

REGULAR MEETING
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

APRIL 15, 2015

Chairperson Laurella called to order a regular meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Deerfield, County of Cumberland and State of New Jersey, at the Municipal Building, 736 Landis Avenue, Rosenhayn, at 7:00 p.m.

Chairperson Laurella led the flag salute.

The Clerk took roll call and members present included Mr. Sparacio, Mr. Stanzione, Mr. Spatola, Mr. Danna and Mr. Laurella.

Departmental Reports

The Clerk presented the departmental reports of the Construction Office, Housing/Zoning Officer, Tax Collector, Treasurer, Fire Marshal and Emergency Management Coordinator.

Mr. Sparacio made a motion, seconded by Mr. Spatola, to accept and file the departmental reports. The Committee approved.

2015 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

The Clerk presented Resolution #15-91 Authorizing The Municipal Clerk To Read The 2015 Budget By Title Only.

Mr. Spatola made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stanzione to adopt Resolution #15-91. Roll Call Voted:

Mr. Danna	Yes	Mr. Sparacio	Yes
Mr. Spatola	Yes	Chairperson Laurella	Yes
Mr. Stanzione	Yes		

Mr. Spatola made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sparacio to open the Public Hearing on the 2015 Municipal Budget. The Committee approved.

There being no comment from the public, Mr. Spatola made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stanzione to close the Public Hearing on the 2015 Municipal Budget. The Committee approved.

The Clerk presented Resolution #15-92 To Adopt The 2015 Municipal Budget. Mr. Spatola made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stanzione to adopt Resolution #15-92. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Danna	Yes	Mr. Sparacio	Yes
Mr. Spatola	Yes	Chairperson Laurella	Yes
Mr. Stanzione	Yes		

Chairperson Laurella stated that he would like to give Sgt. Koslowski of the New Jersey State Police the opportunity to give his community report. Sgt. Koslowski indicated that he is the Administrative Sergeant at the Bridgeton Barracks. Sgt. Koslowski stated that he was here this evening to give an overview of last month's activity. He further stated that Bridgeton has the highest call volume over every other State Police Barracks in the State. He indicated that Deerfield is usually third or fourth on their list for activity. Sgt. Koslowski indicated that there were 132 calls for service for the month, 14 accidents and 25 investigations for Deerfield. He further indicated that the investigations were as a result of burglaries or break-ins to vehicles. He further stated that these burglars are opportunists and don't want to be at your place or car longer than

they have to. Sgt. Koslowski stated that these people go up and down driveways and try door handles and if they are unlocked they go in and see what they can take. He recommended that motion lights are a good deterrent. Sgt. Koslowski noted that electronic equipment left in vehicles are usually taken, small power tools from unlocked sheds and reminded everyone to be diligent. Sgt. Koslowski indicated that residents are the most effective deterrent of crime in their neighborhoods as they know what vehicles should be there and which ones shouldn't. He further indicated that the State Police would much rather come out than have someone robbed.

There being no questions, the Committee thanked Sgt. Koslowski for coming to the meeting.

Ordinances

The Clerk presented Ordinance #2015-2 – An Ordinance Appropriating The Sum Of \$30,000.00 From The Capital Improvement Fund Of Deerfield Township For Various Improvements To The Deerfield Township Municipal Building And Grounds.

Mr. Spatola made a motion, seconded by Mr. Danna to adopt Ordinance #2015-2 on first reading and to set Wednesday, May 6, 2015 for second reading, public hearing and final adoption. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Danna	Yes	Mr. Sparacio	Yes
Mr. Spatola	Yes	Chairperson Laurella	Yes
Mr. Stanzione	Yes		

Resolutions

The Clerk presented Resolution #15-93 – Resolution Certifying The Salaries Of Certain Municipal Employees.

Mr. Sparacio made a motion, seconded by Mr. Spatola to adopt Resolution #15-93. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Danna	Yes	Mr. Sparacio	Yes
Mr. Spatola	Yes	Chairperson Laurella	Yes
Mr. Stanzione	Yes		

The Clerk presented Resolution #15-94 – Authorizing Inter Local Service Agreement Between The Borough Of Shiloh And The Township Of Deerfield For Certified Recycling Coordinator Services. The Clerk noted that this is a yearly Resolution as the Borough of Shiloh has agreed to have their Clerk who is a Certified Recycling Coordinator prepare our annual report.

Mr. Stanzione made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sparacio to adopt Resolution #15-94. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Danna	Yes	Mr. Sparacio	Yes
Mr. Spatola	Yes	Chairperson Laurella	Yes
Mr. Stanzione	Yes		

The Clerk presented Resolution #15-95 –Authorizing Agreement Between The County Of Cumberland And The Township Of Deerfield Regarding The Alliance For Substance Abuse Prevention.

Mr. Danna made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stanzione to adopt Resolution #15-95. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Danna	Yes	Mr. Sparacio	Yes
Mr. Spatola	Yes	Chairperson Laurella	Yes
Mr. Stanzione	Yes		

Old Business

The Clerk presented Reports from Department Chairpersons.

Mr. Spatola stated that it was brought to his attention by the Maintenance Supervisor that he spoke with the Chairman of the Recreation Committee that there needs to be a course of action with regard to the stage roof. He further stated that we keep getting prices on the money received from the CCIA, but the prices are over budget. Mr. Spatola indicated that something has to be done with the existing roof. He further indicated that the roof is in disrepair and it needs shingles and bracing and framing members and it needs to be addressed. Mr. Spatola stated that he and Mr. Stanzione will bring it up to Recreation at the next meeting and that there is a bit of urgency. He further stated that the Township is holding \$40,000 for the roof, but questioned whether the Township should return the money to the CCIA or save money to do the roof. Mr. Spatola indicated that there has been a great deal of discussion on scaling back on the Festival and there may be the opportunity to save the money and redo the roof. Mr. Spatola asked the other Committee members to think about what could be done and possibly give some feedback.

Chairperson Laurella asked if the old part of the stage could be extended out to a slope roof instead of an "A" type roof. Mr. Spatola indicated that had been discussed but because of the height of the roof and the pitch of the ridge it would be too low for the lighting.

As to Buildings and Grounds, Mr. Spatola noted that he had received a telephone call from the Fire Chief who saw some 4-wheelers or dirt bikes ripping up the park. He further noted that the Committee had approved some new signs being put up and wanted to ask if that had gotten done. The Clerk indicated that she had not heard whether that was completed, but would check with the Maintenance Supervisor.

Mr. Spatola stated that he was disappointed with the response by the State Police as the individuals were sitting at the park and could have been addressed by the State Police.

Mr. Danna stated that with regard to the incident a couple of weeks ago regarding Morton Avenue and Sherman Avenue, the County and Board of Health were involved and some photos were in the packets this evening. He further stated that the individual scrapped the road to remove the manure, however, as no one actually saw the individual drop the manure on the road the State Police couldn't do anything. Mr. Danna indicated that he spoke with Jim Neher at the County and the County came out and took pictures and spread sand. He further indicated that he went to the State Police Barracks today and spoke with the Station Commander. The Station Commander was aware of the situation and wanted to know if there was a Township Ordinance for this type of situation.

Mr. Spatola agreed that it was a mess, but if the Township has an Ordinance to prevent this type of debris on Township roads that's all well and good, but neither of these roads were Township roads – they were County roads and the County took care of it. Mr. Spatola suggested that the person who was responsible should be billed by the County for

the clean up. Discussion was held among the Committee regarding responsibility of offenders who drop debris on the roads whether on Township or County roads. Further discussion was held on the need for DEP permits for the receipt of vegetative waste.

Mr. Stanzione motion, seconded by Mr. Spatola to have the Board of Health come to a meeting and explain this issue of the road debris. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Danna	Yes	Mr. Sparacio	Yes
Mr. Spatola	Yes	Chairperson Laurella	Yes
Mr. Stanzione	Yes		

Chairperson Laurella asked Mr. Danna if he ever contacted the County with regard to Big Oak and Parvins Mill Road where there's a large dip in the road to move water off the intersection. Mr. Danna stated that the County is doing Woodruff Road, they probably won't get to Vineland Avenue, and that the County is going to get to it, but they did not say when. He further stated that he couldn't get a commitment from the County and Mr. Danna told the County that we have been told that in the past. Mr. Danna indicated that they talked about the 4-way stop at that intersection and nothing has been done about that.

Mr. Stanzione indicated that he spoke with John Knoop the County Engineer who informed him that the County is putting a 4-way stop at the Woodruff Road and Vineland Avenue and that they want to lower the speed limit from Terrigno's all the way down to Stillman Avenue to 35 mph. Chairperson Laurella noted that it is presently 40 mph until Deerfield and then it goes up to 50 mph. Mr. Spatola stated that was ridiculous and no one is going to do 35 mph all the way down that road.

The Clerk presented Update-Review And Discuss Report From Land Use Board Regarding the Vacation Of A Portion Of Maxon Avenue Per The Request Of F & S Produce. The Clerk stated that in the packets this evening is the report from the Land Use Board whereby they discussed the matter at their April 8th meeting and they found no issues with the request and is still in compliance with the Master Plan and would not impair access to other properties.

Mr. Stanzione questioned if the Committee is going to approve this, why would the Township just approve that portion when the Township could vacate that property up to the next land owner and put even more property back on the tax rolls and would block off the other land owner. Mr. Stanzione stated that F & S is asking for a small portion when they already own all of the property on that road except for one other land owner so why not approve the vacation of the road up to the other land owner. Mr. Spatola clarified that the Township would approve all of the vacation of the paper street up to the other land owner.

Solicitor Testa indicated that the Township could put it on for discuss and invite F&S and their attorney to address the Committee before the Township puts an Ordinance on the agenda.

Mr. Stanzione made a motion, seconded by Mr. Danna to have F&S and their attorney address the Committee regarding their request to vacate a portion of Maxon Avenue. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Danna	Yes	Mr. Sparacio	Yes
Mr. Spatola	Yes	Chairperson Laurella	Yes
Mr. Stanzione	Yes		

The Clerk presented Review and Approve Notice to Bidders For The Sale Of 1985 International Dump Truck And Plow. The Clerk stated that Solicitor Testa's office prepared the Notice To Bidders and it is returnable May 6th at the meeting. She further stated that Mr. Laurella had suggested that the Township might want to receive the bids earlier in the day and report the results at the meeting that evening.

Chairperson Laurella noted that the Township is receiving 2 sets of bids that day-one for the Carmel Fire Hall and the second for the dump truck. He suggested that the bids for the dump truck could be opened that afternoon with 2 Committee people present and the ones for the fire hall could be opened that night at the meeting and would help expedite the process.

Mr. Spatola felt that it was important to open the all the bids at the meeting. Mr. Spatola made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stanzione to open all sealed bids for the dump truck at the meeting on May 6th on the record in front of the public. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Danna	Yes	Mr. Sparacio	Yes
Mr. Spatola	Yes	Chairperson Laurella	Yes
Mr. Stanzione	Yes		

Mr. Danna stated that at the last meeting the Committee had discussed getting the Zoning/Housing Officer to do something about the abandoned houses. The Clerk indicated that Zoning/Housing Officer has one of the secretaries preparing letters to the banks and property owners.

New Business

Chairperson Laurella stated that 2 meetings ago the Township did away with our electrical and plumbing inspectors to do shared services with Upper Deerfield Township. He further stated that he felt that the way the 2 individuals were terminated was a little harsh and they should have been called on the phone and not just sent a letter. Chairperson Laurella indicated that he is as much to blame as the rest of the Committee and the Township should treat their people better. He further indicated that about 5 years ago these 2 individuals took a cut in pay and this is like a slap in the face to them. Chairperson Laurella stated that he gave the Committee tonight printouts of the last couple of years showing receipts and loses in the Construction Department. He further stated that he wished the Township could keep some of their own employees, but everything is about shared services.

Mr. Spatola stated that this is a business and not a boys club. He further stated that he holds these 2 gentlemen in high regard and have known them for 30 years and are probably the best inspectors in their departments in the State of New Jersey. Mr. Spatola indicated that these gentlemen were informed that there contracts would not be reinstated 3 weeks prior to that happening. He further indicated we did not rush into this decision and at budget time it takes money to run a Township and the biggest reason this was ventured into is because our tax rate is not viable enough for the Township to move forward. Mr. Spatola stated that for whatever reason the Township does not raises taxes and every year there seems to be a reason not to and we keep foregoing the increase for fear of being a "bad guy", but the Township doesn't have a tax rate. He further stated that the Township made \$700 one year, but each year it cost the Township \$41,000.00. We entered into a shared service with Upper Deerfield for \$28,000 which would include an electrical and plumbing subcode official, the Township chose to spend \$11,000 more a year on top of our shared service contract (which was redundant), but did it anyway

because these are great guys and great inspectors. Mr. Spatola indicated that the Township was paying out 2 ways and it didn't make sense then and nor does it make sense now. He further indicated that the Committee chose not to raise taxes again in 2015 and the Township had to find a way to save money. Mr. Spatola noted that in revising the shared service agreement the Township is saving \$41,000 and it equates to about 2 ½ cents of taxes that didn't have to be passed on to the taxpayers. He further noted that he was the one or pushed the fact that the construction department is not making a penny, losing money every year, having someone come in for 2 hours a week and leaves. The staff will still be able to give permit applications, but any transactions will take place in Upper Deerfield, just like it has been. Mr. Spatola stated that instead of 2 hours a week in our building individuals will be able to get answers 5 days a week from 8:30 to 4:30. He further stated that Upper Deerfield is making themselves very available. Mr. Spatola indicated that he did receive a phone call from one of the inspectors who indicated that he was upset that the Township was doing this. He further indicated that he apologized if the individual's feelings were hurt, but on a business level, the move was to protect taxpayer dollars. Mr. Spatola noted that he thought a phone call had been made to the individual advising of what was going to happen, but nevertheless, the letter sent was very nice and it was sent 3 weeks before effective date of termination.

Chairperson Laurella clarified when the letter sent and that there was not verbal communication with the individuals. He noted that the blame falls on the Committee and in the future a face to face should be held with the individual.

Chairperson Laurella wanted to discuss a situation with comp time, however Solicitor Testa stated that the matter should be discussed in closed session. Chairperson Laurella asked for a closed session at the next meeting.

Communications

The Clerk stated that there were no communications this evening.

The Clerk presented Resolution #15-96 For The Payment Of Bills.

Mr. Spatola made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sparacio, to adopt Resolution #15-96. Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Danna	Yes	Mr. Sparacio	Yes
Mr. Spatola	Yes	Chairperson Laurella	Yes
Mr. Stanzione	Yes		

Public Comment

Mr. Spatola made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stanzione, to open the meeting to the public. The Committee approved.

Jason Scythes, 786 Landis Avenue came before the Committee. Mr. Scythes stated that he was confused concerning the discussion about the construction department. Chairperson Laurella clarified what had been taken in through the construction department and what was spent on shared services and salaries and how there is a loss in that department. Mr. Scythes confirmed that all the fees for permits would now stay with Upper Deerfield and that was confirmed.

Mr. Scythes questioned who, if anyone, looks into attracting businesses to the Township.

Mr. Stanzione stated that when a business is interested in a location, they contact the State, who in turn contacts the County, who in turn contacts CDC. He further stated that CDC is comprised of all of the municipalities in the western part of the County as well as the City of Bridgeton. Mr. Stanzione indicated that CDC contacts the municipalities to see if there is land available for the business. He further indicated that what hurts Deerfield a lot is the fact that the Township doesn't have water and sewer where some of the other towns do. Mr. Stanzione stated that it doesn't mean that Deerfield won't have businesses coming in, because there are a couple of businesses looking into Deerfield now.

Mr. Scythes questioned if there are incentives for businesses to come to Deerfield. Mr. Stanzione stated that what he has learned lately is that the town will receive more money if the town does give an abatement. Chairperson Laurella indicated that a business will receive a 5 year abatement. Mr. Stanzione indicated that when a town gives an abatement the town receives the money, if you don't then a certain portion of that money goes to the State. He further indicated that a town is better off in the beginning doing the abatement so the town will receive more money. Discussion was held between Mr. Scythes and Mr. Stanzione regarding abatement lengths and how much goes to the town and county. Additional discussion was held regarding water and sewer and clean businesses versus "dirty" businesses.

Mr. Stanzione noted that Deerfield Township can't compete with the City of Millville or the City of Vineland because they offer incentives and abatements that Deerfield cannot offer.

Mr. Spatola stated that abatements are attractive, but the problem that we had in the past, whether it be 5 or 7 year abatement, the property was assessed a value. He further stated at that point the owner of the property took the Township to Court to get the assessment that owner wanted on the property. Mr. Spatola stated that the only way to have a successful abatement program is to have contract with the property owner that the assessment will be "X" at the end of 5 years and if the property owner doesn't like that they'll take us to Court. Chairperson Laurella agree and noted that a property owner is again going after the Township to lower assessments on some other properties.

Chairperson Laurella noted that larger municipalities have Enterprise or Empowerment Zones that Deerfield doesn't have and Deerfield can only offer the tax abatement.

Mr. Spatola noted that unless sewer and water comes through Deerfield Township the Township will stay as it is. Mr. Spatola stated that the Township will never have a large tax rate and the businesses in the Township are not necessarily "clean" businesses. They are farming businesses that produce complaints from the people of flies, groundhogs, stink and debris. He stated that if the Township had water and sewer all that debris would be ground up and washed down the sewer. Mr. Spatola noted that water and sewer is a double edge sword. Water and sewer would solve a lot of problems and until that happens the Township can't grow. He further noted, however, if the Township did have water and sewer the Township would grow, but then the Township would have to deal with affordable housing issues and school issues.

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There being no further comment from the public, Mr. Spatola made a motion, seconded by Mr. Danna to close the public portion of the meeting. The Committee approved.

There being no further business, Mr. Stanzione made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sparacio, to adjourn the meeting. The Committee approved.

Cosmo J. Laurella, Chairperson
Township of Deerfield

ATTEST:

Karen Seifrit, Clerk
Township of Deerfield