

TOWNSHIP OF MOORESTOWN
TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
OFFICIAL ACTION MEETING
April 3, 2023

The Regular Meeting of the Moorestown Township Council was called to order by Mayor Gillespie at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, Council Chamber, 111 West Second Street, Moorestown. Attendance was as follows:

Nicole Gillespie, Councilmember
Quinton Law, Deputy Mayor
Sue Mammarella, Councilmember
Jake Van Dyken, Councilmember
David Zipin, Councilmember

Kevin E. Aberant, Township Manager
Thomas J. Merchel, Deputy Manager/Finance Director
Patricia L. Hunt, Township Clerk
Stephen Raymond, Substitute Township Attorney

CALL TO ORDER: At 7:00 p.m., Mayor Gillespie read the Open Public Meetings Act statement in full, as printed on the agenda.

MAYOR'S STATEMENT

"Notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act"
by:

1. Posting a copy of the agenda on the bulletin board at the Municipal Complex.
2. Filing a copy of the agenda in the office of the Township Clerk at the Municipal Complex.
3. Mailing a copy of the agenda to the Burlington County Times and Courier Post.
4. Forwarding written notice to each person who has requested copies of the regular meeting schedule.

All of the above posting, filing and mailing have taken place on March 31, 2023.

MOMENT OF SILENCE AND FLAG SALUTE: The Official Action meeting began with a moment of silence and flag salute.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Gillespie took roll call. All were present.

PROCLAMATIONS & PRESENTATIONS: None.

Reports from Council: Mr. Van Dyken advised that the Recreation Advisory committee meets tomorrow night.

Ms. Mammarella advised that the Historic Preservation Ad Hoc Committee submitted a draft grant application to the Manager for review.

Mayor Gillespie reported that the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) and Moorestown Business Association held an informational session with the Economic Development Authority. The session will be posted online. The EDAC is very interested in seeing

the Lenola Streetscape project completed and what they can do to help bring new business to the area. Save the Environment Moorestown's (STEM) pollinator garden project was postponed and will be held this week; STEM is seeking volunteers.

Upcoming Meeting(s) Hybrid: Mayor Gillespie read the upcoming meetings aloud.
April 24, 2023 – 7:00 p.m. (Official Action)
May 8, 2023 – 7:00 p.m. (Official Action)

Agenda Updates: None.

Adopting Consent Agenda Resolution No. CA 04 03 2023: Mayor Gillespie asked for a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda.

MOTIONED BY: Mr. Zipin
SECONDED BY: Ms. Mammarella
ABSENT: None
ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favor

RESOLUTION APPROVING CONSENT AGENDA CA 04 03 2023

WHEREAS, Consent Agendas include routine items of business which are not controversial; do not require individual discussion; and are voted upon as one item by the Governing Body; and

WHEREAS, any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda by the request of any Council Member; and

WHEREAS, if so removed, said item(s) will be treated as a separate matter(s); and

WHEREAS, the Township Council has reviewed the Consent Agenda and determined that the matters listed are matters, which require official action; but do not require further deliberation or discussion.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Moorestown, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey, that it hereby:

- x a. Approves the Consent Agenda as written on the agenda.
 b. Approves the Consent Agenda as written with the exception of the following:
 c. Requests that all matters on the Consent Agenda be handled separately.

Participation in Burlington County Development Block Grant and Urban County Cooperation Agreement: Mr. Aberant advised that this program is run by the County and the Township has participated for many years in the past. It is a three-year commitment; participation makes the Township eligible for Community Development Block Grants and the HOME

Investment Partnership Program. He advised that Pennrose applied for and received funding through the HOME Investment Partnership Program for its affordable housing project in Moorestown. He advised it is time to renew the contract; if Council consents, a resolution will be prepared for the next meeting. There were no objections.

2023 Municipal Budget: Mr. Aberant reviewed the overall budget.

Mr. Aberant advised that he transmitted the Manager's recommended budget to Council. The total budget is \$27,400,000 which reflects a \$5,000 decrease as compared to the 2022 adopted Municipal Budget. The proposed amount to be raised by taxation for municipal purposes is \$16,054,846 which is \$354,198 more than in the 2022 adopted Municipal Budget. The appropriations are below the appropriations cap, and the levy is below the levy cap.

The proposed budget calls for an increase to the local purpose tax rate of \$.008 (\$.432 as compared to \$.424 in 2022). This represents a 1.89% increase. He reviewed revenues and appropriations as set forth in his memorandum to Council regarding the proposed 2023 municipal budget. He advised that there is \$200,000 allocated in the capital improvement fund for bond down payment monies.

Mr. Merchel said it was a very good year, construction department revenues, interest on investments, tax collection rate, etc. Mr. Merchel said the budget anticipates 165,000 less than last year. We should be using about \$2.2 million each year. Spending has been a little more due to the pandemic and mall tax appeals. This is the last year of the \$325,000 judgment from the mall (Lord and Taylor and Macys). Salaries are down with all the retirements and contract negotiations that have resulted in lower hiring salaries. Group insurance went up 4.29% (as compared to municipalities in the State Health Benefits Program who are seeing a 24% increase). Levy is going up by \$391,310 due to a decrease in appropriations (\$5,000) and decrease in revenues (\$396,310) – last year we had a two-time revenue source from the American Rescue Fund which only \$400,000 is available in the budget this year. The Township had a 99.22 tax collection percentage rate. This year a 98.8 tax collection percentage rate will be used (reserve for uncollected taxes).

In summary, the proposed budget calls for a municipal tax increase of 0.8 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation, which represents a 1.89% increase compared to 2022's tax rate. This rate will mean the average assessed home of \$461,559.00 will pay \$1,993.93 local purpose property taxes, which is an increase of \$36.92 over the prior year (the increase for municipal purposes is \$32.31 and an increase for library services is \$4.61). Mr. Merchel reviewed the appropriation and levy caps, we are well under the maximum.

Mr. Merchel reviewed the current fund surplus; a very good year. The utility budget had a decrease in surplus.

Mr. Aberant reviewed the capital budget, noting specific projects have not been decided upon. He advised that the down payment monies equate to approximately \$4 million in capital projects. Mr. Merchel advised that the projects must be in the capital plan along with the down

payment monies, or you cannot adopt a bond ordinance without a special emergency appropriation. Mr. Merchel explained tower rents.

Mayor Gillespie asked questions; same were discussed and answered. Mr. Merchel recommended replenishing the surplus at \$2.2 million per year. Mayor Gillespie asked if there is room to use a little more of the surplus this year; Mr. Merchel said yes. Revenues and appropriations were discussed. Revenues: Discussion was held on the energy receipts tax; revenues anticipated; construction fees and fees that will not be collected for affordable housing development; interest on investments. Appropriations: Discussion was held on police salaries and wages and number of officers and special law enforcement officers; crossing guards, staff and overtime; court overtime. Mr. Merchel advised this will be placed online.

Next steps were discussed. Mr. Aberant advised that the budget could be introduced on April 24, 2023 and adopted on May 22, 2023 or introduced on May 8 and adopted on June 12. Mr. Aberant advised on when another workshop could be held. In closing, Mayor Gillespie advised that she will follow up with the Township Manager concerning the potential for another budget workshop.

Planning Board Ordinance Sub-Committee Recommended Change Re: Warehouses in BP-1: Mr. Aberant provided background and said the Planning Board subcommittee is making a recommendation to amend the warehouse regulations. The Planning Board will discuss the recommendations this week; it is anticipated that the Planning Board will approve the recommendations. He reviewed the proposed amendments. He advised that there have been significant changes in the warehouse industry with the rise of Amazon. As a result, it has been found that many warehouses are going up in places they are permitted, but not where appropriate. The State Planning Commission has made recommendations for amendments and that is what the subcommittee has based its recommendations on. Mr. Aberant advised that if the Planning Board recommends the amendments, an ordinance can be introduced at the next meeting. Discussion was held. Mr. Aberant advised that the developers would be required to make financial contributions towards any financial impact on infrastructure due to the development. Again, questions were asked and answered. In closing, Council concurred with introduction at the next meeting, if approved by the Planning Board.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Aberant reported:

- Closure of Camden Avenue Bridge. Mr. Aberant advised that the bridge is closed for renovations by the County. More deterioration was found than expected; it is unknown when it will be reopened. Mr. Aberant advised that the Lenola Streetscape project should not be affected since it was thought that traffic would have to be re-directed, but, with the bridge closed, there is no traffic.
- Severe storm on Saturday. Mr. Aberant advised that there was tornadic activity in town and surrounding towns. The Emergency Management Coordinator, James Carruthers, was present and on top of things. He advised that there was a lot of tree damage but not a significant amount of house damage.

ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING: None.

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING: None.

CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS: The Township Manager read the consent agenda resolution by title.

100-2023 AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FROM THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND FOR SERVICES RECEIVED IN CONNECTION WITH THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A HOUSING PLAN FOR MOORESTOWN TOWNSHIP, BURLINGTON COUNTY (CGP&H)

Mayor Gillespie opened the floor for public comment. were no comments.

Mayor Gillespie asked for discussion by Council. There was none.

Mayor Gillespie asked for a motion to adopt the resolution.

MOTIONED BY: Mr. Zipin
SECONDED BY: Mr. Law
ABSENT: None
ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favor

MINUTES: None.

APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURES: Mayor Gillespie asked for comment or a motion to approve the bill list.

MOTIONED BY: Ms. Mammarella
SECONDED BY: Mr. Van Dyken
ABSENT: None
ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favor

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (Items listed on and/or off the Agenda):

Chris Schafer, 17 Windermere Drive, provided a handout (Strawbridge Lake Loop Walking Trail Proposal dated April 3, 2023) and advised that there are loosely connected walking trails along Strawbridge Lake. He advised adding a walking trail on the Nixon Drive/Route 38 side would add to the enjoyment of this great open space and he has been working with a group of people to determine if it were possible to connect the trail by adding this section and in doing so, same would create a connected loop. He advised of the work that would need to be done (minimal-removing loose brush and bushes). Compost and removal of the debris would be needed from the Township. STEM agrees with the idea. He sought endorsement from Council. Mayor Gillespie thanked Mr. Schafer, and inquired about ADA requirements. Mr. Aberant advised that he would

have to check into it. Questions and answers were had. In closing, Council supported the idea but wanted to get more information from the Township Engineer. Council thanked Mr. Schafer. Mr. Schafer encouraged all to take a walk around the site.

The following residents spoke in favor of the proposal by Mr. Schafer: George Gravenstine, 347 West Third Street, Lenny Wagner, 182 Foxwood, Nancy and Henry Dipasquale, 568, Bartram Road, Doug Maute, 141 Pleasant Valley Avenue.

Kathy Sutherland, 417 North Church Street, gave credit for the walking path at Strawbridge Lake to Victoria Napolitano. She also advised that there has been an uptick of tractor trailers on North Church Street due to the closing of the bridge. Ms. Sutherland commended Mr. Merchel for his work on the budget.

CLOSING COMMENTS BY COUNCIL: All members of Council wished all a Happy Easter and Passover.

Mr. Law thanked Mr. Aberant and Mr. Merchel for their work on the budget finding same to be fair and equitable. He thanked staff for its work in connection with the Lenola Road Streetscape. Mr. Law advised that there will be a listening session on April 12 at 6 p.m. at the North Church Street Recreation Center, third floor. In attendance will be the Mayor, himself and police staff. The session is open to the public and they hope to hear from the people and continue to keep Moorestown as safe as they can.

Mayor Gillespie agreed that the budget appeared to be fair and responsible, noting there is still a little more to do. She thanked staff. She advised that discussions regarding affordable housing and the impact on schools have begun with the Acting Superintendent and members of the Board of Education about affordable housing, the impact on the schools and Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program which some of the developments have received. She advised that the PILOT program helps the developers to get tax credit; if they did not get the credit (through the PILOT program), the cost would be borne by the taxpayers. Mayor Gillespie felt confident that all parties recognize that they all work in the best interest of the taxpayers.

CLOSED SESSION (IF NECESSARY) (RESOLUTION NO. CS 04 03 2023): None.

ADJOURNMENT: At 8:43 p.m., there being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn.

MOTIONED BY: Mr. Zipin
SECONDED BY: Mr. Law
ABSENT: None
VOTE: All in favor

PATRICIA L. HUNT, RMC
Township Clerk