

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Verona Township Council on Monday, November 22, 2021, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 600 Bloomfield Avenue, Verona, New Jersey and via Zoom video conferencing platform.

Call to Order:

Municipal Clerk reads notice of Open Public Meetings law. The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been satisfied with respect to this meeting of the Township Council which is being held via Zoom video conferencing and in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the time and date were included in the public meeting notice. This information, along with the public internet link and telephone call-in information was posted in the Municipal Building, and sent the official newspapers of the Township, the Verona-Cedar Grove Times and the Star Ledger and MyVeronaNJ.com, TAPinto and the Verona/Cedar Grove PATCH, the official online news source(s) of the Township, at least 48 hours preceding the start time of this meeting. The agenda and public handouts for this meeting can be viewed online at www.veronanj.org/councilmeetings. A public comment period will be held in the order it is listed on the meeting agenda and instructions on how to comment will be provided at the appropriate time. This meeting is being recorded, both audibly and visually for retention purposes and for rebroadcast on the Township's YouTube.

Roll Call:

Mayor Alex Roman, Deputy Mayor Christine McGrath, Councilman Jack McEvoy, Councilwoman Cynthia Holland and Councilman Chris Tamburro. Township Manager Matthew Cavallo, Township Attorney Brian Aloia and Municipal Clerk Jennifer Kiernan are also present.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Roman announces that Township Manager Matthew Cavallo has submitted his resignation effective February 11, 2022 and will be joining the Township of Wyckoff. Mayor Roman thanks him for his services and states he will have more to say at future meetings. He announces that he is glad the EssexHudson Greenway is happening. He went to the NJLM 2021 Conference last week. One of the interesting seminars he attended was on data driven management in municipal government. He also thanks the clergy council for last week's interfaith service and wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Essex County Liaison Julius Coltre approaches the lectern and thanks Mr. Cavallo for their wonderful work relationship and congratulates him on behalf of Joseph DiVincenzo. The County is still utilizing Essex County College, Sears and Kmart as their vaccination sites. Mr. Coltre recommends everyone make an appointment online for boosters. He reminds the public the County is still providing Covid testing as well. Food distribution will be held in Branch Brook Park on November 23 beginning at 9am. They will be distributing turkeys as well. The County golf course will be closed on Thanksgiving Day.

Mr. Cavallo states the Township has requested a follow up meeting with the NJDEP to discuss further the continuing notification requirements. They had met with them back in September and the Township has yet to hear back from them with a final decision. It is Mr. Cavallo's hope that by December the Township will have a final game plan on how we intend to address the PFOA remediation.

The Engineer's Office has arranged for the work to be completed to restore the roadway on Franklin Street after the last water main break. The Vendor will be coming on December 15 to mill and repave. Our DPW will work to reset the manhole and catch basin before that.

Steve Neale is currently going through the training required to get the new VTV platform up and running. He hopes that this week we will be able to at least start showing pre-recorded meetings. Once training is complete, Steve will begin working on getting the bulletin boards created.

We are currently reviewing the COVID-19 Utility Ratepayer Relief Measures Implementation of P.L. 2021, c. 97 Notice Requirement and hope to have a plan to implement the requirements of the law by the next meeting.

Everett Field needs to be re-graded.

The Township is working on a list of equipment that is at or near end of life that needs to be replaced to apply for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant that is due December 17. Department of Environmental Protection's and the Department of Health's virtual PFAS Summit will be held on November 30, 2021. Prior registration is required. Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill will be hosting an Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Telephone Town Hall on Tuesday, November 23 6:00 PM. \$61,000 was received from the NJ Office of the Attorney General for the Body Worn Camera's that we have to help offset our lease payments. The Friends of the Library Book Sale is Friday, December 3 - Sunday, December 5.

The Fair in the Square is Saturday, December 4. Santa has confirmed he will be available for the Fair in the Square this year! He will be available for free photos from 11am-3pm. New for this year, we will have a private session inside the Council Chambers from 11am-12pm for Autistic children and children with sensory issues and then open things up to the neuro-typical population from 12-3pm outside in the Civic Center. More info on the photo sessions with Santa will be coming soon but we ask that you bring your own camera as there will not be one available.

We will be lighting the Menorah in front of the Police Station on Sunday, November 28th and every night of Hanukkah. Residents are invited to come and enjoy the Menorah at any time but we are holding a large community celebration on Sunday, December 5th at 5:00pm. There will be music and singalongs, a brief performance, speakers, food and we are currently working on an interactive art installation for the lobby of Town Hall.

Deputy Mayor McGrath states she is sad to see Mr. Cavallo leaving as the Township has been well served by him. He is a very technical individual who excels in financial management and is always willing to listen and try new things. He will be missed. She congratulates Mr. Cavallo on his new opportunity and will have more to say in the future. She reports she led the Veteran's Day Ceremony and thanks the high school choir for performing as well as all who attended. She thanks the clergy council for the interfaith service. She attended the NJLM 2021 Conference and attended many seminars one of which was about the film industry and learned how Verona can participate and will discuss with Mr. Cavallo. The Friends of the Library Book Sale is next week with the \$5 Bag Sale taking place on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Councilman McEvoy also attended many seminars at the NJLM 2021 Conference. He hope that within the years he can get together with officials to prepare for the 2025 COAH Round 3. The HPC met on 11/18 and by the end of the year will be sending letters to 70-80 identified homes targeted to be deemed historic. He thanks the clergy for keeping the tradition of the interfaith service going. The VEC held a clean-up a week ago in Peckman Park. He thanks the neighborhood residents for showing up to help. He thanks Matt Cavallo and will have more thoughts to come. He states Mr. Cavallo brought the Town through a difficult time with Covid and was a flawless leader. He also states that he visited the Kmart site which is a flawless operation.

Councilman Tamburro thank Kris Gould for organizing the Veteran's Day Ceremony and the Deputy Mayor for leading the Ceremony. The Neighborhood Traffic & Safety Advisory Committee met and discussed ideas for traffic calming and placement devices. He encourages the public to attend on any matter relating to public safety. He thanks the clergy council and OLL for hosting the interfaith services. The House passed an amendment to the SALT and it is now before the Senate. He implores the public to encourage Senator Menendez and Senator Booker to support the bill. The Friends of the Library and the PBA are both hosting their annual fund drives. He strongly encourages charitable giving. He is going to follow Councilman McEvoy's lead and reserve comments on the Township Manager for a later date. He states that Matt hasn't stopped working since he started and learns something from Matt each time he speaks with him.

Councilwoman Holland submitted her report in writing: Good Evening. I join my colleagues in wishing Mr. Cavallo well in his new endeavors. I was also honored to attend the Veteran's Day Ceremony on November 11 and lay a wreath honoring our veterans. The High School Choir did a great job and I thought it was particularly lovely that we had students from OLL and HBW in attendance for the event, and many of our local veterans in attendance. I attended the Environmental Commission Meeting this month. Among other items, they discussed their request for an anti-idling resolution (which we have listed on the agenda today). There was also

discussion of Recycling and other initiatives.

As Councilman McEvoy mentioned, the Commission also hosted a clean-up event that was well attended and yielded some interesting treasures. I urge residents to get involved in these activities. I know we'll have more in the spring. Volunteering is one of the things that makes Verona a great place to live. The Rutgers University students met with our Engineering Manager last Monday to review some of the mapping they are doing for the Township. I think this is very exciting and I'm so appreciative of Rutgers' support for our small Town. I'm happy to speak further in new business.

I attended various seminars at the League of Municipalities Conference, including a few on recent OPRA decisions, affordable housing, liquor licensing, the plastic bag ban, -- and several regarding climate resilience and assessing climate vulnerability. I want to congratulate Verona on another Bronze award with Sustainable Jersey. I know our dedicated volunteers are still pushing to make it to a silver (or even a gold award) at a future date. So a big thank you to our volunteers. I particularly want to thank the DEP for scheduling me for an individual consulting session with Assistant Commissioner Rosenblatt (Chief Resilience Officer of the DEP) and a second consulting session with Assistant Commissioner Mazzei, who leads the land use permitting section, including stormwater. I will discuss this information further during new business. I did also attend a full day DEP "regulatory update" on Friday that covered a variety of topics in even more detail; and I intend to participate in the PFAS summit next week.

The entire Council attended the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, which is a beautifully inclusive event. I also attended with my two girls and really enjoyed it. Hearing prayers from the Quran, prayers in Hebrew, and clergy from different Christian denominations was really moving. And I do hope we all find peace this holiday season. I'd like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Hanukkah.

I do look forward to seeing everyone at Fair in the Square - may we all be on the nice list. That concludes my report.

Public Comment on Consent Agenda Items:

None.

RESOLUTION No. 2021-156

A motion was made by Councilman McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

**IN SUPPORT OF THE ADOPTION OF A STRONG
ANTI-IDLING POLICY IN NEW JERSEY**

WHEREAS, emissions from gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles contribute significantly to air pollution, including greenhouse gases, ozone formation, fine particulates; and

WHEREAS, numerous scientific studies have found links between exposure to fine particles and health effects including premature death, and increased incidents of asthma, allergies, and other breathing disorders; and

WHEREAS, the United States Environmental Protection Agency has classified diesel exhaust as likely to be carcinogenic to humans; and

WHEREAS, vehicle idling occurs in locations (e.g. school grounds, parking lots, distribution centers, strip malls, construction sites, business centers, etc.) where New Jerseyans can be exposed to concentrated sources of air pollutant emissions; and

WHEREAS, asthma is a significant public health concern in New Jersey, especially among children (up to 25% of New Jersey's school-age children are asthmatic) and the elderly; and

WHEREAS, the reduction of fine-particle emissions from diesel engines could also prevent 16,000 new asthma cases annually and save \$770 million to \$10 billion in health care and related costs in the State; and

WHEREAS, for every gallon of gasoline used, the average car produces about 20 pounds of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the largest contributor to greenhouse climate change, with one-third of

greenhouse gas emissions coming from the transportation sector; and

WHEREAS, petroleum-based gasoline and diesel fuel are nonrenewable fuels and should be used wisely and not wasted; and

WHEREAS, idling is not generally beneficial to a vehicle's engine because it wears engine parts; and

WHEREAS, idling more than 10 seconds uses more fuel and emits more pollutants than turning an engine off and on again; and

WHEREAS, current state law prohibits the idling of vehicles for more than three minutes and studies have shown that an anti-idling policy will save fuel, prolong engine life, and improve air quality.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Council of Verona, in the County of Essex, State of New Jersey supports the adoption of a strong anti-idling policy by government agencies, schools, businesses, and other organizations by:

1. Make enforcing existing violations and penalties under New Jersey's existing no-idling law a priority pursuant to C. 39:3- 70.2 and C. 26:2C-1;
2. Encouraging any gasoline or diesel-powered motor vehicle to turn off their engines immediately at schools and off-site school related events to minimize exposure of children to vehicle emissions;
3. Maintaining municipal vehicles to eliminate any visible exhaust and complying with the annual inspection requirement for those vehicles;
4. Promote the widespread use of emission controls in construction contracts (for example, see the "Diesel Emission Controls in Construction Projects: Model Contract Specification" developed by the Northeast Diesel Collaborative); and
5. Supporting broad education of the public about the health, environmental and economic impacts of idling and ways to reduce idling.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2021-157

A motion was made by Councilman McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

**AWARDING CONTRACT TO ENTERPRISE FLEET MANAGEMENT
FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF AN OPEN ENDED VEHICLE LEASE
FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT VEHICLES**

WHEREAS, the Chief of Police recommends that Verona procure two (2) vehicles for use by the Police Department ("Department"); and

WHEREAS, the Department has researched vendors that would achieve the Department's goals and determined that the sought-after equipment may be procured through a nationally-recognized and accepted cooperative purchasing contract between Sourcewell (NJPA) and Enterprise Fleet Management ("Enterprise"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 52:34-6.2b(3)* (as amended by *P.L. 2011, c.139*) and LFN 2012-10, a New Jersey municipality may purchase goods and services without public bidding under the Local Public Contracts Law through the use of a nationally-recognized and accepted cooperative purchasing contract that has been developed utilizing a competitive bidding or contracting process by another contracting unit within New Jersey or another state; and

WHEREAS, Sourcewell is a regional organization of governments operating under the laws of the State of Minnesota and is a political subdivision of the State of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the subject cooperative purchasing contract was awarded by Sourcewell to John Deer utilizing a competitive contracting process; and

WHEREAS, also pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 52:34-6.2b.(3)* (as amended by *P.L. 2011, c.139*) and LFN 2012-10, prior to making purchases under nationally-recognized and accepted cooperative purchasing contracts, the municipality must determine that the use of the cooperative purchasing contract shall result in cost savings after all factors, including charges for service, material, and delivery, have been considered; and

WHEREAS, the Department has determined that Verona's use of the Sourcewell cooperative purchasing contract to procure one (1) 2022 Dodge Charger Police 4DR All-Wheel Drive Sedan and one (1) 2022 Ford F-150 Police Responder will result in cost savings to Verona and consistent with the Sourcewell cooperative purchasing contract and needs of Verona, Enterprise has submitted a proposal to provide the vehicles; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to *N.J.A.C 5:30-5.5(d)(2)* this contract is subject to the availability and appropriation annually of sufficient funds as may be required to meet the extended obligation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The foregoing "WHEREAS" clauses are hereby incorporated as if fully restated.
2. A contract for the purchase of one (1) 2022 Dodge Charger Police 4DR All-Wheel Drive Sedan and one (1) 2022 Ford F-150 Police Responder is hereby awarded to Enterprise without public bidding as permitted by law.
3. The Township Manager and Township Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute an Agreement and any other forms necessary for the fulfilment of this contract with Enterprise pursuant to the terms of its nationally-recognized and accepted cooperative purchasing agreement with the Sourcewell.
4. The form and terms of the End User Agreement shall be consistent with this resolution is subject to the approval of the Township Attorney.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2021-158

A motion was made by Councilman McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

AUTHORIZING TAX SALE WITHOUT DELINQUENT SEWER CHARGES

WHEREAS, on October 15, 2020, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order 190 which, among other things, requires that *"No gas or electric public or municipal utility or privately or publicly owned water system shall collect any fee or charge imposed for late or otherwise untimely payments or service reconnections that have accrued, and will continue to accrue, during the Public Health Emergency"*; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 190 has been extended numerous times, and

WHEREAS, the most recent Executive Order in regards to this matter is Executive Order 246, and

WHEREAS, the Township shall conduct an upcoming tax sale on December 2, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector has determined that in order to fully comply with the requirements of Executive Order 246, the Township should not sell any sewer delinquencies at

the December 2, 2021 tax sale.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, State of New Jersey that the Tax Collector shall proceed with the December 2, 2021 tax sale but shall not sell any sewer delinquencies at said tax sale in order to fully comply with Executive Order 246.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2021-159

A motion was made by Councilman McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

REFUNDING ESCROW PAYMENT

WHEREAS, Escrow fees, for the Board of Adjustment, were received from Paul Watkins III, for property located at [REDACTED] and the fees have been held in Trust; and

WHEREAS, certification has been received from the Engineer to release these funds, from Trust, as follows:

ESCROW AMOUNT	EXPENSES	AMOUNT TO BE REFUNDED
\$500.00	\$160.76	\$339.24

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex New Jersey that the Chief Financial Officer and Tax Collector be authorized to refund, from the Trust Account, \$339.24 to Paul Watkins III, [REDACTED]

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2021-160

A motion was made by Councilman McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

REFUNDING TAX LIEN REDEMPTION

WHEREAS, property located at 136 Forest Avenue, Block 2101 Lot 15, owned by 136 Forest LLC, has been held in tax lien since December 3, 2020; and

WHEREAS, payment was received, in the amount of \$31,518.87 from the Cold River Land Title LLC, clearing the lien as follows:

Certificate #20-00005	
Certificate	\$ 6,261.92
4% Redemption Penalty	\$ 250.48
2020 Taxes plus Interest	\$13,967.06
2020 6% Year End Penalty	\$ 715.74
2021 Taxes plus Interest	\$ 9,872.20
2021 Water and Sewer plus Interest	\$ 451.47
 Premium	 \$53,600.00
 Total	 \$85,118.87

WHEREAS, this certificate has been held by the Township of Verona and the certificate has been received and properly signed for cancellation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chief Financial Officer and Tax Collector be authorized to refund, from Trust, \$85,118.87 to:

Sunshine State Certificates VIII
7900 Miami Lakes Drive West
Miami Lakes, FL 33016

Trust Check - Sunshine State Certificates VIII - \$85,118.87 Certificate #20-00005

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2021-161

A motion was made by Councilman McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

PERMITTING ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, permits the exclusion of the Public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exists.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of an action upon the hereinafter specified subject matter.
 - a. Pending, Ongoing, or Anticipated Litigation and Contract Negotiations pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (7)*
 - i. P.P. adv Township of Verona
 - ii. Water Utility
 - b. Personnel Matters pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (8)*
 - i. Township Manager
 - ii. Chief Financial Officer

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

New/Unfinished Business:

The Council discusses the establishment of local 5G regulations. They also discuss stormwater management, especially what can be done in the Peckman brook. Councilwoman Holland states that students from Rutgers University will complete a flood study taking data and recreating the flooding to determine where water infiltrates areas. They are also coming back to town to do more drone footage. The Council discusses the goals for 2021-23 subcommittees. There is a meeting with the Fire Department and Rescue Squad set to be scheduled for the 2nd week in December. The DEI subcommittee will have a presentation at the December 6, 2021 meeting. The Downtown Business District subcommittee would like an inventory of the businesses and apartments in the District. Mr. Cavallo recommends the subcommittee involve the Tax Assessor and Fire Official as they keep updated records of those lists. The Health & Wellness subcommittee is temporarily on hold.

Public Comment:

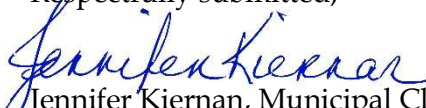
Jessica Pearson, [REDACTED]

Adjournment:

Council enters into Executive Session at 8:36. Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:26 p.m. is made by Councilman Tamburro; seconded by Councilman McEvoy.

The next regular scheduled meeting of the Township Council is December 6, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jennifer Kiernan, Municipal Clerk


Alex Roman, Mayor

APPROVED: December 6, 2021