

DOWNE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 13, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.

The Downe Township Committee met in the Meeting Room of the Municipal Office on Monday, March 13, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Michael L. Rothman, presided. Deputy Mayor Larry Jordan, Committeemen Robert Campbell, Steve Byrne, and Edward Bart 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 the meeting to order; led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

ROLL CALL

Present – Jordan, Bart, Byrne, Campbell, and Rothman
Absent - 0

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- February 13, 2023 Regular Meeting
- February 13, 2023 Executive Session

On a motion by Campbell and seconded by Byrne the minutes of the previously mentioned meetings were approved as presented.

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

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Mayor Rothman read the Tax Collector, Chief Finance Officer, and the Zoning Office Reports. The Township Committee acknowledged the receipt of the following report:

- Chief Finance Officer February 2023
- Tax Collector February 2023
- Zoning Office February 2023

MUNICIPAL SOLICITOR’S REPORT

Solicitor Bertram presented her report which consisted of information and updates on matters that should be discussed in Executive Session.

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION

Ordinance 2023-2 *Calendar Year 2023 Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a CAP Bank (NJSA 40A:4-45.14)*

Motion was made by Byrne and seconded by Campbell to introduce Ordinance 2023-2.

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

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION

Ordinance 2023-3 *An Ordinance Authorizing the Acquisition of Property Known as 16 Princeton Avenue (Block 69 Lot 22) on the Tax Map of the Township of Downe*

Motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Jordan to introduce Ordinance 2023-3.

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

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION

Ordinance 2023-4 *An Ordinance Declaring Certain Parcels of Property Owned by Downe Township Situate in Cumberland County No Longer Needed for Public Use and Authorizing Public Sale*

Motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Bart to introduce Ordinance 2023-4.

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

ORDINANCE PUBLIC HEARING

Ordinance 2023-1 *An Ordinance Authorizing the Acquisition of Property Known as Raybins Beach (Block 143 Lot 4) on the Tax Map of the Township of Downe*

Motion was made by Bart and seconded by Jordan to open the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-1.

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

Liz Cowley of Fortescue asked if there is a liability that comes with taking this donated property. Mayor Rothman answered this property will be insured just like all other township properties.

Kary Wilson of Newport asked if the taxes have been paid since 2012. How can we take on a property that is behind in tax payments. Mayor Rothman answered the township can auction the property to put it back on our tax roles.

There being no further comments a motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Byrne to close the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-1

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

ORDINANCE FINAL ADOPTION

Ordinance 2023-1 *An Ordinance Authorizing the Acquisition of Property Known as Raybins Beach (Block 143 Lot 4) on the Tax Map of the Township of Downe*

Motion was made by Jordan and seconded by Campbell to adopt Ordinance 2023-1.

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

RESOLUTIONS

R-41-2023 *Authorizing the Payment of Bills*
R-42-2023 *Authorizing the Sale of Tax Sale Certification #23-00007*
R-43-2023 *Authorizing Executive Session*

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Byrne to adopt Resolution No. R-41-2023 *Authorizing the Payment of Bills* in the total amount of \$364,458.14.

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

Vote: All in favor

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Bart to adopt Resolution No. R-42-2023.

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

Vote: All in favor

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

Mayor Rothman reported the County is working on replacing the weight limit signs that were missing at the south end bridge. We are working on the dune situation that was bought up last month. There is an issue on Turkey Point Road with dumping cats. There is a request from a resident on Turkey Point Road to install “illegal cat dumping signs” in the area to stop the action. We have received some complaints about the condition of Pennsylvania Avenue. The township has put some fill dirt down as a temporary fix. We have spoken with the property owner of the trailer park today and he is in the process of eviction of some tenants and will be cleaning up the property. We have put up some signage on Maple Avenue and we are waiting on the county who has agreed to work on making the area safe with signs and fencing.

HEART AND SOUL PRESENTATION

Jamie Warner of Dividing Creek gave a brief overview of what’s happening with the Heart and Soul Project. The process entails reaching out to the community to find out what we all love about Downe Township and use that data to create an action plan for the future of the township. We have spent part of last year collecting data from over 650 residents and visitors of Downe Township. We grouped the data by theme and created value statements. Mrs. Warner read over the value statements hoping to collect feedback from the attendees of the meeting. The next thing to do is create an action plan. We now have some money that we can throw behind some projects for the township. We need your feedback. The committee thanked the Heart and Soul Project team for all of their hard work.

Meghan Wren of Fortescue stated if there are any comments to the value statements or if there is something you think the township should be doing that we didn’t address, please contact Jamie or Meghan because we are still working on the draft.

Liz Cowley of Fortescue stated that on March 25th we will be doing a roadway cleanup in Dividing Creek on Narrow Lane Road towards Millville. We meet at the OEM building at 8am. On March 26th we will be sponsoring a lecture on Nature at the Newport Methodist Church from 2pm-4pm. We will be featuring two rehabilitators, one from Conserve Wildlife and one from Wildlife Rehabilitators. We are happy to announce that Vicki from Wildlife Rehabilitators is now a resident of Fortescue. We will be learning what to do when we have injured animals or other wildlife in this area. About a week ago we had a seal rescued in Fortescue.

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

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

Vote: All in favor

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Rothman commented that we are still working on our budget and because of where the world is today, we cannot avoid an increase in our tax rates. We will be introducing our budget at next month's meeting.

Mr. Jordan suggested to have our Road Department contact the county engineer to get a timeline on when they are planning to repave Fortescue Road.

Mr. Bart reported the state has been working on cleaning up Money Island.

Mr. Byrne stated music will begin again starting on March 18th at 2pm with the Fiddle Club of Linwood. The Austin Brothers will be performing on April 15th at 7pm. Don't forget our one Sunday a month music session from 1pm-4pm.

Mr. Campbell stated we are waiting for the bids to come in on March 30th. Everything is on track. Mr. Pignatelli asked if the DEP had signed everything and are we ready to go. Mayor Rothman stated there is one issue with the DEP regarding the legal wording of a document that is being worked on and will be resolved shortly. This is not holding us up. There is nothing holding us up at this point, that is why we were able to go out for bids. Mayor Rothman explained the conditions of the construction. There are seasons we can not do construction because of eagles & osprey nesting in the area. When the bids are opened, we will know what the project will cost.

Mr. Campbell also spoke about the three FEMA projects we are working on. The projects are the Fortescue Cap project, the new seawall in Gandy Beach and the repair of the steel bulkhead in Gandy Beach.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Downe Township Committee will be held on Monday, April 10, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Municipal Complex.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Campbell and seconded by Jordan, the meeting was closed to the public and the Executive Session was opened with no action to be taken after Executive Session. A contract issue will be discussed.

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

Vote: All in favor

On a motion by Campbell and seconded by Bart, the Executive Session portion was closed.

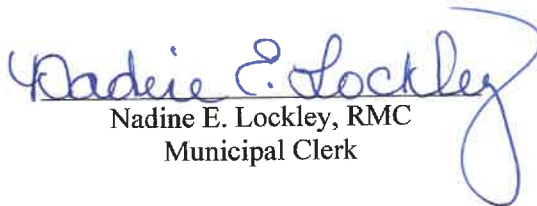
Roll Call: Aye – Bart, Byrne, Campbell, Jordan, and Rothman
Nay – 0

Vote: All in favor

ADJOURNMENT

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

Vote: All in favor


Nadine E. Lockley, RMC
Municipal Clerk