

REGULAR MEETING
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING
COUNCIL MEETING ROOM – UPPER LEVEL

March 3, 2020

The following are the Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Lawrence Township Council that was held on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, at 6.30 p.m.

The meeting was then opened with the Inspiration and Pledge of Allegiance, led by Municipal Clerk.

At the commencement of the meeting Mayor Kownacki read the following statement of proper notice:

STATEMENT OF PROPER NOTICE: "Adequate notice of this meeting of the Lawrence Township Council being held on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, has been provided through the posting of the annual meeting schedule of said Council in accordance with Section 13 of the Open Public Meetings Act." Said Notice was forwarded to The Trentonian, The Times and The Princeton Packet on December 19, 2019.

The roll was then called as follows:

Present: Councilmembers Bobbitt, Lewis, Powers, Ryan and Mayor Kownacki.
Absent: None.

Also in attendance were Kevin Nerwinski, Esq., Municipal Manager, David Roskos, Esq., Municipal Attorney and Peter Kiriakatis, CFO.

Special Proclamations, Recognitions and Presentations

Oath of Office Administered to Sergeant Shaun Sexton

Mayor Kownacki stated he would be turning the floor over to the Chief of Police for the swearing in of their officers. Afterwards, Chief Caloiaro greeted the audience and thanked everyone for coming out to see the swearing in of a the new Sergeant and two new Police Officers and indicated it is always a great day in the Lawrence Police Department when they can bring two new officers to the force and welcome them to the family and promote someone who is very well deserving of that honor so they are thrilled to have two new officers who started their field training program and have done unbelievably well, so far, and have received praises from the academy staff for

everything they did while in the Police Academy, so they are really happy to have them as part of their force. He then asked Officer Shaun Sexton to come forward and proceeded to read a brief bio relative to Officer Sexton's background history and the important role he played at the Quakerbridge Mall and mentoring of young officers in the Police Department. Mayor Kownacki then administered the Oath of Office to Sergeant Shaun Sexton. He then turned the floor over to Sergeant Shaun Sexton.

Sergeant Sexton stated he would like thank his parents who came up from Myrtle Beach, his godmother Sharon, retired State Police Lieutenant Bob Long who wrote one of his reference letters for the Lawrence Police Department, his sister and brother and everyone else for coming out this evening. And advised he kind of lives by what Sir Robert Peel said in these words "the police are the public and the public are the police". He also believes that everyone should be treated with respect and treated how you would want your mom to be treated if ever dealt with by the police...and he lives by that. Further, he would like to bring attention to someone in the back of the room, Robert Wagner, and asked him to raise his hand and advised that Officer Wagner is probably one of the most famous police officers in the Township as there is no one that does not know him or hug him when they see him. And, when they are at the mall together it is like a two hour trip to get through one lap because everybody wants to talk to him and he knows everybody and advised that he is retiring April 30th which is a huge loss for the town and he will be making a motion before the Council to get a bronze statue of Officer Wagner (Rob) that could be put in the mall which was followed by lots of applause and laughter. Mr. Nerwinski noted for the record that Sergeant Sexton's Motion was not seconded.

Sergeant Sexton then thanked Kevin Nerwinski, Township Manager, Mayor Kownacki and the Township Council for the promotional opportunity and stated he promises to give it his all and put his best foot forward doing it. He then advised the new officers to just remember the Oath they take today and indicated this is probably the fourth or fifth time he has taken an oath similar to this and he has always honored that and it is very important for them to do the same because they are not only doing it in front of the people today...this is a note to themselves so remember that. And, as they said in the Army "always place the mission first" and the Mission is the Township, the Residents and the Governing Body... and urged them to remember those words.

In closing, Sergeant Sexton advised that there will be a reception at the American Legion Post 458 at the Brunswick Circle and everyone is invited to come by for food and beverages.

Chief Caloiaro pointed out how many officers are in attendance to celebrate Officer Sexton's accomplishment of being promoted to Sergeant which is a great testament to him that so many people are here to celebrate with him which shows a lot about his character.

Oath of Office Administered to Police Officer Nigel Davis

Prior to administering the Oath of Office, Chief Caloiaro called up Officer Nigel Davis front and center and indicated during the background investigation he could not find one person who had a negative thing to say about Officer Davis and he knew from doing the background that he was going to be perfect for the Lawrence Police Department as he comes from good family where his father works in the Streets Crime Unit as a K-9 Detective in the City of Trenton so law enforcement is in his blood and he knew from the beginning that they were getting a real good candidate for the Police Department.

Chief Caloiaro proceeded to read a brief bio relative to Nigel Davis' background history and congratulated and welcomed Officer Davis as part of the Lawrence Township family and echoed Sergeant Sexton's words about honoring the badge and stated he knows he will do really well. Mayor Kownacki then administered the Oath of Office to Officer Nigel Davis. He then turned the floor over to Officer Davis.

Officer Davis stated he would like to thank Police Chief Caloiaro, Kevin Nerwinski, Township Manager, Mayor Kownacki and the Township Council and everyone else for the opportunity in hiring him as well as all the departments that have been backing them since they got hired and all throughout the academy when they told them if they needed anything they could come to them. So, he just wanted to thank everyone for coming out and wished everyone a nice night.

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**Oath of Office Administered to Police Officers Michael Hammond**

Chief Caloiaro advised before hiring Michael Hammond as a Police Officer and him showing up on the police list he was a Dispatcher with the iXP Corporation who covers the Police Dispatch Center so they knew a little bit about Officer Hammond before going into the whole process – his work ethic, his ability, his dedication to the Township of Lawrence was exemplary and they knew from the onset that Officer Hammond was somebody they could trust and would like to hire and they are really happy that his name came up on the list for the job of police officer because they knew they were going to get a good one based on his past track record working in the Police Department with the iXP Corporation.

Chief Caloiaro proceeded to read a brief bio of Michael Hammond's background history and congratulated and welcomed Officer Hammond as part of the Lawrence Township family. Mayor Kownacki administered the Oath of Office to Officer Michael Hammond. He then turned the floor over to Officer Hammond.

Officer Hammond greeted and thanked everyone for coming out and stated he would like to thank his family who have been so supportive of him; especially, his wife who has been his rock and helped him to get through the academy because without her

support he does not know if he would be standing before them tonight. He further thanked his wife's family for being so supportive of her during the past 6 months as she had to support him coming home stressed and just tired and beaten down and proceeded to thank the rest of his family for also supporting him, the officers in the back of the room for supporting him since 2013 and having been a second family to him as well, and for always helping him when he needed support and for making him be a better person and showing him what a great work ethic is.

Officer Hammond went on to thank Police Chief Caloiaro, Kevin Nerwinski, Township Manager, Mayor Kownacki and the Township Council and stated he looks forward to serving the community in his new role as a Police Officer and thanked everyone again for the opportunity.

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#### Public Participation

There was no public participation.

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#### Review and Revisions of Agenda

The Municipal Clerk requested that Resolution 98-20 (18-H.3), Authorizing a Closed Session of Council Immediately Following the Regular Meeting to Discuss Litigation, be amended to include discussions on labor negotiations.

On a motion by Ms. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Powers, the Agenda was amended to include the above revision.

Same was carried on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers Bobbitt, Lewis, Powers, Ryan and Mayor Kownacki.  
Nays: None.  
Absent: None.

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#### Adoption of Minutes

There was no adoption of minutes.

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Awarding or Rejecting of Bids

There was no awarding or rejection of bids.

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Introduction of Ordinances

There was no introduction of ordinances.

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Adoption of Ordinances

Mayor Kownacki read by title, an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 435 OF THE LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATIVE CODE ENTITLED "MOTOR VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC" – Handicapped Parking

Ordinance No. 2356-20

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 435 OF THE LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATIVE CODE ENTITLED 'MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC'

BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that Chapter 435 of The Lawrence Township Administrative Code entitled 'Motor Vehicles and Traffic' be and is hereby amended as follows:

Section 1. Article II – Stopping, Standing and Parking

Sec. 13-4 – Parking prohibited – At any time, except by vehicles bearing special identification for handicapped persons.

**(5)** Special Vehicle Parking (Handicapped)

Restricted parking spaces shall be established as set forth below and only those persons who are handicapped and who possess a special vehicle identification shall park in such designated parking space.

- a. 64 feet eastbound from the prolonged curb line of Brunswick Pike and Valley Forge Avenue (S/E corner) for a distance of 22 feet on Valley Forge Avenue on the south side of 1894 Brunswick Pike.
- b. 138 feet eastbound from the prolonged curb line of Brunswick Pike and Pear Street (N/E corner) for a distance of 22 feet in front of 766 Pear Street.

- c. 340 feet eastbound from the prolonged curb line of Rt. 206 (Lawrence Road) and Fairfield Avenue (S/E corner) for a distance of 22 feet in front of 81 Fairfield Avenue.
- d. 285 feet eastbound from the prolonged curb line of Princeton Avenue and Myrtle Avenue (S/E corner) for a distance of 22 feet in front of 55 Myrtle Avenue.
- e. 180 feet westbound from the prolonged curb line of Hopewell Avenue and Slack Avenue (S/W corner) for a distance of 22 feet in front of 115 Slack Avenue.
- f. 263 feet eastbound from the prolonged curb line of Princeton Avenue and Myrtle Avenue (S/E corner) for a distance of 22 feet, in front of 57 Myrtle Avenue
- g. 204 feet westbound from the prolonged curb line of Ohio Avenue and Puritan Avenue (N/W corner) for a distance of 22 feet in front of 716 Puritan Avenue.
- h. 324 feet eastbound from the prolonged curb line of Princeton Avenue and Myrtle Avenue (S/E corner) for a distance of 22 feet in front of 51 Myrtle Avenue.
- i. 141 feet eastbound from the prolonged curb line of Slack Avenue and Princeton Pike (S/E corner) for a distance of 22 feet, in front of 143 Slack Avenue.
- j. 99 feet northbound from the prolonged curb line of Pine Street and Brunswick Avenue, for a distance of 22 feet, in front of 1117 Brunswick Avenue.
- k. 518 feet westbound from the prolonged curb line of Brunswick Avenue and Lanning Avenue (N/W corner) for a distance of of 22 feet, in front of 944 Lanning Avenue.
- l. 70 feet westbound from the prolonged curb line of Brunswick Avenue and Lanning Avenue (S/E corner) for a distance of 22 feet on the side of 1279 Brunswick Avenue.
- m. 56 feet southbound from the prolonged curb line of Greenfield Avenue and Rupert Street (S/W corner) for a distance of 22 feet on the side of 49 Greenfield Avenue.
- n. 268 feet eastbound from the prolonged curb line of Princeton Avenue and Lanning Avenue (S/E corner) for a distance of 22 feet in front of 961 Lanning Avenue.

- o. 191 feet eastbound from the prolonged curb line of Brunswick Pike and Puritan Avenue (N/E corner) for a distance of 22 feet in front of 758 Puritan Avenue

Section 2. This ordinance supercedes all previous ordinances that relate to the designation of handicapped parking on streets and roadways within the Township of Lawrence.

Section 3. Severability.  
If any provisions of this ordinance shall be adjudged invalid, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions, which shall be deemed severable therefrom.

Section 4. Repealer.  
  
All ordinances or parts of same inconsistent with any provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

Section 5. Effective Date.  
  
This ordinance shall become effective twenty (20) days following the adoption thereof in accordance with law.

Additions Underlined \_\_\_\_\_

The Ordinance was adopted after the public hearing thereon, on the following roll call vote:

| COUNCIL        | AYE | NAY | PRESENT | ABSENT | ABSTAIN | MOVE | SECOND |
|----------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|---------|------|--------|
| Mr. Bobbitt    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Ms. Lewis      | X   |     |         |        |         |      | X      |
| Mr. Powers     | X   |     |         |        |         | X    |        |
| Mr. Ryan       | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Mayor Kownacki | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |

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**Manager’s Report –**

Mr. Nerwinski submitted invoice listings for the month of March 2020 in the amount of \$947,568.04.

Mr. Nerwinski stated he would first like to apologize to the Town Council for not supplying them with the Manager's Report for this meeting based on there not being much on the Agenda and him being away in Vancouver they thought it would be okay with the Council not to do one; but, in the future they always get a report to them and certainly if there was something of consequence he would have reached out to them.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that Lawrence Township is fortunate to have a Health Department and advised that they get approached several times a year from towns that do not have a Health Officer and are seeking shared services from Lawrence Health Department and they have resisted those requests and the Coronavirus is one of those examples where it is really important to have a Health Officer as Ms Chamberlain has taken substantial steps in her department to ensure that the community of Lawrence is safe. They have posted informative information on the Township website as well as to what steps the Township has taken in response to the outbreak of the virus which is a continuing process that has taken up a lot of Ms. Chamberlain's time; but, she stayed on top of it and she keeps him informed and he sent an email to Council sharing that information with them just in case residents reach out to them given her office has been filled with a lot of concerns from residents.

Mr. Nerwinski advised that the Township employees will also be given information to protect themselves from this virus because they deal with the public in a lot of public places so they are going to make sure that the employees receive individually specific skillset to handle this to protect themselves and he wanted the Council to be aware of that at this public meeting and indicated at this point in time Lawrence Township is in good hands with regards to Carol Chamberlain, Health Officer, and the Health Department who have a protocol set in place and he will continue to keep them informed on the situation.

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### **Attorney's Report –**

Mr. Roskos reported that he has more to discuss for closed session but he would like to bring the Council up to speed on their discussions with the new owners of Steward's Crossing and advised that Steward's Crossing was purchased in the latter part of 2018 by Berkshire Realty out of Boston which is their only New Jersey rental property. They own a lot of properties across the United States but one of the things that became obvious is that they are not familiar with the UHAC Regulations or Mount Laurel Housing so they are negotiating with them over rental rate increases.

Mr. Roskos advised that there was a period of time when COAH regulated what rental increases could be for rental apartments but under the Christi Administration there was a 'dark time' when COAH was out of business for a while and no numbers were issued and substitute numbers are now generated by a New Jersey planning group which is recognized by everyone. But, during the dark period many apartments that had affordable units did not know what they could and could not do; but, in 2018

there was an increase issued by the new group and that was the time for apartment owners to catch up on their failure to be able to do legal rent increases. But, the new owners of Steward's Crossing did not take advantage of that so they came to Township pleading their case to raise the rent to get closer to what other affordable units are in the county.

Mr. Roskos stated his position is they missed their window as they did not take advantage of the rates and act as they should have but Piazza & Associates have said that is really not what is taking place across the State and the increase is capped at 9 percent so they are working their way through the negotiation process and he will come back at a later date as to what he and Piazza & Associates feels is equitable and fair and proceeded to discuss new imposition of fees – for parking, trash and amenity fees' charged at the Steward's Crossing site. And, although, the money has been utilized to clean up the site he made it clear that they would not tolerate fees for Mt Laurel unit which is really a substitute for the rent increase. The Owners indicated it was never their intentions to impose the fees on the affordable units they are in the process of learning the ropes and will get back to them with a plan is to eliminate the fees that in his estimation is illegal and should not be applied to the Mt. laurel units. In closing, Mr. Roskos stated he just wanted to provide the Council with a little history so when he brings forth the proposal they will know the history.

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**Clerk's Report –**

There was no Clerk's report.

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**Unfinished Business –**

- A. Change of Start Time for Council Meetings - Mayor Kownacki advised that start time for the Council Meetings will remain the same and the summer schedule start time will start at 6:00 p.m.
- B. Change of Start Time for Boards and Committees – After some discussion amongst the Council the consensus was to move the Boards and Committee meetings start time to 7:00 p.m.

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**New Business –**

Mayor Kownacki posed the question as to the legality of the Council who serve as liaisons to the Boards and Committees becoming a voting member of their particular board or committee. After some discussion, Mr. Roskos advised that one vote does not

decide an issue; it has to be majority so he does not have a problem with a member of Council being a voting member while serving as a liaison. Mayor Kownacki asked the Municipal Clerk to set the matter for the April's agenda and the Township Attorney requested that all the changes to the Boards and Committees be done at the same time.

Mayor Kownacki stated last year while covering the meeting for Mayor Bobbitt they received a letter asking the Council to change or endorse the naming road into Heritage Park (Eggerts Crossing Village at Johnson Avenue) "Harold Vereen Greenway" from Eggert Crossing Road to the Ewing Township borderline; an area Mr. Vereen always made sure the Township maintained and cared for. And, he tabled the matter being more information was needed and he did not want to deal with it without Councilman Bobbitt being present. So, his question to Mr. Roskos is there any provision prohibiting them from changing the name of the Greenway to "Harold Vereen Greenway" being it involves Greenway funding. Mr. Roskos stated he thinks it is a good idea but he does not have an answer right now as he does not know if the use of other public money handicaps the Township in anyway; if it was Open Space money he would say it is okay. Mr. Nerwinski noted that he has some ideas for Council's consideration.

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**Public Participation (3-minute limitation per speaker) –**

Mr. Paul Larson, Chair of Trails, Open Space and Stewardship Advisory Committee and Trustee for the Historical Society, stated as it relates to the time change he still has to poll the members of the Committee to see what time works best for them because of other commitments.

Mr. Larson reported that the Trails and Bicycle Plans have finally been made available by Mercer County and there will be a public hearing on March 11<sup>th</sup> at the McDade County Administration Building about the new Mercer County Bicycle Plan. And, Tim Braille from the New Jersey Conservation Foundation sent him a link that should have been out last year about the Great Mercer Trails Plan and associated pattern book that is now posted on the GMTMA website. Mr. Larson further reported that the Mercer Green Fest is on May 14<sup>th</sup> at Rider University from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., indicated he hopes to see everyone there.

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Resolutions

Resolution Nos. 95-20 (18-A.1) through 100-20 (18-H.3) with the exception of Resolutions 101-20 and 102-20 (Bond Releases) were approved by the following roll call vote:

| COUNCIL        | AYE | NAY | PRESENT | ABSENT | ABSTAIN | MOVE | SECOND |
|----------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|---------|------|--------|
| Mr. Bobbitt    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Ms. Lewis      | X   |     |         |        |         | X    |        |
| Mr. Powers     | X   |     |         |        |         |      | X      |
| Mr. Ryan       | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Mayor Kownacki | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |

Cited Resolutions are spread in their entirety in the Resolution Books of the Township of Lawrence.

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Resolution No. 101-20 (18-B.2) and 102-20 (18-B.3) was approved by the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Mr. Bobbitt	X						X
Ms. Lewis					X		
Mr. Powers	X					X	
Mr. Ryan	X						
Mayor Kownacki	X						

Cited Resolutions are spread in their entirety in the Resolution Books of the Township of Lawrence.

Council Initiatives/Liaison Reports –

Councilman Bobbitt reported that the Growth & Redevelopment Committee had a presentation on the Brunswick Streetscapes and they had a lot of good feedback and a lot of people excited about it and if anyone missed the meeting there will be another on March 11th at 7:00 p.m. at the Slackwood Fire Company.

Councilman Ryan reported that the Lawrence Township Police Department is having a fundraiser this coming Saturday, March 7th from 9 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. for Officer Mark Harmon who passed away.

Councilman Powers reported that the Black History Month Celebration at Lawrence High School was really well attended so they had great turnout for that event. The Historic Preservation Committee did the approval for the project at the Lawrenceville School Campus that will be going before the Planning Board even though it is technically not in the historic district but they took a conservative approach getting the approval from the Committee. With regards to the Shade Tree Advisory Committee,

there was an issue getting one set of plans with Andy Link not being there so they had to go into the Engineers Office to grab Sue Snook, Administrative Secretary, to get plans to do the application which they did review and gave their comments on for the Rider University expansion and suggested better coordination in the future.

Written Communications –

There was no written communications.

There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting adjourned at Council went into Closed Session.

7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kathleen S. Norcia, Municipal Clerk

Attest:

James S. Kownacki, Mayor