

SEPTEMBER 12, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.

The Downe Township Committee met in the Meeting Room of the Municipal Office on Monday, September 12, 2022 at 7:00p.m. Mayor Michael L. Rothman, presided. Deputy Mayor Edward Bart, Committeeman Robert Campbell, Larry Jordan and Steve Byrne were in attendance. Municipal Solicitor Rebecca Bertram was also present.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / STATEMENT REGARDING COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Mayor Rothman called for a moment of silence in observance of 911 which was yesterday. Mayor Rothman called the meeting to order; led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

ROLL CALL

Present – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman

Absent - 0

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Mayor Rothman read the Zoning Office Report. The Township Committee acknowledged the receipt of the following report:

- Zoning Office August 2022

MUNICIPAL SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Bertram stated a report was prepared for the committee. The report references topics that should only be discussed in Executive Session. Mrs. Bertram asked if the committee had any questions about the report. There were no questions from the committee.

ORDINANCE PUBLIC HEARING

Ordinance 2022-4 – *An Ordinance Providing for the Use of Capital Funds for the Purchase of New, Additional or Replacement Public Works and General Office Equipment and Improvements for Municipal Buildings and Structures, and to Appropriate the Sum of \$56,700.00 to Pay the Cost Thereof*

Motion was made by Jordan and seconded by Campbell to open the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2022-4.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan, and Rothman

Nay - 0

Vote: All in favor

There being no comments from the public, a motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Bart to close the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2022-4.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan, and Rothman

Nay - 0

Vote: All in favor

ORDINANCE FINAL ADOPTION

Ordinance 2022-4 – *An Ordinance Providing for the Use of Capital Funds for the Purchase of New, Additional or Replacement Public Works and General Office Equipment and Improvements for Municipal Buildings and Structures, and to appropriate the Sum of \$56,700.00 to Pay the Cost Thereof*

Motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Jordan to adopt Ordinance 2022-4.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan, and Rothman
Nay – 0
Vote: All in favor

ORDINANCE PUBLIC HEARING

Ordinance 2022-5 - *A Bond Ordinance Providing for Improvements by the Township of Downe, in the County of Cumberland, New Jersey Appropriating Funds Therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of Funds of the Township*

Motion was made by Bart and seconded by Byrne to open the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2022-5.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan, and Rothman
Nay – 0
Vote: All in favor

Liz Cowley of Fortescue asked what is the dollar amount of the bond? Mayor Rothman answered \$1M. These funds are for the FEMA reimbursement project for the North Cove Road bulkhead repair.

There being no further comments from the public, a motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Byrne to close the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2022-5.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan, and Rothman
Nay – 0
Vote: All in favor

ORDINANCE FINAL ADOPTION

Ordinance 2022-5 - *A Bond Ordinance Providing for Improvements by the Township of Downe, in the County of Cumberland, New Jersey Appropriating Funds Therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of Funds of the Township*

Motion was made by Jordan and seconded by Campbell to adopt Ordinance 2022-5.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan, and Rothman
Nay – 0
Vote: All in favor

RESOLUTIONS

- R-87-2022 *Authorizing the Payment of Bills*
- R-88-2022 *Governing Body Certification of the Annual Audit*
- R-89-2022 *Corrective Action Plan*
- R-90-2022 *Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of the Green Team and Environmental Commission Members*
- R-91-2022 *Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Contract Renewing Membership in the Atlantic County Municipal Joint Insurance Fund*
- R-92-2022 *Resolution of the Township Committee of the township of Downe, Cumberland County Adopting the Cumberland County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Update*
- R-93-2022 *Resolution Authorizing Application for a New Jersey Historical Commission Re-Granting Program Grant*
- R-94-2022 *Resolution Authorizing Application for the American Rescue Plan Firefighter Grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs*
- R-95-2022 *Resolution Pledging to Support Sustainable Land Use*
- R-96-2022 *Resolution to Authorize the Township of Downe to Execute Recreation and Open Space Inventory*
- R-97-2022 *Authorizing Executive Session*

A motion was made by Bart and seconded by Campbell to adopt Resolution No. R-87-2022 *Authorizing the Payment of Bills* in the total amount of \$297,805.12.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

Mayor Rothman stated the Annual Audit for 2021 was returned with no recommendation. This is due to a great effort by the staff of Downe Township.

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Bart to adopt Resolution No. R-88-2022.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Byrne to adopt Resolution No. R-89-2022.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

A motion was made by Byrne and seconded by Jordan to adopt Resolution No. R-90-2022.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Byrne to adopt Resolution No. R-91-2022.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Byrne to adopt Resolution No. R-92-2022.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Byrne to adopt Resolution No. R-93-2022.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

A motion was made by Byrne and seconded by Jordan to adopt Resolution No. R-94-2022.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Jordan to adopt Resolution No. R-95-2022.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Byrne to adopt Resolution No. R-96-2022.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Jordan to adopt Resolution No. R-97-2022.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

Mayor Rothman reported that we are in negotiations with our Comcast Franchise Renewal to extend our service area. They are proposing to include Newport Neck Road. Mayor Rothman reported that Bayshore Wireless has been doing a lot of work in this area providing internet service to areas not serviced by Comcast. We are still working on the details for a bulkhead ordinance. South Jersey Gas has been installing new service throughout Fortescue. On September 14th the Sherriff Department will be doing a project in Dividing Creek. We are currently working on an ordinance concerning travel trailers, campers and RVs in the township. We are in review of our current cannabis ordinance which will be amended to provide more details. Mayor Rothman gave some brief details from Mr. Loteck's Enforcement report. The report listed several items being investigated by Mr. Loteck which includes abandoned vehicles, overgrown weeds, and junk yard properties.

PUBLIC COMMENT

On a motion by Campbell and seconded by Byrne, the meeting was opened to the public for comment.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

Liz Cowley of Fortescue reported on Wednesday, September 14th the Sherriff Dept has asked that the township allow them to bring children in to use the property along with the Mennonite Church property to do what is called an "Open Play". The Sherriff Dept is in charge of the event and will be bringing in all of the equipment and supplies needed. They heard that the Green Team had a community garden set up on the property they want to use. They asked if we could participate with the event using our garden to educate and teach the kids gardening skills on that day. We are going to give the kids a lesson in community service. We have a lot of weeding that needs to happen down there. Also, Jamie Warner will be donating the plants that will be planted by the kids. This will help the Green Team because we are short handed and it will also give them a lesson in community service.

Liz continued we just completed the Bounty on the Bay. A great time was had by all. The building was hopping for 5 hours. We ran out of tables and chairs. This fundraiser goes with the Heart and Soul project and we walked away with a net profit of \$7,000. The community did an excellent job with donating all the things needed to make it work. That event puts us around \$45,000 raised towards the endowment for Heart and Soul. We have a foundation that will match dollar for dollar what we put into the endowment. If we do things right, we can walk away from the Heart and Soul project with about \$80,000 in an endowment for Downe Township that goes on forever. We have about nine months left in Heart and Soul to raise more money and make our decisions. Tonight, Jamie Warner and a group of people are out going door to door in Dividing Creek gathering viewpoints and a feel for what they think is important for Downe Township. The Green Team has a waterway cleanup scheduled for September 18th cleaning up the beaches in the township. We will be doing Turkey Point, Hansey Creek, Dividing Creek, Maple Avenue, Fortescue, Money Island and Gandy Beach. We will meet at 8am at the OEM building and separate into groups in order to hit all the beach areas in the township. Lastly, Downe Home Day is scheduled for October 15th at the Downe Elementary School. It is an open community event and is not a fundraiser for the Green Team. The Green Team is putting it on to get the community together to enjoy each other for the day. The school will be trying to raise money for the 8th Grade After Glow Party. The event is free to everyone.

Sean Pignatelli asked Ms. Cowley to explain what the endowment funds can be used for in the township. Ms. Cowley explained the endowment is through a South Jersey Organization that gave us a \$100,000 grant. Once the money is in the endowment that money can never be spent down below what was originally put into it. We can work off of the interest forever. The decision maker on what will be done with the money is going to come out of the Green Team. We are literally going out and interviewing clubs, groups, people, we are even down at the docks on the weekends gathering information from the people on what brings them here to this area. The endowment does have restrictions on what you can spend the funds on per year. They will only allow us to spend a percentage of the funds per year. Will need to decide where the funds we have are going so they are available for the Green Teams project

There being no further comments, the public comment portion was closed on a motion by Campbell and seconded by Jordan.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

INFORMAL PRESENTATION – Mr. Emmett Vandegrist of Pigment Holdings

Pigment Holdings currently has applied to the State for licenses to operate a cannabis facility in the State. Mr. Vandegrist and his partners at Pigment Holdings are interested in property in Downe Township for a cannabis cultivation facility. Mr. Vandegrist explained they are currently in the process of approval and what their next steps will be. They are also proposing a facility in Commercial Township. Mayor Vizzard of Commercial Township gave positive comments about the project planned for his township.

Mr. Bart had no report

Mr. Jordan had no report.

Mr. Byrne reported on Saturday, September 18th the Union Hall will be blessed with the sounds of the Vineland Village Gospel Choir at 7pm. On Sunday, September 19th from 1pm-4pm come out to Union Hall and listen to some great music. Hope to see you all there.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was determined there were no topics for discussion. Therefore, Resolution R-97-2022 Resolution Authorizing Executive Session was vacated and not needed as it was determined there was no need for an Executive Session meeting.

NEXT MEETING

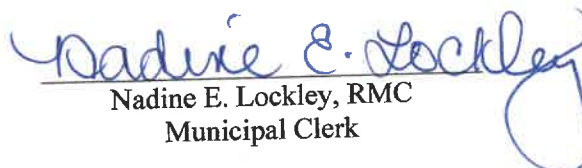
The next meeting of the Downe Township Committee will be held on Monday, October 10, 2022 at 7pm.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Bart and seconded by Campbell.

Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Rothman, Jordan and Campbell
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor


Nadine E. Lockley, RMC
Municipal Clerk