

REGULAR MEETING
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING
COUNCIL MEETING IN LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM
AND BY TELE-CONFERENCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH
N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, ET SEQ. AND EXECUTIVE ORDER 107

May 4, 2021

The following are the Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Lawrence Township Council that was held on Tuesday, May 4, 2021, 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, May 4, 2021, 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 18, 2020.

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 and David Roskos, Esq., Municipal Attorney.

Special Proclamations, Recognitions and Presentations

Mayor Kownacki advised that Lawrence Township has a new Health Officer that will be taking over for Carol Chamberlain who will be retiring as of June 1st. Mr. Nerwinski then stated how happy he is to introduce Keith Levine as the new Lawrence Health Officer and advised that his start date is May 10th and Ms. Chamberlain has agreed to stay on until June 1st to make sure the transition is smooth and that he gets access to all the information he needs from her with regards to the operations of the Health Office.

Mr. Nerwinski continued to discuss the difficulty of searching for a Health Officer in the middle of the pandemic and the Township being very fortunate to get the interest of Mr. Levine who comes to the Township by way of Manalapan where he served as the Health Officer since 2019 and prior to that spent 11 years working for the Princeton Health Department as a Senior Registered Environmental Specialist so he knows the area very well. In addition, he has previously worked with Ms. Chamberlain and appeared before him at times when he was the Judge and he has met privately with Ms. Chamberlain a few times to get a full understanding of the job as part of the process so he is really looking forward to working with Mr. Levine and is confident that he is the right person for the position. Although he is the appointing authority with respect to hiring and while not customary he wanted to introduce Mr. Levine to the Council as a courtesy, after which each member of Council introduced themselves, provided a brief bio and welcomed Mr. Levine onboard. Councilwoman Lewis then asked Mr. Levine to provide them with a brief account of what brings him to Lawrence Township.

Mr. Levine stated he is very familiar with the community of Lawrence, working next door in Princeton for so many years, and he is very fond of the Township and he is familiar with Mercer County as well so he is very excited for the opportunity to take over Lawrence Health Department. Further, he has worked with Carol Chamberlain over the years and indicated she is fabulous and has taken the department this far and he feels very privileged to have her support in taking over the department. He then stated how he loves the enthusiasm, kindness and good spirit in the room and thanked Mr. Nerwinski, the Township Council and the community for affording him the opportunity to serve Lawrence during this pandemic-historical time.

Mr. Nerwinski again welcomed Mr. Levine and indicated that the Township has been very fortunate to have department heads who have worked for years...and years...and years making people with 20 years look like newcomers. So this is something new to Lawrence Township and the Governing Body and suggested that Mr. Levine take advantage of all the experience that the staff has to offer and he will make sure that the transition is as smooth as possible and support Mr. Levine in everything that he does and wants to accomplish. Councilman Bobbitt thanked Mr. Nerwinski for bringing Mr. Levine before Council which is a good thing to do to let new hires know that they are supported by the Governing Body as well as the staff.

Public Participation

There was no public participation.

Review and Revisions of Agenda

There was no review or revisions of the agenda.

Adoption of Minutes

There was no adoption of Minutes.

Awarding or Rejecting of Bids

On a motion by Ms. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Powers, Resolution (9-A), Authorizing the Awarding of 2020 Road Improvement Program – Phase 2, was presented for adoption.

Resolution No. 164–21

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, April 21, 2021 bids were received and publicly opened for the project known as **Bid No. 21-04 2020 Road Improvement Program – Phase 2**; and

WHEREAS, ten (10) bids were received and reviewed by the appropriate Township Officials; and

WHEREAS, the lowest responsible bidder was Richard T. Barrett Paving Company who submitted a bid in the amount of \$223,850.00, and

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:50-14, a Certificate of Availability of Funds has been provided and the accounts to be charged are:

Acct.	Ord. No.	Name	Amount
C-04-55-466-243	2360-20	Ashwood/Pheasant/Brookdale/Laurel Wood	\$27,988.50
C-04-55-466-244	2360-20	Holly/Ivy Glen/Woodbury/Laurel Wood	\$113,672.69
C-04-55-466-245	2360-20	Lawrencia Drive (portion)	\$82,188.81

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that pursuant to the recommendations of the Municipal Engineer, the Mayor and Municipal Clerk are hereby authorized to execute a contract with Richard T. Barrett Paving Company, Inc., 400 Prospect Street, Trenton NJ 08618-2630 in the amount of \$223,850.00;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Municipal Manager is hereby authorized to draft the necessary agreement, subject to the approval of the Municipal Attorney as to form and content thereof.

Same was carried on the following roll call vote:

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

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On a motion by Ms. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Powers, Resolution (9-B), Authorizing Renewal of Contract for Bid 18-11 Refuse Collection and Trash Disposal for Additional Year – 12/1/2020 thru 11/30/2021, was presented for adoption.

Resolution No. 168-21

WHEREAS, by Resolution 376-18 adopted on November 8, 2018, Central Jersey Waste and Recycling, Inc., (432 Stokes Avenue, Ewing NJ 08638, Inc. was awarded Bid No. 18-11, Refuse Collection and Trash Disposal; and

WHEREAS, the Township is electing to renew the contract for a third year per the bid specifications; and

WHEREAS, the Township is awarding Option #1 (*curbside and container garbage collection including bulk waste*) and Option #5 (*curbside organic waste collection*) from the submitted proposal for the period December 1, 2020 through November 30, 2021, with the option to renew for two (2) additional years concluding November 30, 2023; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-14, a Certificate of Availability of Funds has been provided and the account to be charged is 0-01-26-305-252 (Garbage and Trash Removal) in the amount of \$78,604 one month in 2020 and charge 1-01-26-305-252 (Garbage and Trash Removal) in 2021 the balance of \$864,644 upon approval of adopted budgets; and

WHEREAS, Option #5 for curbside organic waste is being awarded at \$38.50 per month per household with the customer being responsible for the monthly fee;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that the Township is hereby authorized to enter into a one-year contract for Option #1 and Option #5, per bid specification, from December 1, 2020 through November 30, 2021, with the option to renew for two (2) additional years with Central Jersey Waste & Recycling, Inc.

Same was carried on the following roll call vote:

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

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On a motion by Ms. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Powers, Resolution (9-C), Authorizing Amending Contract for Bid No. 20-16 – 2020 Snow Plowing Services, was presented for adoption.

Resolution No. 169-21

WHEREAS, on October 20, 2020, by Resolution 301-20, Marrazzos Manor Lane was awarded the contract for Bid No. 20-16, 2020 Snow Plowing Services; and

WHEREAS, it is now necessary to amend this contract in the amount of \$2,325 for the final amount due to the contractor because of the significant snow events in the contract period; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-14, a Certificate of Availability of Funds has been provided and the account to be charged is 1-16-56-849-299 (Reserve for Snow Removal);

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that the Township is hereby authorized to amend the contract amount by \$30,000.00 for 2020 Snow Plowing Services, to Marrazzos Manor Lane, for the period of November 1, 2020 through April 15, 2021 with an amended total contract amount of \$49,325.00.

Same was carried on the following roll call vote:

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

On a motion by Ms. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Powers, Resolution (9-D), Authorizing a Contract with Goose Busters for Geese Management Services, was presented for adoption.

Resolution No. 172-21

WHEREAS, the Township of Lawrence has a need for geese management services; and

WHEREAS, the Township requested several quotes and the Director of Health reviewed the quotes received and the quote from Karen Cox, dba Goose Busters was the lowest quote in the amount of \$695.00 per month; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-14, a Certificate of Availability of Funds has been provided and the account to be charged is 1-16-56-843-255 (Open Space) for \$8,500.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that the Township is hereby authorized to award the contract to Goose Busters – Karen Cox, P.O. Box 7784, West Trenton, New Jersey 08628 for a one year period, August 1, 2020 through July 31, 2021.

Same was carried on the following roll call vote:

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

Introduction of Ordinances

Mayor Kownacki read by title, an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2247-16 ESTABLISHING RATES FOR SEWER SERVICE"

Mr. Nerwinski advised that the Ordinance is amending Ordinance No. 2247-16 establishing rates for sewer service. The rate increase deals with the Debt Service and paying down that debt in an effort to gradually get to place where they are paying down the debt as they are supposed to. He is proposing a 5-year plan with a \$12.00 annual increase to get closer to the target of paying down that debt service. While they expect debt to increase a bit, the gap will be reduced and will be less of a burden to the residents.

The Ordinance No. 2393-21 was approved 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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Mayor Kownacki read by title, an ordinance entitled, "BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS ROAD IMPROVEMENTS IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE IN THE COUNTY OF THE MERCER, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$2,597,550, INCLUDING ANY TRANSPORTATION TRUST GRANT FUNDING TO BE USED TO OFFSET BONDS OR NOTES OR NOTES, AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$1,836,000 BONDS OR NOTES TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF"

Mr. Nerwinski advised that Ordinance is part of the Road Improvement Program providing for various road improvements and authorizing the issuance of bonds or notes to finance a portion of the cost. Further, Trenton Water Works is going through their lead replacement line program and they asked that Lawrence Township be placed at the top of the list in terms of getting work done; especially in the area where this is designated because they do not want to start a road program until that work is completed.

The Ordinance No. 2394-21 was approved 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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Mayor Kownacki read by title, an ordinance entitled, “ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$258,450 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FUND FOR VARIOUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE, IN THE COUNTY OF MERCER, NEW JERSEY”

Mr. Nerwinski advised that the Ordinance provides for various capital improvements. The funds will be used to purchase the automated (blue) refuse receptacles that are issued to the residents as they are getting low, and the other cost relates to the construction of a Public Works storage building onsite.

The Ordinance No. 2395-21 was approved 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						

Adoption of Ordinances

There was no adoption of ordinances.

Manager’s Report –

Mr. Nerwinski reported that he previously shared with the Council plans regarding a Dog Park at Hamnett Park to get that park better utilized by the community and he is working on the cost related to the plan which he will share with the Council prior to moving forward. He then proceeded to discuss the preliminary concept for creating an exercise area around the two dog areas as well as naming the dog park which will take place at a later time. He further indicated the plan for the park is a great way to bring the park back to life and continue to build upon. When they get all the plans together he will make a more formal presentation with regards to that.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that the Governor has reduced some restrictions along the way as it relates to COVID-19 which has triggered some questions for him with regards to the anticipated opening of the Municipal Building. It is his position that Lawrence Township provides an essential service to its residents so he is going to take it slower than most people might like with regards to opening because if the Municipal Building should have to quarantine the services would then stop and it is not as though customers can go to another municipality to get assistance. Therefore, the plan is keep doing what they doing as none of the services have stopped and business has been

conducted as usual (at the north entrance) with little to no complaints. New Jersey is doing well with regards to vaccinations so his anticipated targeted date for reopening the building is September, if all goes well. He does not know how everyone feels about this plan; but, he feels it is their primary responsibility to keep the employees healthy so they can keep providing the services to the community and that is why he is taking a more conservative approach with regards to opening up.

Councilman Powers stated that Princeton University had some conversation about voluntary reporting of vaccination status and asked Mr. Nerwinski if there has been any discussion in Lawrence about that voluntary reporting. Mr. Nerwinski replied 'no' there has been no discussion at this point as they are waiting for guidance with regard to how to handle government employees and the interworking with the union agreements and the right to privacy. But, he thinks Lawrence Township employees are right in line with what the population trends are in terms of everybody not getting a vaccine for whatever reason which is okay. So, they are not at a point of setting a policy in place; however, vaccinated employees do not have to quarantine when they visit impacted states as an employee incentive and there are no other discussions on the table at this point.

Attorney's Report –

Mr. Roskos reported that the Municipal Manager's Agreement was approved at the March 16th Council Meeting but he was absent from that meeting and it has taken him a little while to collect his notes with the help of the Municipal Clerk. So, today he had the Agreement circulated through the Clerk's Office for members of Council to review and if everyone has had an opportunity to read the contract and is in agreement he thinks it is appropriate to sign the contract tonight as the Manager's last contract expired on April 30th so he is technically working without a contract which he does not subscribe being he is with the Township until they terminate the relationship. Mr. Roskos apologized for the delay and advised that there were some fairly simple changes to be included in the contract according to the Resolution that was adopted at the March 16th meeting. An exchange of dialogue took place amongst the Council with regards to some members of Council who have not had a chance to read the contract; thereby, abstaining from the vote for the Mayor to sign the new contract. Mr. Nerwinski requested that the Council hold off until the next meeting as he would feel more comfortable with the majority of the Council in support of the Mayor signing his contract.

Clerk's Report –

There was no Clerk's report.

Unfinished Business –

Councilwoman Lewis inquired if they still have Planning Board interviews they need to schedule. Mayor Kownacki replied ‘yes’ for the next meeting. Ms. Norcia advised that she has not received any additional applications; but she will reach out to those applicants she has and schedule them for the May 18th meeting.

New Business –

There was no new business.

Public Participation (3-minute limitation per speaker) –

There was no public participation.

Resolutions

Resolution Nos. 160-21 (18-B.1) through 172-21 (18-H.3) was 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.

Council Initiatives/Liaison Reports –

Mr. Ryan reported with regards to Diversity Day the Committee had a very good meeting. They discussed Plan B with various options if the school is not available for the event which they feel is very important to have Diversity Day this year. He indicated in speaking with Mr. Nerwinski he thinks it is important for them to have something this year as well even if it is scaled down. The plan is to have it in October at Lawrence High School indoors; but, if everybody cannot fit inside they do not mind extending the event outdoors. The second option they discussed was to have the event at Village Park, the third option was Central Park and the fourth option was Veterans Pavilion...but a major

concern was some of the parks not having restroom facilities. So, right now they are tossing around some wonderful ideas and looking at various options and their next meeting is Tuesday, May 11th.

Mr. Ryan further reported that he received a call from Mr. Loper who wanted to thank and express his sincere appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Nerwinski, Mayor Kownacki and Council for putting up the barricades and signs at The Gatherings a month before the Amazon grand opening. Also, he received a call on Arbor Day from people at Colonial Lake thanking him for that event as well.

Mr. Ryan commended Mr. Nerwinski on the fabulous job done on the benches at the parks. Councilwoman Lewis stated even her children noticed the new benches at Central Park and they were very excited. Mr. Nerwinski noted they put some at Veterans Park as well which makes a big difference.

Written Communications –

There was no written communication.

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

7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kathleen S. Norcia, Municipal Clerk

Attest:

James S. Kownacki, Mayor