appointments for committees/boards before they voted on the resolution. Cuozzo asked about the drop off in membership in the past, what is the reason? Neyenhouse said it's a volunteer group and a lot of the members dedicated themselves to other groups so they may have gotten involved in other things. Cuozzo asked what has changed to bring back volunteers. Neyenhouse stated Witham has sent requests to town through website for volunteers which has helped. Also being involved in events like the NJ Wildlife Expo at

Collier's Mills has given them exposure. Cuzzo asked about points with Stormwater. Neyenhouse spoke about educating the community. Cuzzo also asked about involving youth perhaps after school programs. COVID has limited activities but they are hoping to get back to things.

Grilletto asked about their budget going from \$350 to \$2000 and the reason for it. Neyenhouse said that the \$350 only accounts for dues to ANJEC. Increasing the budget would allow them to fund certain things to work toward the Sustainable Jersey certification. Grilletto spoke about compliance requirements with a commission, comparing it to real estate commissions and requirements for lead based paint in units as a landlord. He feels commissions can be oppressive to business people; he is ok with a committee, not commission. Neyenhouse said that their powers are in the ordinance so they are limited as to what they can do; they are an advisory group. Grilletto is concerned that in the future, their authority may change. Neyenhouse is unable to change any ordinances, can only make recommendations to the committee.

Cuzzo asked about qualifications on what organizations they partner with; are background checks done, what is the process? Neyenhouse said the environmental committee doesn't have that; it hasn't been warranted. Cuzzo disagreed asking about their relationship with Plumsted for Progress. Neyenhouse said there is no direct relationship with them. Cuzzo asked about his personal relationship. Neyenhouse has been involved with them as they were instrumental in the community garden and donating hundreds of pounds of produce donated to our local food pantries to help our community which was positive. Cuzzo asked if he would want to partner with them in the future. Neyenhouse is only looking to protect the environment. Cuzzo wouldn't support the EC if they don't know who they would partner with in the future.

Cuzzo asked the mayor about the complaint against Plumsted for Progress. Neyenhouse said he would like to focus on the EC. Cuzzo continued to ask about their relationship with Plumsted for Progress. Cuzzo said the community garden does do great things. Neyenhouse said that Plumsted for Progress also helped the garden which was a great contribution. Cuzzo said it would be a no vote from him.

Mayor Bowen asked about the ordinance. Neyenhouse discussed their advisory duties. Bowen also asked about the inventory and what it included like trees and protection for them. Bowen has enjoyed serving with him on the LUB. Neyenhouse introduced some of their members there that evening.

Grilletto spoke about building his home and trees on the property. He then mentioned his Pride in Plumsted group cleanups and filling the bird feeders at Paradise Park. Barbara Mislick came forward. She has lived here 11 years and became involved in the EC in 2018. The only thing she wanted to add was that they are getting involved in the Trex program of bags to benches, taking it over from the Girl Scouts. She also takes the minutes at the meeting. The committee thanked Neyenhouse for his presentation.

Mayor Bowen asked for a motion to accept the letter of resignation from Officer Nani. ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, SECONDED BY COMMITTEE GRILLETTO, THE RESIGNATION WAS ACCEPTED WITH REGRETS; ALL AYES.

ORDINANCE: Introduction

ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN CALABRESE

ORDINANCE 2022-01 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AN ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022 (N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14) WAS INTRODUCED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

The second reading of the ordinance is scheduled for March 3, 2022.

RESOLUTION NON-CONSENT AGENDA: Separate votes are being taken on three resolutions that were pulled from last month's agenda.

ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN CALABRESE, RESOLUTION NO. 2022-31 - APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED WAS ADOPTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES WITH COMMITTEEMAN CUOZZO VOTING NO.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN CALABRESE, SECONDED BY DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, RESOLUTION NO. 2022-35 - ADOPTING THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED'S INTERNAL CONTROL HANDBOOK WAS ADOPTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, RESOLUTION NO. 2022-67 – APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE WAS ADOPTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

RESOLUTION CONSENT AGENDA:

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-104 - APPOINTING MARCEL RENSON AS ALTERNATE ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR IN THE ABSENCE OF RALPH ROSAMILIA

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-105 – AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF CHECKS FOR THE REDEMPTION OF TAX SALE CERTIFICATES

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-106 – AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 2022-77 APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-107 – APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP RECREATION COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-108 – RESCINDING RESOLUTION NO. 2021-322 AUTHORIZING THE RENEWAL OF THE AGREEMENT WITH RST LAWN CARE, LLC TO PROVIDE GROUNDS SERVICE TO PUBLIC LANDS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED FOR THE YEAR 2022

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-109 – AUTHORIZING THE EXCHANGE OF CONSTRUCTION CODE SERVICES

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-110 – AUTHORIZING PAYMENT FOR 2021 UNUSED SICK LEAVE

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-111 – AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP CLERK TO ADVERTISE FOR THE RECEIPT OF BIDS FOR SEWER CONNECTIONS FOR TOWNSHIP-OWNED PROPERTIES

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-112 – REJECTING ALL BIDS FOR THE EMS SERVICES PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A.40A:12-14

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-113 – AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 2021-372 APPOINTING THEODORE TOBIASSEN AS THE TAX ASSESSOR FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-114 –AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR PUBLIC GROUNDS LAWN MOWING SERVICES FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-115 – APPOINTING A MEMBER TO THE LAND USE BOARD OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-116 – APPOINTING MATTHEW RACK AS THE BUILDING SUBCODE/INSPECTOR FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-117 – APPOINTING BARRY STEWART AS THE BUILDING INSPECTOR FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-118 – AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF SEWER LOANS

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-119 – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AND FILE THE 2022 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT APPLICATION

Committeeman Calabrese asked about 2022-105. Grilletto explained about the tax sale redemptions. Calabrese mentioned 22-111 and asked about which buildings we will be going out to bid. Finally, Calabrese asked about 2022-118 regarding payment of sewer loans. Witham advised they were just the current loan applications, not past ones.

Cuozzo spoke about the resolution for inspectors that the two of them will be splitting work; we aren't increasing personnel, just dividing the work among the two. Bowen added that we were able to add an additional inspection day as well to better serve the community.

Cuozzo asked about 2022-115 and who is being appointed. Bowen advised Galloway will be returning to the LUB as she is no longer the Public Safety Director. Calabrese then asked about 2022-119. Witham explained that we have to authorize the CDBG application in order to get it in by the deadline of mid-February. There will be a second public hearing tonight.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN CALABRESE, RESOLUTIONS 2022-104 THROUGH 2022-119, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF RESOLUTION 2022-112 THAT WAS PULLED FROM THE AGENDA, WERE APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES

ADD ON RESOLUTIONS:

This resolution authorizes us to join the NJSEM in order to go out to bid to find the best rate for electric for the municipality, similar to the energy aggregation program for residential rates. Witham explained that we have to complete the paperwork by the end of the month, that's the reason for the last minute add on.

ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, RESOLUTION NO. 2022-120 AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED TO JOIN THE NEW JERSEY SUSTAINABLE ENERGY JOINT MEETING WAS APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES WITH COMMITTEEMAN CALABRESE ABSTAINING.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN CUOZZO, RESOLUTION NO. 2022-121 TO OPEN TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETINGS WITH AN INVOCATION WAS ADOPTED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

MOTION TO CONSIDER: Witham announced all Raffles Licenses that came in for approval. All of their paperwork is in order.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN CALABRESE, Raffles License No. 2022-01 On-Premise Gift Auction; 3/25/22 for Oceans of Love; Raffles License No. 2022-02 On-Premise 50/50; 3/25/22 for Oceans of Love; Raffles License No. 2022-03 On-Premise Merchandise Raffle; 3/12/22 for New Egypt Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary; Raffles License No. 2022-04 On-Premise 50/50; 3/12/22 for New Egypt Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary; Raffles License No. 2022-05

Off-Premise 50/50; 6/25/22 for New Egypt BPO Elks #2457 WERE APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES WITH COMMITTEEMAN CUOZZO ABSTAINING.

REPORTS OF DEPARTMENTS AND PROFESSIONALS:

Mayor Bowen asked if there were any comments on the Bill List of February 3, 2022.

ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, THE AMENDED BILL LIST OF FEBRUARY 3, 2022 WAS APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR COMMITTEE REVIEW: CONSTRUCTION REPORT – Plumsted & New Hanover December 2021; TAX COLLECTOR REPORT – November 2021; FINANCIAL REPORTS – Revenue Summary by Month December 2021; Abbreviated Summary Budget Account Status December 2021; Treasurer’s Report December 2021; POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT – December 2021 & End-of-Year 2021 Stats; PLUMSTED BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT #1 MEETING MINUTES – 12/6/21; PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP MUA MINUTES – 11/16/21

SECOND PUBLIC HEARING OF THE 2022 CDBG (Community Development Block Grant):

Mayor Bowen opened the second public hearing on the Community Development Block Grant. Committeeman Cuozzo asked about a resolution. Witham advised that she has a draft resolution that will be revised once the committee decides on which projects they would like to submit. Witham reviewed what was discussed at the first public hearing.

There was a comment to consider the paving from Brynmore Road parking lot to the football field for an ambulance. However, after further research, it appears that an ambulance can utilize the paved pathways for an ambulance. A consideration is a gravel area leading to the field.

Committeeman Calabrese asked for clarification about how the projects are submitted and what the money could be used for. He asked about the recreation building since it is need of repair. Mayor Bowen said that we are looking into that to see what we are dealing with. What needs to be repaired and where we might be able to secure funding for a larger project like that.

Committeeman Grilletto asked the police chief about ambulances. There was discussion about when the project might be awarded.

Mayor Bowen opened the public hearing. There was no public comment.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, THE SECOND CDBG PUBLIC HEARING WAS CLOSED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

There was further discussion about which projects would be included in the grant application. Committeeman Cuozzo stated that safety is a priority for either access to the football field. Witham stated that our OCJIF inspection showed that we are very close to having to shut down the basketball court because it is in disrepair and unsafe.

Mayor Bowen agrees and recommends applying for access to the football field and the basketball court. Committeeman Grilletto agreed. Deputy Mayor is in agreement. Witham asked if they wanted to add a third. Committeeman Calabrese recommended the municipal lot should be added. There will be a consideration for all three items and we will secure quotes for the same.

However, we will look into the pathway to the football field to see if it is a necessity or if EMTs do have proper access to the football field.

ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN CALABRESE, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, RESOLUTION NO. 2022-119 – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AND FILE THE 2022 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT APPLICATION WAS APPROVED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

Bowen asked for any old business; there was none. Bowen asked for any new business. Bowen made a few announcements about upcoming holiday closures, the next budget workshop, a special meeting and the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Witham made an announcement that the New Egypt High School Girls Bowling Team came in first place in the BCSL Tournament today, they came in first place in the division, and they were undefeated 19-0.

Cuozzo brought up that some mayors have been writing letters of recommendation to school boards for parents to decide whether or not their children are going to take part in medical device mandates, including masks. They are being forced unwillingly on parents and children. He makes a recommendation for the mayor to send a letter. He would be in support of that.

Bowen asked for any other new business; there was none. Mayor Bowen asked for any public comment. No comments received to the clerk prior the meeting.

Chris Neuert of Evergreen Road came forward. He is sad to hear about losing an officer. He is asking why we are, is it because we don't want to pay these guys? Or is it paying pensions? What is the real reason behind this? Their turnover is so high. Bowen replied that this is the first officer leaving since 2019. There are larger towns that can offer more than we can, even more than the county can. Toms River is about a 50% increase in their salaries. Grilletto said that people leave for other opportunities too. Neuert talked about training costs. Bowen feels it has been more stable with our chief.

Chief spoke about some history with police turnover. Cuozzo spoke about how they back the police department but at the same time are being fiscally responsible with taxpayer's money. There was some discussion about the state pension program.

Neuert then spoke. When talking about leaving specific trees on your property, if you deem a specific tree, does the commission have any authority (inaudible). Neyenhouse said that the only spot that he's seen in our township ordinances that comes in to play is the woodlands ordinance which only comes into play with a major subdivision. So if, for example, you decided on your property to subdivide for five houses or properties, then the LUB would review it to determine if there is any specimen or any landmark trees that have to be preserved. Neuert said then the commission wouldn't have any authority about what people do with the trees on your property. Neyenhouse said no. Grilletto said if a branch comes over on your property, then you can cut it.

Cuozzo said that is the problem with that regulation and people don't realize this that there's a bottleneck with these things. If you are about to subdivide your property, they just chop down all the trees first so it ends up being much, much worse to have those regulations in place and much, much worse for the environment because they chop down all of their trees gone. And

then they apply for those things so it's better. Kind of like when you put an animal on the endangered species list, everyone goes out to their property and kills those animals because they don't want to deal with having them on your property. It has the opposite and unintended consequence than what the intention of the law was. That's always the kind of way it is with regulations and one of the reasons he voted against it. He said that he wants the trees to stay. He doesn't want people to have that overbearing as Len put it, oppressive regulation on top of that so that they would be more inclined to actually keep their trees. Neuert thanked them. Cuozzo said good question.

Chief Meroney came forward about the new hires. In January, we advertised and there were over 60 applicants. They are going through the interview process at this time to replace Officer Nani and hopefully two part-time Class II officers to assist with code and traffic detail. It is anticipated to narrow the list down to 5-10 candidates.

Holly Potter of Sanders Lane came forward and asked about what safety concerns there were with Plumsted for Progress as she is confused as to what that meant. Cuozzo said that concerns were brought up when threats were made towards people's employment and that was brought up as a complaint because threatening someone based on their political views is a threat to not be able to provide for their family. In an effort to promote unity in our town, we want the groups that we support to be groups that don't make threats toward places of employment. That was the complaint that came in and the complaint that was filed. He would like to see that paperwork himself to see why they weren't fully followed through on but that's specifically the reason. The other thing was that when we had township meetings and outside groups were invited to come to promote violence at our school board meetings which is a safety concern.

Potter wanted to clear something up for the community. She saw the Facebook post about a member of the community said they were inviting outside groups to come and harass people at the school board meeting. Obviously that didn't happen and the only people at the school board meeting were community members. The post that was made invited other groups to a Zoom meeting to talk about certain issues regarding race, LGBTQ issues. It was not an invitation to come to the school board meeting. It was to talk about issues they have seen in their own schools. There was no invitation made at any point for anybody to come and threaten any members of the school board. It was cleared up in the Facebook comments. She is not sure what rioters Cuozzo is eluding to. She thinks someone posted to Black Lives Matter NJ. She thinks that was a miscommunication and misrepresentation of what their group is about. They aren't about violence. They are about acceptance and raising the voices of marginalized communities and they are not about inviting others to start violence. There is no physical violence threat from Plumsted for Progress. Every event they have held has been 100 percent peaceful and coming from a place of celebration and joy. There have been no incidences with any of their events.

She doesn't know if it is supposed to be public information about a complaint made. Cuozzo said it was on Facebook. Bowen asked if there were policies regarding social media and moderators of that page. Potter said that comments that are harassing or contain slurs are removed. It is pretty much like any other Facebook group. They don't delete comments that disagree with them, just inappropriate. Cuozzo read some of the post on Facebook. Potter said that if Cuozzo has a personal issue with her or any other members of the group, she would be willing to take that up with him but it's inappropriate for a committee member to use any relationship with her or any members to harass a private citizen like he did with John. Potter was referring to the EC. Cuozzo said they have no policy on who they partner with. Potter asked what he thinks he might

find with background checks. Cuozzo wants to know what the policy is. He thinks it's important since the EC works with youth. Cuozzo spoke about his church's rules. Potter said that it is getting personal. Cuozzo said this is a very big safety issue regarding employment. He is pro-business and pro-family. Potter said Cuozzo took a picture of her and her group when she came into the meeting and said that she would end her comment at this time.

There are a couple of people on Zoom for comment. Wendy Galloway congratulated the Chief on being appointed Public Safety Director; it was an honor to work with the department. She thanks everyone for that opportunity. She thanked the committee for that opportunity and she will continue to support the department.

Ellen Taylor of 29 Story Street came forward. She addressed Holly Potter. She's a Christian and Bible-thumping woman. Pastor Cuozzo was sticking up for her. Her daughter was the one being referred to on Facebook; she loves her job. Her daughter didn't want to pursue this. She admires them standing up for what they believe in. But the person that was commenting on Facebook is in the website photo of the community garden. Cuozzo was sticking up for her. It was scary for her and her daughter. She worries about the threats, it's a small community. Her daughter spoke about choice. Taylor said don't force me to believe what you want to believe and I won't do the same. She asks, she petitions and prays. It's about tolerance and getting along with everybody. She sees Plumsted for Progress trying to do the right thing for the community. One person made a comment and it was a bad choice. She doesn't think we should hate; let's have tolerance.

Ted Kucowski of 195 E Colliers Mills Rd was on Zoom. He appreciated the committee. He has some issues to address surrounding environmental issues and zoning laws with the New Egypt Speedway. It has turned into a truck stop now 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. There are millings that have been brought in, moving topsoil, numerous flood lights illuminating the parking lot and their rural residential area. There are numerous back up alarms from tractor trailers, a dramatic increase in commercial truck traffic. There are so many trailers there is security guards 24/7. Just the other day, two days ago, he put his son's recreational drone in the air and counted over 70 trailers parked in this area. To date, there has been no Pinelands approval, no environmental impact study, no permits issued by the township or any other entity. The LUB application they submitted is incomplete. This continues to drag on. Code enforcement was advised of this last year but to this date, no action has been taken. They consulted with Pinelands and they said the township should be issuing violations and a cease and desist order. None of this has happened. He is asking the committee to look into this and see that the laws that the township created get enforced. Everything he has done on his property he has gotten permits for and paid the fees. He had to have a retention basin put in when he was building his home. In 2001 he moved to this area. The once a week speedway has turned into an Amazon trailer parking. Ted enjoys the rural characteristic of this township. His severely disabled son enjoys the wildlife as well but now all they hear is tractor trailers. He is asking that we uphold the laws of this township. He doesn't understand why this isn't being reinforced.

Bowen asked counsel for guidance. Zabarsky said that we are pursuing this. We have had meetings and we intend to take action that is appropriate. The LUB application is not complete. He sent a memo to the clerk today to share with the committee. It is potential litigation at this point so he would prefer no further comment. It will be discussed in executive session. Kucowski thanked the committee. He said the rest of the neighbors have had it.

James Hagelstein of 12 Ivins Drive came forward. He and Bowen have talked about this already. He spoke about being on the MUA and LUB. It seems there was a personal attack where his

name was dropped at the reorg as being appointed over other members. He is now being given an ultimatum to pick which board to be on. History is long withstanding to serve on both boards. He said that his term on the MUA expired January 31st. Right now, the MUA is down membership. He's been asking the committee to consider him being on both boards. Right now he is being told no for personal reasons. The MUA doesn't have senior members that know the sewers. He is publicly asking the committee to reappoint him to the MUA. He has letters of recommendations from LUB, MUA and past committee members speaking to his merits.

Bowen said he has heard him. He and Hagelstein have spoken about this before. Cuzzo said that when he came before the board previously, Grilletto brought up his feelings about this before so we sought counsel. He would like to ask counsel to tell us his findings as far as the ethics and court decision precedent about how the standing that we take, that it is unethical and a conflict of interest for people to work on both sides of the boards. We aren't alone in this. We have nothing against James personally. Cuzzo personally likes him very much and it's been great reading all of the recommendations. He has a following of many people that respect him; that is not the issue. Cuzzo wanted to appoint him to things himself that were not a conflict of interest but this is. We are thankful for your service but would like you to serve on one of them. Biblically, we don't want any appearance of evil and he doesn't want to put him and his family in peril. No one should question his ethics. No one does. He was pushing for the board to issue an apology to him.

Hagelstein said that when it's common practice, it is not enforceable law. Zabarsky said that an appointment to the MUA and LUB is in the discretion of the governing body. There is not right or entitlement to be on the LUB or MUA. He researched this issue to see if there is a conflict. He sent a memo to the committee. There was a law division case in 1992 out of Monmouth County where the court specifically found that a person who is a member of the Marlboro LUB and also service on the Western Monmouth Utilities Authority, the court said they cannot serve simultaneously. Zabarsky gave the board the legal memo. It isn't illegal, just the opinion of the mayor and several board members that there is a potential conflict and there was a case in Marlboro Township.

Grilletto asked Hagelstein why he wouldn't pick the MUA since he is so concerned for them. Grilletto said that he didn't believe he should be jumping over other members for a Class IV position on the LUB. Hagelstein said that he made a commitment to the LUB to serve his term; he honors that commitment. Hagelstein said that it is his responsibility to recuse himself if there is a conflict on a particular case. He recommended they consider what they are going to do about staffing the MUA.

Kate Tallon, 53 Oak Lane came forward. There have been two things to address tonight. So far there were votes on the EC and a vote on James and the MUA. With both of those, it seems like members of the committee were acting in their own interest, rather than the interest of the township. It seemed like it was the Dominick Cuzzo dog and pony show. He's going to vote for him because he holds grudges against people. That isn't ok. He is here to represent the township.

Stacy Reed, 791 Monmouth Road, inquired about the school being run at 9 Main Street with no fire inspection, no board of health inspections. She was a previous tenant of that building. Bowen said that it is on their agenda for the next Safety Committee meeting. Witham advised we are working on determining what the use is at that property and are working with the construction office. Reed is concerned that this is a school, operating 5 days per week and is

concerned for their safety. Bowen said that we have been discussing changes in any building uses and inspections for new businesses. So the construction department is working on our process for handling that. Reed asked about registering businesses in town. Other towns do have registries, some for a cost, others no. That way, emergency contact info is kept for all businesses. She thinks we should be proactive in knowing our businesses and have communication between all first responders, especially with the sewer system and hoping to have new businesses in our town. Cuzzo asked if Reed knew how long the school has been there. Reed thought September/October of 2021.

Finally, Reed said that since Chief Meroney has been in charge, we have not seen the turnover like in the past. She has been through many officers in charge.

Carol Reed, 63 Brindletown Road came forward. She had one comment that Plumsted for Progress does good things. They collected a lot of winter coats and took them to the Christian Caring Center in Pemberton. And they have done other things we don't know about. They are a good group. Reed is not a gambler or a drinker but she is a Christian. She thinks that the invocation before each meeting should be for the board; they need prayers, not the public. Reed thanked Committeeman Grilletto for his service as a liaison with the Historical Society.

Reverend Phyllis Zoon of 8 Front Street, of the Plumsted Presbyterian Church. She is going to read a voice mail she got last summer from one of the town committeemen. "I'm calling so late because it's almost 10 o'clock at night because I heard from a running mate, Thomas Calabrese, and this is the second time that someone involved with my campaign has been vandalized at their home and you know, since your comments and the people that are members of your church (I guess he thinks the members of my church are violent.) They have been violent and threatening and I thought perhaps you may know who could be doing some of these things."

That was scary for her. She lives by herself that sometimes feels like a fish bowl since she has many doors and sheers on the windows. She had four or five of these calls. She made two complaints to the police and the Chief knows about it. Someone she would think would be a colleague shouldn't be making phone calls like that.

Committeeman Cuzzo said that he was the one being harassed, not her. He said there is a common theme among these things and it's him caring about the safety of other people, his running mate at the time, people's employment in our town, the family I respect.

Hagelstein said that he also received harassing calls from Cuzzo that evening in which Cuzzo said to "call the dogs off" which he had nothing to do with. It wasn't just Zoon, it was also done to him. Cuzzo said after the two calls, the vandalism stopped. Hagelstein said that was because he said if Cuzzo called again, he would file harassment charges. There was additional inaudible comment at that time and Mayor Bowen called the meeting to order.

Barbara Diblin of Terrace Ave came forward. She finds this is a good committee, she has found that there is no problem with having invocation. They have it in our Congress. There should be no problem in someone stating their opinion in having an invocation. That is under the Constitution to have freedom of choice. All of the committee shares her opinion because she has been talking to them the last five years or more. There are plenty of people in the town that want it. We care about everybody. You can have your opinion. That's what it means to live in the USA. We don't all have to agree. She can get along with those that don't agree with her. God

will judge everything in the end. We are all responsible for ourselves. Diblin continued about religion and the invocation.

Committeeman Calabrese wanted to make a comment to Hagelstein. He personally wanted to talk about members moving ahead of alternates without giving someone an opportunity to say no. It is procedural. Hagelstein said that there is nothing in the ordinance on how to appoint people. Calabrese said they will be working on an ordinance. Hagelstein said that he moved ahead of an alternate on the MUA because they were not doing their job on the board so he was moved ahead. Cuozzo had a problem with the procedure back in 2019 when he resigned from the board. Hagelstein asked about the reorg meeting where Cuozzo specifically mentioned Hagelstein and removing him from one of the boards. Hagelstein listened to the meeting recording.

Neyenhouse, 22 Lakeview Drive, said that he was trying not to come up for public but he wanted to talk about the invocation. He asked everyone to read the minutes from September 2015 because this is an older item. He reiterated his comments from 2015 regarding his feelings toward invocation. He was raised Christian and attended church regularly. But he feels that the township committee meeting isn't necessarily the spot to have denominational prayer preached to the public. He is fine with a moment of silence or non-denominational prayer or some sort of invocation that can be open to everyone in the community that pays taxes. There are a number of members in the community. The US is made of a lot of different people with different backgrounds and yes, everyone can have their own feelings. But people shouldn't feel alienated in coming to a township committee meeting where they are paying taxes in that town. This is the same as if the Church of Satan wanted to preach about believing in Satan. Or the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster coming in with a colander on their head preaching about the Pastafarian religion. He feels that any invocation or prayer should be something welcome to the whole community where no one would feel offended by or people being afraid to come to the meeting since something is being pushed on them. He would like them to carefully think about what prayers are in place as there are members of the community who have every right to be here and may not feel the same as the person leading that prayer.

Grilletto said that if you look in those notes, there was a person in the audience, Eric Sorchik, who said it is our right to prayer. And there's a gentleman that came up and asked if this was going to be part of our procedure and the answer was yes. And that man was me. If someone doesn't want to hear it, they may walk out. General consent invoked prayer for four years and then it stopped. He goes back to 1979 when he moved here.

Neyenhouse is the scout master and has been trained on how to give non-denominational prayers to the scouts so that it is welcome to everyone. He spoke about reverence. It is the bookend to their scout law. Grilletto said that this is the right under case law.

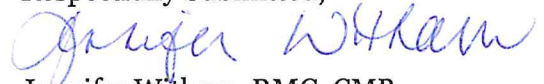
Cuozzo said that we are not going to authoritatively tell someone what they can pray. That is what Neyenhouse is introducing. We are not going to tell a minister what they can and cannot say. We are not authoritarians. Neyenhouse said that he is an ordained minister as well. Will he be allowed to do the invocation? Cuozzo said perhaps we should read the resolution. Neyenhouse said there was no public comment at the point of voting for that resolution. His point is that if we are doing an invocation, he feels that the taxpayers should have a non-denominational prayer that welcomes everyone. This is not a new issue, he just wanted to mirror his comments from that time. There was no further public comment.

There will be a second executive session at this time and there may be official action once they return from that session. Zabarsky read them into executive session again. ON MOTION OF COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN CALABRESE, RESOLUTION NO. 2022-103 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 to regular session and there was one add-on resolution. ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, RESOLUTION NO. 2022-122 TO GO OUT FOR AN RFP FOR A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR EMS WITH NEW HANOVER AND NORTH HANOVER WITH PLUMSTED BEING THE LEAD AGENCY.

Bowen asked for a motion to adjourn, ON MOTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR MARINARI, SECONDED BY COMMITTEEMAN GRILLETTO, THE FEBRUARY 3, 2022 MEETING WAS ADJOURNED. ROLL CALL VOTE: ALL AYES.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jennifer Witham, RMC, CMR
Municipal Clerk