

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Verona Township Council on Monday, January 3, 2022, beginning at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom video conferencing platform <https://zoom.us/j/95262662770>.

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:

Essex County Liaison Julius Coltre reports that the Pfizer booster for 12 - 15 year olds has been approved and the County will begin distributing as soon as possible. Testing, vaccines and booster shots are still being administered at Essex County College, Kmart and Sears in the Livingston Mall. Five - 11 year olds, Monday-Friday from 4-7pm, Saturdays 9am-5pm. Children ages 12+ are Monday-Friday from 9am-4pm, Saturdays 9am-5pm. Adults can come at any time. All appointments can be made at EssexCovid.org or call 973-877-8456. The sites will be open on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 17th. Essex County's Deer Management Program has been cancelled for the 2nd year due to the pandemic.

Mayor Roman appoints Carol Stafford to the Library Board of Trustees for a term ending 12/31/2026.

The Mayor hopes everyone had a good holiday. As Council meetings are back to Zoom only, he states that the situation will be looked at from meeting to meeting. He prefers that meeting be held in-person, but for now it is important to keep everyone safe.

Manager's Report:

Township Manager Matthew Cavallo makes the following appointments:

		Term Expires
Township Engineer		
i. Brightview Engineering		12/31/2022
Clean Communities Coordinator		
ii. Steven Neale		12/31/2022
Office of Emergency Management		
iii. Joel Martin	Coordinator	12/31/2024
Shade Tree Commission		
iv. Valerie Ryan	Public Member	12/31/2027
Planning Board		
v. Steven Neale	Class II Member	12/31/2022
New Jersey Intergovernmental Insurance Fund		
vi. Matthew Cavallo	Commissioner	12/31/2022
vii. Steven Neale	Alt. Commissioner	12/31/2022
Bergen Municipal Employee Benefits Fund (Gateway BMED)		
viii. Matthew Cavallo	Commissioner	12/31/2022

ix.	Jennifer Muscara	Alt. Commissioner	12/31/2022
Essex County Solid Waste Advisory Committee			
x.	Harold (Len) Waterman	Representative	12/31/2022

Mr. Cavallo continues with his report and states that Verona has had many positive cases of COVID in the last two weeks. Get tested and isolate if you have symptoms. Wear a mask! Get vaccinated! Get boosted! The Virus may start to affect municipal operations this week because of school closures and half days, family members and employees getting sick. Please be patient with contacting the Township as your response might be delayed if the particular Department is affected. Also, please try to limit your traffic into Township buildings, please try and call and email your concerns if possible to help reduce the spread of the virus.

There currently is some disruption and there might be more with regard to Recreation Programs due to the virus. At this time, wrestling is on hold for 2 weeks. Some basketball teams are also on hold due to exposures and illness. Anyone who is attending either wrestling or basketball games or practices, please remember to wear a mask over your nose and mouth while indoors and whenever you are within 6-feet of another person. The Ski program to Mountain Creek is still on starting on January 13 and COVID precautions are being taken on the buses.

The NJ Department of Health and Vault Medical Services have partnered to offer a free, at-home COVID-19 saliva test kit that is available to every New Jerseyan who thinks they need a test - even if you don't have symptoms. To order a free test kit, visit learn.vaulthealth.com/nj. The kit will be shipped through UPS with next-day delivery. Once received, you will connect over Zoom with a Vault healthcare professional who will walk you through the test and answer your questions. When complete, the test can be sent back in a prepaid package via UPS next-day shipping. You will receive your test results 24 to 48 hours after your sample arrives at the lab. You will not be charged for the test, and you will not be asked for your credit card information. In addition, in-person testing is available at locations across the state, including free testing. Learn more about COVID-19 testing in New Jersey at covid19.nj.gov/testing.

There are no notable updates this week in regards to the PFOA Remediation, except that the required quarterly Public Notice is being sent to the post office tomorrow for delivery into homes. This is not the same notice that we have provided in September but it is very similar. Please, please read the letter that accompanies the notice before jumping to any conclusions or calling municipal offices to get clarification on the notice. Please allow me to reiterate that the water currently being distributed to the Township's water users meets all safety standards and is safe to drink.

The Legislature and the Governor extended the moratorium on the imposition of interest and penalties along with the shutting off of water service due to lack of payment through March 15. The moratorium also includes sewer charges for this current period. If you are experiencing economic hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and are having difficulty paying your utility bills, there are several options available to you including energy assistance programs administered by the State and 12-month interest-free installments plans. If you have any questions regarding your eligibility for any of these services, please contact the Finance Office at (973) 857-4798. A notice will be going out to all ratepayers by the end of the month outlining the options available.

The COVID-19 Eviction Moratorium has ended, but the State has created a self-certification process for renters who experienced financial hardships due to COVID-19. Visit covid19.nj.gov/renter for more information.

The Comprehensive Master Plan Website and Survey has launched. We are preparing a new Township Master Plan to shape the physical, social, environmental, and economic future of the community. The Master Plan provides a framework for preserving Verona's character, supporting investment, and promoting desired changes. The process will take several months to complete, with a goal to have the plan complete in mid-2022. The public survey is available for all residents to take. We look forward to hearing your opinion on all of the topics that the Master Plan will cover. In addition to the survey, Verona residents will be able to share their opinions at the Master Plan Community Workshop. Your opinions will help to shape the Master Plan as the drafting process moves along. We are working with the Verona Public Library to assist residents who have issues accessing the internet. We are also discussing the possibility of a post card mailer

to each residence. More to come!

Franklin Street Water Main Break was repaired prior to the last Council meeting. The work completed has been deemed unsatisfactory by the Engineer and payment is held up. Once the spring arrives, the work will be redone.

The 2022 Garbage & Recycling Collection Schedule can be downloaded from the Township's website and hard copies will be delivered to mailboxes soon. You can also download for free the Remyndr app to receive collection notifications and important updates directly to your smartphone.

Christmas Trees will be collected at the curb, every Wednesday in January beginning this Wednesday. Trees wrapped in plastic will not be collected.

The Verona Police Department reminds everyone to lock your vehicle and remove your keys fobs and valuables from the car, at all times when not occupied not just at night. There has been a rise in the rate of vehicle thefts around the region and they are not just occurring overnight. Be vigilant, protect yourselves by locking your doors and removing your key fobs from your vehicles. And as a reminder report suspicious activity to the Police Department immediately.

Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. invites Essex County residents to participate in an Essex County Community Health Assessment Survey. The results of the survey will help the Essex County Public Health Office identify health issues affecting the Essex County community and create a public health plan to raise awareness and promote wellness. Residents can access the on-line survey at www.EssexCountyNJ.org and clicking on the "Community Health Assessment Survey" link. Responses will be collected until March 31, 2022. Residents linking to the survey will be asked a variety of general questions about their overall health, diet and exercise habits, access to affordable medical care and prescriptions, and if there are any barriers that they experience in obtaining health care. All responses are anonymous and confidential. The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete.

Essex County has contracted with Rutgers University School of Public Affairs and Administration to conduct the study. Participants in the study may choose to participate in a raffle from which they could win a variety of Amazon gift cards.

The VFEE Annual Coat Drive is still going on through January 12. Donate your clean, gently worn coats. All coats collected and will be donated locally. Drop your coat at 6 Belleclair Place or you can email them for a pickup. More information along with the email address are on the Township's webpage.

Ashley Neale has been appointed to the position of Assistant Tax Collector effective January 2, 2022. A new Finance Clerk Gita Limbachiya has started in the Finance Office. Matt Gifford has been appointed to the position of Fire Official, replacing Rick Neale who retired on January 1.

Councilmembers' Reports:

Deputy Mayor McGrath wishes everyone a Happy New Year and to those who have tested positive, she wishes them a quick recovery. She encourages the Township Manager to reach out to the Interim Superintendent and offer support to keep the schools open. She encourages the Township offer clear and consistent communications regarding the Recreation Department's sports with Covid. Verona has been moved from the 11th Congressional District to the 10th District and effective January 2023, will be represented by Donald Payne, Jr.

She comments that there is a lot of information on this meeting agenda. There are two proposed ordinances and cites that the recent process was for Council to talk about the ordinances in New Business first, but that was process was not followed in this meeting. She offers a second reflection regarding performance management. She wants to vocalize that a better job needs to be done with performance management and goal setting. The Council has a responsibility to do consistent goal setting with the Township Manager and Municipal Clerk and therefore so does the Township Manager with Department Heads. She is appalled that Department Heads have had no review in the last year or two and this needs to be corrected. It is owed to the employees. She promises the employees that the Council will correct this. She inquires if this is something that the Council can apply to professional service contracts. She recognizes that it is not

practical to go out to bid every year, but have the governing body set performance goals and analyze if those goals were met at the end of each year. She hopes this can be implemented going forward.

Councilman McEvoy wishes everyone a Happy New Year and congratulates Rick Neale on his retirement and thanks him for his many years of service. The Councilman states that one (1) committee sends the governing body their Year End report every year and that is the Environmental Commission. He thanks the Commission members for volunteering their time and making Verona cleaner and better.

Councilman Tamburro congratulates Rick Neale and incoming Fire Official Matt Gifford. The Neighborhood Traffic & Safety Advisory Committee will meet on January 12 at 7pm via Zoom. He states that as the County sites were closed over the weekend, he went to the East Orange state location for Covid testing. It was efficiently run. The test is self-swab and results are provided 30 hours later. The Councilman wishes everyone a Happy New Year and thanks all the Township employees for the hard work they put in last year.

Councilwoman Holland wishes everyone had a Happy and healthy New Year. She recognizes that this has been a holiday of stress and anxiety for many in our community with the rise in Covid numbers. She states that there is not a lot to report since last meeting. The Township received a copy of the evaluation of vulnerabilities from Rutgers, including slides and a video, which has been sent to the Township Manager. She is looking forward to receiving feedback from the Township Engineer and looks forward to working further with Rutgers. The Councilwoman urges residents to complete the Master Plan survey and the County health assessment.

Proposed Ordinances:

ORDINANCE No. 2022-01

**AMENDING CHAPTER 18 (COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES AND
BOARDS), ARTICLE II (ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION), SECTION 17
(MEMBERSHIP; COMPENSATION; TERMS; ALTERNATE MEMBERS) TO
CHANGE THE APPOINTING AUTHORITY**

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 2022-01 is moved by Mayor Roman; seconded by Councilman Tamburro.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2022-01 is introduced 5-0 and will be published according to law and a public hearing will be held at a Regular Meeting scheduled January 24, 2022.

ORDINANCE NO. 2022-02

**AN ORDINANCE REPEALING CHAPTER 12 (CLAIMS) IN ITS ENTIRETY
AND ESTABLISHING A NEW CHAPTER 12 (CLAIMS, PAYMENT OF) OF
THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA**

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 2022-02 is moved by Councilman Tamburro; seconded by Mayor Roman.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2022-02 is introduced 5-0 and will be published according to law and a public hearing will be held at a Regular Meeting scheduled January 24, 2022.

Public Comment on Consent Agenda Items:

Maria Squilanti, 6 Belleclaire Place, Verona, New Jersey
Chris Ford, 50 East Reid Place, Verona, New Jersey
Raiza Czupak, 7 Durrell Street, Verona, New Jersey
Kristen Donohue, 31 So. Prospect Street, Verona, New Jersey
Albaine Carabello, 44 Mt. Prospect Avenue, Verona, New Jersey
Joe Haggerty, 44 Morningside Road, Verona, New Jersey

The Minutes from the December 20, 2021 meeting are approved unanimously;

RESOLUTION No. 2022-01

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

ADOPTING A CASH MANAGEMENT PLAN

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the Township of Verona to earn additional revenue through the investment and prudent management of its cash receipts; and

WHEREAS, the Local Fiscal Affairs Law requires that each local unit shall adopt a cash management plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that the following shall constitute the Cash Management Plan for the Township of Verona and the Township of Verona shall deposit and manage its funds pursuant to this plan:

Definitions

1. Treasurer shall mean the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer of the Township of Verona.
2. Fiscal year shall mean the twelve-month period beginning January 1 ending December 31.
3. Cash Management Plan shall mean the plan as approved by this resolution.

Designation of Depositories

1. At least once each fiscal year the Township Council shall by resolution designate the depositories for the Township of Verona in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-14*.

Audit Requirement

1. The Cash Management Plan shall be subject to the annual audit conducted pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4*.

Authority to Invest

1. The Chief Financial Officer and the Township Manager shall make and be responsible for municipal deposits and investments.

Investment Instruments

1. In accordance with the Local Fiscal Affairs Law, the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer may use moneys which may be in hand for the purchase, at his/her discretion, of any of the types of securities listed under *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-15.1a*, and if said security is suitable for registry, may be registered in the name of the Township.

Records and Reports

1. The Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer shall report all investments in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-15.2*.
2. At a minimum the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer shall:
 - a. Keep a record of all investments.
 - b. Keep a cash position record, which reveals on a daily basis, the status of the Township's cash in its bank accounts.
 - c. Report monthly to the Township Council as to the status of cash balances in bank accounts, revenue collection and cash receipts and disbursements

Cash Flow

1. The Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer shall ensure that the Township's accounting system provides regular information concerning the Township's cash position and investment performance.
2. All monies shall be turned over to the Tax Collector or the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer and deposited in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-15*.
3. The Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer is authorized and directed to invest surplus funds of the Township of Verona as the availability of the funds permit. In addition, it shall be the responsibility of the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer to minimize the possibility of idle cash by depositing the Township's monies in interest bearing accounts wherever practical and in the best interest of the Township of Verona.
4. The Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer shall ensure that funds are borrowed for Capital Projects in a timely fashion.
5. The Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer or Deputy Treasurer is authorized to make de minimums petty cash disbursements upon being presented a Receipt of Petty Cash slip, detailing the nature of the expenditure not to exceed \$25.00. The expense will be supported by an original receipt and will be approved by the employee's supervisor and also the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer or the Deputy Treasurer.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-002

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

RESOLUTION FIXING DEPOSITORIES

WHEREAS, *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-14* provides that monies held in any separate fund shall be treated as monies held in trust and shall not be diverted to any other purposes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Investors Bank, New York Community Bank, Kearny Bank and BCB Bank shall be authorized as the depository for the separate funds of the Township and that the custodian shall be Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer, Jennifer Muscara.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all withdrawals for the following accounts shall be on orders signed by at least two of the authorized officers. The authorized officers for the following accounts shall be the Mayor, Chief Financial Officer and Township Manager.

- Claims Fund
- Current Fund

- General Capital Fund
- Water/Sewer Utility Operating Fund
- Water/Sewer Utility Capital Fund
- Swimming Pool Utility Operating Fund
- Swimming Pool Utility Capital Fund
- All Payroll Funds
- State Unemployment Compensation Insurance Account
- Animal Control Funds
- Development Fee Trust Funds
- Affordable Housing Trust Funds
- Open Space Trust Funds
- Trust Funds (Other/Escrow)
- Check Clearing Account

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all withdrawals for the following account shall be on orders signed by the Municipal Court Administrator and the Judge of the Municipal Court.

- All Court Funds

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-003

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

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER FOR ALL ADVERTISEMENTS AND NOTICES AND DESIGNATING TWO NEWSPAPERS TO RECEIVE NOTICE OF MEETING

WHEREAS, *N.J.S.A. 40:53.1* permits the governing body of every municipality to designate official newspapers for the publication of all advertisements and notices required by law to be published; and

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, *N.J.S.A.10:4-6 et seq.*, requires the governing body of each municipality to designate two newspapers to receive the notices of its meetings.

WHEREAS, all municipal advertisements shall be published in one or both of the designated official newspapers according to the various statutory provisions; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Verona is desirous of designating two official newspapers for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of these statutes; and

WHEREAS, the VERONA-CEDAR GROVE TIMES and THE STAR LEDGER, a newspaper published within the County of Essex meets the statutory criteria for designation as the official newspapers for the Township of Verona.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that the VERONA-CEDAR GROVE TIMES and THE STAR LEDGER be hereby designated as the official newspapers for all advertisements and notices of the Township of Verona required to be published.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the VERONA-CEDAR GROVE TIMES and THE STAR LEDGER be hereby designated as the two newspapers to receive the notices required by the Open Public Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-004

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

**DESIGNATING MYVERONANJ, PATCH CEDAR GROVE/VERONA, AND
TAPINTO VERONA/CEDAR GROVE, AS ELECTRONIC NEWS SOURCES
FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA**

WHEREAS, the Senator Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act, *N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 to 4-21*, requires written advance notice of at least 48 hours, giving the time, date, location and, to the extent known, the agenda of any regular, special or rescheduled meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Verona to at least two newspapers designated by the governing body, one of which shall be the official newspaper, to receive such notices; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the notice requirements set forth above, the Township Council may provide electronic notice of any meeting of the public body through the Internet in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 10:4-9.1*; and

WHEREAS, “electronic notice” means advance notice available to the public via electronic transmission of at least 48 hours, giving the time, date, location and, to the extent known, the agenda of any regular, special or rescheduled meeting, which notice shall accurately state whether formal action may or may not be taken at such meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Township wishes to designate MyVeronaNJ, Patch Cedar Grove/Verona and TAPinto Verona/Cedar Grove as news sources for electronic notices pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-9.1*; said notice being at the discretion of the governing body.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that MyVeronaNJ, Patch Cedar Grove/Verona and TAPinto Verona/Cedar Grove be and are hereby designated as news sources for electronic notices and other matters required to be advertised under the Open Public Meetings Act.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no electronic notice issued pursuant to this act shall be deemed to substitute for, or be considered in lieu of, such adequate notice in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 10:4-9.2*.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-005

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

**SETTING THE RATE OF PENALTIES AND GRACE PERIOD FOR RECEIPT
OF DELINQUENT TAXES AND MUNICIPAL CHARGES**

WHEREAS, *N.J.S.A. 54:67(a)* permits the governing body to fix the rate of interest to be charged for the nonpayment of taxes, assessments, or other municipal liens or charges on or before the date when they would become delinquent, and may provide that no interest shall be charged if payment of any installment is made within the tenth calendar day following the date upon which the same became payable. The rate so fixed shall not exceed 8% per annum on the first \$1,500.00 of the delinquency and 18% per annum on any amount in excess of \$1,500.00, to be calculated from the date the tax was payable until the date that actual payment to the tax collector is made; and

WHEREAS, *N.J.S.A. 54:67(c)* permits the governing body to fix a penalty to be charged to a taxpayer with a delinquency in excess of \$10,000 who fails to pay that delinquency as billed, prior to the end of the fiscal year, the penalty so fixed shall not exceed 6% of the amount of the delinquency with respect to each most recent fiscal year only; and

WHEREAS, this legislation is permissive in nature and requires the adoption of a

resolution by the governing body imposing the penalty for delinquencies in the municipality; and

WHEREAS, it has determined that it is in the best interests of the Township to authorize imposition of such penalty.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 54:4-67(a)* that the interest rate for delinquent taxes and any delinquency for the year 2022 be set at the rate of 8% per annum for amounts under \$1,500 and 18% per annum for amounts over \$1,500 unless otherwise superseded by law, rule, regulation or order of the State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no interest shall be charged if payment of any installment is made by the 10th of the month after the date upon which the same became payable, effective January 1, 2022. In the event that the 10th of the month falls on a Saturday, Sunday or Legal Holiday, the date of the Grace Period ends with the following working day.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to *N.J.S.A.54:4-67* the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to impose a penalty of 6% on any delinquent taxes and municipal charges in excess of \$10,000 in addition to the interest charges set forth above.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-006

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

**AUTHORIZING TAX COLLECTOR TO MAKE CORRECTIONS AND/OR
ADJUSTMENT NOT EXCEEDING \$10.00**

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector has to make certain corrections and adjustments to the accounts in the Tax Collector's Office; and

WHEREAS, it is proper bookkeeping procedure to have the Tax Collector's record reflect that there are no monies due and owing; and

WHEREAS, *N.J.S.A 40A:5-17.1* allows the Tax Collector to process property tax refunds and cancellations or delinquency of less than \$10.00.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona in the County of Essex, New Jersey that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to make any corrections or adjustments to the accounts in the office of the Tax Collector where the correction or adjustment does not exceed \$10.00.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-007

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

**AUTHORIZING TAX COLLECTOR TO REFUND
PROPERTY TAX AND UTILITY OVERPAYMENTS**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona in the County of Essex, New Jersey that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to refund property tax and utility overpayments to the accounts in the office of the Tax Collector when deemed appropriate and necessary.

ROLL CALL:**AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman****NAYS:****RESOLUTION No. 2022-008**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE SETTLEMENT OF TAX APPEALS RESULTING IN A
REDUCTION NOT EXCEEDING \$10,000.00**

WHEREAS, there are tax appeals before the County Tax Board or the Tax Court of New Jersey where the amount of reduction in the total annual taxes as a result of a settlement does not exceed \$10,000.00 per tax year; and

WHEREAS, it will be more cost efficient for the Township to permit the Tax Assessor, the Attorney and the Township Manager to settle those tax appeals without the necessity of obtaining Township Council approval by way of a resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that the Tax Assessor, the Attorney and the Township Manager are hereby authorized to settle any tax appeal where the amount of reduction in the total annual taxes as a result of a settlement does not exceed \$10,000.00 per tax year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all settlements authorized pursuant to this Resolution shall be reported at the next meeting thereafter of the Township Council.

ROLL CALL:**AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman****NAYS:****RESOLUTION No. 2022-009**

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

**AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF ASSESSOR'S TAX APPEALS, ANSWERS,
COUNTERCLAIMS, APPEALS AND CROSS APPEALS IN TAX MATTERS
ON BEHALF OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA**

WHEREAS, statutory tax appeals and other matters and applications affecting the taxation of real property within the Township of Verona are routinely filed with the Essex County Board of Taxation and the Superior Court of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council finds it to be in the best interest of the citizens of the Township to authorize and direct the Tax Assessor to take any and all action that he/she deems advisable in such tax matters in order to protect, promote and advance the Township's interest in assuring that each property within the Township is fairly and equitably assessed in accordance with the law; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council finds it to be in the best interest of the citizens of the Township to authorize and direct the Township Attorney and/or Special Counsel to assist the Tax Assessor in such tax matters referred to herein;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, State of New Jersey that the Tax Assessor of the Township of Verona be and is hereby authorized and directed to prepare, file, pursue and litigate, if necessary, any Assessor's Tax Appeals, Answers to Tax Appeals, Counterclaims, Appeals and Cross-Appeals in statutory tax appeals and other matters and applications affecting the taxation of real property within the Township of Verona as may be filed with the Essex County Board of Taxation and/or the Superior Court of the State of New Jersey, that the Tax Assessor deems advisable in such tax matters in order to protect, promote and advance the Township's

interest in assuring that each property within the Township is fairly and equitably assessed in accordance with the law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notwithstanding the foregoing, the Tax Assessor shall provide the Township Manager and the Township Council with a quarterly report detailing all pending tax appeals, and shall be required to obtain the prior approval and consent of the Township Council for the following:

1. The settlement of all non-residential tax appeals.
2. The hiring of expert witnesses for purposes other than real property appraisals.
3. The Tax Attorney for the Township of Verona be and are hereby authorized and directed to take any and all action said Attorney deems advisable to assist the Tax Assessor of the Township of Verona in such tax matters as are referred to herein.
4. The Township Manager, Township Tax Assessor, Township Tax Attorney be and are hereby authorized to take all necessary and appropriate actions to carry out the subject and intent of this Resolution.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-010

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

APPOINTING A PUBLIC AGENCY COMPLIANCE OFFICER

WHEREAS, *N.J.A.C. 17:27-3.5* requires a municipality to designate an officer or employee to serve as its Public Agency Compliance Officer; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that the Township Manager, Matthew Cavallo, shall serve as the Public Agency Compliance Officer for the Township.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that in pursuant to the provisions of *N.J.A.C. 17:27-3.5* the Township Manager, Matthew Cavallo, is hereby designated as the Public Agency Compliance Officer for the Township of Verona.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Municipal Clerk is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to the State of New Jersey, Department of the Treasury, Public Contract Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance Monitoring Program.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-011

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

**AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN THE LAW ENFORCEMENT
SUPPORT OFFICE PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, Federal law permits the Secretary of Defense to transfer to Federal and State agencies personal property of the Department of Defense that the secretary determines is suitable for use by agencies in law enforcement activities; and

WHEREAS, known as the "Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) 1033 Program", this program allows local law enforcement agencies to obtain, at little or no cost, surplus federal property originally intended for use by the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, although equipment is provided through the “Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) 1033 Program” at no cost to county and municipal law enforcement agencies, these agencies are responsible for costs associated with the maintenance, fueling and upkeep of the equipment and for specialized training for its operation; and

WHEREAS, taxpayers are the primary consumers and financiers of services provided by county and municipal law enforcement agencies and have the right to be assured that their money is being spent in an efficient and effective manner and the right to know the purposes for which public funds are utilized; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to establish a system of local oversight for county and municipal law enforcement agencies that participate in and acquire equipment through the “Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) 1033 Program” and guidelines for the use of this equipment by those agencies; and

WHEREAS, an application for the enrollment of a municipal law enforcement agency in any program established by the United States Department of Defense pursuant to 10 U.S.C. s.2576a shall be approved by a resolution adopted by a majority of the full membership of the governing body of a local unit prior to the transmittal of any such application to the State Coordinator of any such program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, State of New Jersey does hereby authorize and approve participation in the “Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) 1033 Program” established by the United States Department of Defense pursuant to 10 U.S.C. s.2576a.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Manager, Chief of Police and the Township Clerk are hereby authorized to make application for the enrollment on behalf of the Township of Verona.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Manager is hereby authorized to approve the acquisition of any property deemed appropriate under this agreement.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-012

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

TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS FOR OPERATING PURPOSES

WHEREAS, *N.J.S.A. 40A:4-19* provides that, where any contracts, commitments, or payments are to be made prior to the adoption of the 2022 budget, temporary appropriations be made for the purpose and amount required in the manner and time therein provided; and

WHEREAS, the total appropriation in the 2021 budget, exclusive of any appropriations made for principal and interest of debt, public assistance, and capital improvement fund, is the sum of \$21,975,045 for the Current Fund, \$6,043,030 for the Water/Sewer Utility Fund, and \$539,550 for the Pool Utility; and

WHEREAS, the temporary budget shall not exceed 26.25% of the total appropriations in the 2021 budget, exclusive of any appropriations made for principal and interest of debt, public assistance, and capital improvement fund, which is the sum of \$5,768,449 for the Current Fund, \$1,586,295 for the Water/Sewer Utility Fund, and \$141,631 for the Pool Utility Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY the Township Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, that the following temporary appropriations for 2022 operating purposes be made in the amount of \$5,750,000 for the Current Fund, \$1,550,000 for the

Water/Sewer Utility Fund, and \$140,000 for the Pool Utility Fund.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-013

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

**AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH ALOIA LAW FIRM LLC
FOR TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY SERVICES**

WHEREAS, the Township has a need for legal services for the period commencing on January 1, 2022 and terminating on December 31, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Township has received a proposal from Aloia Law Firm LLC, 2 Broad Street, Suite 407, Bloomfield, New Jersey 07003 to represent the Township as the Township Attorney for 2022 at the same rate of compensation as in 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law (*N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(a)(1)(i)*) permits contracts for professional services to be negotiated and awarded by the governing body without public advertising for bids and requires that the resolution authorizing the award of a contract for professional services without competitive bids and the contract itself be available for public inspection; and

WHEREAS, the award of the contract to Aloia Law Firm LLC is being made pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5* and the Business Entity Disclosure Certification and Political Contribution Disclosure Form completed by Aloia Law Firm LLC are annexed to this Resolution as Exhibit B; and

WHEREAS, the cost for said professional services shall be set at a monthly retainer of \$6,000 per month worked, or any portion thereof for "General Services" as outlined in the agreement, plus \$125 per hour for any and all legal services outside of the "General Services" performed by the Attorney, \$75 per hour for any paralegal work performed on services other than "General Services", plus the cost of any reimbursable items; and

WHEREAS, this expenditure shall be charged to Budget Account No. 01-20-155-027, certain Utility Accounts, Capital Ordinance, Certain Escrow/Trust Accounts or any other account that may be deemed appropriate by the Chief Financial Officer or his designee, and the availability of funds which shall be certified by the Chief Financial Officer upon presentation of a property executed Purchase Order and approval of the 2022 Budget.

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

1. The preamble to this Resolution is hereby incorporated as if more fully set forth herein.
2. An agreement with the Aloia Law Firm LLC, 2 Broad Street, Suite 407, Bloomfield, New Jersey 07003 is hereby authorized to provide legal services for the period commencing on January 1, 2022 and terminating on December 31, 2022 not to exceed \$100,000 without further authorization of the Township Council.
3. That the Township reserves the right to cancel this contract for any reason upon thirty (30) days' notice and Aloia Law Firm LLC shall only be paid for the work completed; furthermore, no minimum amount of work or payment is implied or guaranteed.
4. That this contract is being awarded pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5*.
5. That a notice of this action shall be published once in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times.

6. That the Township Manager and the Township Clerk are hereby authorized to enter into any agreement necessary for the aforementioned services a copy of which shall be available for public inspection in the Office of the Township Clerk.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-014

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

**AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT WITH PKF O'CONNOR DAVIES, LLP
FOR AUDIT SERVICES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022**

WHEREAS, *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4* requires every local unit to cause an annual audit of their books by a Registered Municipal Accountant licensed in the State of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council has determined that it would be beneficial for the Township Council to appoint the PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP, 293 Eisenhower Parkway, Suite 270, Livingston, New Jersey 07039 to perform Auditing Services pursuant to statute for the fixed amount of \$58,800; and

WHEREAS, the David J. Gannon, RMA, Engagement Principal of PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP, has extensive experience in the field of Municipal Accounting and a long standing history in Verona; and

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law (*N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(a)(1)(i)*) permits contracts for professional services to be negotiated and awarded by the governing body without public advertising for bids and requires that the resolution authorizing the award of a contract for professional services without competitive bids and the contract itself be available for public inspection; and

WHEREAS, the award of the contract to PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP is being made pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5* and the Business Entity Disclosure Certification and Political Contribution Disclosure Form completed by PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP are annexed to this Resolution as Exhibit C; and

WHEREAS, this expenditure shall be charged to Budget Account Nos. 2-01-20-145-217, 2-05-55-502-278, 2-05-55-502-381, or any other account that may be deemed appropriate by the Chief Financial Officer or his/her designee, and the availability of funds have been contingently certified by the Chief Financial Officer of the Township pending approval of the 2022 Budget.

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

1. The preamble to this Resolution is hereby incorporated as if more fully set forth herein.
2. An agreement with the PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP, 293 Eisenhower Parkway, Suite 270, Livingston, New Jersey 07039 is hereby authorized to provide municipal auditing services for the period commencing on January 1, 2022 and terminating on upon delivery of the 2022 Municipal Audit Report not to exceed \$58,800 without further authorization of the Township Council.
3. That the Township reserves the right to cancel this contract upon thirty (30) days' notice and PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP shall only be paid for the work completed; furthermore, no minimum amount of work or payment is implied or guaranteed.
4. That this contract is being awarded pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5*.
5. That a notice of this action shall be published once in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-015

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

AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH BRIGHT VIEW ENGINEERING LLC FOR GENERAL ENGINEERING SERVICES IN 2021

WHEREAS, the Township has a need for general engineering services for the period commencing on January 1, 2022 and terminating on December 31, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Township has received a proposal from Bright View Engineering LLC, 651 West Mount Pleasant Ave, Suite 100, Livingston New Jersey 07039 to provide general engineering services for 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law (*N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(a)(1)(i)*) permits contracts for professional services to be negotiated and awarded by the governing body without public advertising for bids and requires that the resolution authorizing the award of a contract for professional services without competitive bids and the contract itself be available for public inspection; and

WHEREAS, the award of the contract to Bright View Engineering LLC is being made pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5* and the Business Entity Disclosure Certification and Political Contribution Disclosure Form completed by Bright View Engineering LLC are annexed to this Resolution as Exhibit B; and

WHEREAS, this expenditure shall be charged to Budget Account Nos. 01-26-290-028, 05-55-502-028, certain Capital Ordinance, Certain Escrow/Trust Accounts or any other account that may be deemed appropriate by the Chief Financial Officer or his designee, and the availability of funds which shall be certified by the Chief Financial Officer upon presentation of a property executed Purchase Order and approval of the 2022 Budget.

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

7. The preamble to this Resolution is hereby incorporated as if more fully set forth herein.
8. An agreement with Bright View Engineering LLC, 651 West Mount Pleasant Ave, Suite 100, Livingston New Jersey 07039 is hereby authorized to provide general engineering services for the period commencing on January 1, 2022 and terminating on December 31, 2022 not to exceed \$100,000 without further authorization of the Township Council.
9. That the Township reserves the right to cancel this contract for any reason upon thirty (30) days' notice and Bright View Engineering LLC shall only be paid for the work completed; furthermore, no minimum amount of work or payment is implied or guaranteed.
10. That this contract is being awarded pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5*.
11. That a notice of this action shall be published once in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times.
12. That the Township Manager and the Township Clerk are hereby authorized to enter into any agreement necessary for the aforementioned services a copy of which shall be available for public inspection in the Office of the Township Clerk.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-016

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

AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT WITH SHERWOOD-LOGAN & ASSOCIATES FOR THE PURCHASE OF A BYPASS PUMP FOR THE PRIMARY CLARIFIER PUMP STATION AT THE WASTE WATER TREATMENT FACILITY

WHEREAS, the Township has a need to purchase a single stage mix flow pump for use as a backup bypass pump in the Primary Clarifier Pump Station at the Waste Water Treatment Facility; and

WHEREAS, the Township received two quotes to purchase the required equipment from Sherwood-Logan & Associates for \$38,755.00 and from eProcess Environmental for \$43,900.00; and

WHEREAS, the Township Engineer recommends that a contract be awarded to the vendor providing the lowest quotation, Sherwood-Logan & Associates, 2140 Renard Court, Annapolis, Maryland 21401, in the amount of \$38,755.00; and

WHEREAS, the Township Manager/Qualified Purchasing Agent has determined that the value of said services has exceeded \$17,500.00 but will not exceed the Township's bid threshold of \$44,000; and

WHEREAS, Temporary Chief Financial Officer has certified the availability of funds for this contract, a copy of said Certification is annexed to this Resolution as Exhibit B; and

WHEREAS, the award of the contract to Sherwood-Logan & Associates is being made pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5* and the Business Entity Disclosure Certification and Political Contribution Disclosure Form completed by Sherwood-Logan & Associates have been filed with the Township and are annexed to this Resolution as Exhibit C.

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

13. The preamble to this Resolution is hereby incorporated as if more fully set forth herein.
14. A contract with the Sherwood-Logan & Associates, 2140 Renard Court, Annapolis, Maryland 21401 is hereby authorized for the purchase a single stage mix flow pump for use as a backup bypass pump in the Primary Clarifier Pump Station at the Waste Water Treatment Facility in the amount of \$38,755.00.
15. That this contract is being awarded pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5*.
16. That a notice of this action shall be published once in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times.
17. That the Township Manager and the Township Clerk are hereby authorized to enter into any agreement necessary for the aforementioned services a copy of which shall be available for public inspection in the Office of the Township Clerk.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-017

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

**ESTABLISHING THE MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION AND
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

WHEREAS, a workgroup was formed by Township Council in August 2021 for the expressed purpose of developing a mission statement for diversity, equity, and inclusion activities in the Township.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, New Jersey, that there is hereby established the Multicultural Inclusion and Accessibility Advisory Committee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Multicultural Inclusion and Accessibility Advisory Committee shall consist of eleven to thirteen members including the following:

- A member of the Council to be appointed by it;
- Director of Administration and Economic Development or designee;
- Director of Community Services or designee;
- Director of the Verona Public Library or designee;
- The Superintendent of Schools or designee;
- Six (6) adult public members; and
- Two (2) high school public members (optional).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the term of the Director of Administration and Economic Development, the Director of Community Services, the Director of the Verona Public Library and the Superintendent of Schools shall correspond to their respective tenure or if the member is the respective official's designee in the absence of the respective official, the designee shall serve at the pleasure of the official during the official's tenure. The term of the Council member shall be for one year or terminate at the completion of their respective terms of office, whichever occurs first. Public members shall be appointed by the Council and shall serve for terms of one (1) year. Any vacancy occurring by reason of the death, resignation or removal for cause of any public member shall be filled by the Council for the unexpired term of such member.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee shall elect a Chairperson and Secretary at its first organizational meeting. The Secretary may be a member of the Committee or a municipal employee appointed by the Manager. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all the meetings of the Committee, which minutes and copies of official correspondence of the Committee shall be kept on file in the office of the Township Clerk.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee shall organize within thirty (30) days of the approval of this resolution. The Committee shall hold regular meetings at least quarterly. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson. The Committee may make and amend rules and regulations concerning the conduct of its meetings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Multicultural Inclusion and Accessibility Advisory Committee is hereby charged with the following duties and responsibilities:

- 1) Make recommendations regarding diverse cultural, economic, and social issues within our community to the Township Council
- 2) Propose solutions to the Township Council that ensure accessibility for all community members for our services and programs
- 3) Assist the Director of the Administration and Economic Development and the Director of Community Services with the organization, coordination, research, and manage actions in the Community as it relates to multicultural inclusion and accessibility of the Township's policies, programs, and services.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-018

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

ADOPTING A MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, a workgroup was formed by Township Council in August 2021 for the expressed purpose of developing a mission statement for diversity, equity, and inclusion activities in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Multicultural Inclusion and Accessibility Advisory Committee was formed by Resolution and the Township Council is desirous of adopting a mission statement developed by the working group for the new Committee.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, New Jersey, that the Mission Statement of the Multicultural Inclusion and Accessibility Advisory Committee shall be as follows:

Verona's vibrant community proudly welcomes all residents, business owners, employees, and visitors. Together we are working toward being a truly inclusive place where our policies, services, and programs meet the needs of all people.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-019

A motion was made by Councilman McEvoy; seconded by Mayor Roman 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)*
 - Outfront Media
 - Potential Shared Services
 - b. Personnel Matters pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(8)*
 - Township Manager vacancy - employment, appointment, terms & conditions of employment
 - Municipal Clerk - job performance, compensation and potential disciplinary action

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

New/Unfinished Business:

A motion is made by Mayor Roman; seconded by Councilwoman Holland that the following appointments are made:

	Term Expires
Township Attorney (N.J.S.A. 40A:9-139)	
i. Brian J. Aloia, Esq, Aloia Law Firm, LLC	12/31/2022
Municipal Prosecutor (N.J.S.A. 2B:25-4)	
ii. Brian W. Mason, Esq.	12/31/2022
Municipal Public Defender	
iii. William R. Fried, Jr., Esq.	12/31/2022
Township Auditor (N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4)	
iv. Dave Gannon, RMA	12/31/2022
Neighborhood Traffic & Safety Advisory Committee	
v. Steven Cruz Member	06/30/2023
Planning Board	
vi. Jeremy Katzeff Alternate #2	06/30/2023

Appointments are approved by a unanimous vote.

Mayor Roman states that, as listed on the meeting agenda, the Council has a personnel matter regarding job performance, compensation and potential disciplinary action that they need to discuss. The Municipal Clerk was properly served with a Rice notice. The Municipal Clerk has requested to have the discussion in public session, not closed session. Mayor Roman states a number of Council members had concerns regarding the Municipal Clerk’s performance in the last meeting and he recommends that the governing body direct the Township Manager and Township Attorney retain outside counsel to review this matter and potentially recommend and execute disciplinary action if so warranted after further discussion with the Council. Councilman Tamburro states he thinks that outside counsel should evaluate whether any actions require corrective action and if so what is the recommended corrective action is. Councilman Tamburro then states he will move the appointment of special counsel and Mayor Roman seconds the motion. Councilwoman Holland states she would like to comment and proposes an alternative approach and have someone perform a comprehensive evaluation of HR policies to determine whether or not there are sufficient policies in place that govern these things before taking and level of disciplinary action as there is not always clarity about what the policies are and what the appropriate standards are. She comments that this is putting the Township at risk and therefore she would like a comprehensive audit essentially to establish our policies before going forward with further action and or litigation and the appointment of special counsel at a significant cost to the Township. She agrees with Councilman Tamburro that it should be determined whether or not action is warranted, which involves an evaluation to determine whether or not there actually was an issue that was a violation. However, she wants clarity in determining whether action is necessary such as is this an independent investigation into one specific fact or is it a comprehensive HR audit to avoid continuing issues going forward. Mayor Roman asks Councilman Tamburro to reiterate what he would scope this as since he made the motion. Councilman Tamburro states that evaluating whether any of our policies or whether state statute guidelines touch on, or ordinance or resolution was violated in the circumstance as far as doing an audit of our personnel policies. He continues that he would agree with that approach but it would be a separate item that should be addressed separately to move forward. He states that as the individual with labor experience here he suggests they do that separately but at the same time, there is also a duty to ensure that the affairs of the affairs of the Township are carried out as well. Deputy Mayor McGrath states she has raised this concern with the Mayor and is not comfortable voting on anything until the Council speaks with legal counsel, specifically someone from the JIIF. Mayor Roman states that the JIIF is not a legal advice line and the Council would end up in the same place as right now. In his opinion, the JIIF may choose to pick up the tab for this but his opinion is ultimately this should be turned over to outside counsel. Mr. Aloia opines that the Council could see if the JIIF will appoint counsel. Councilman McEvoy states he thinks outside counsel is more to see if there is wrongdoing and then advise the Council if there should be any disciplinary action and believes an evaluation should be done first and that the next step if it is needed. Motion to appoint special counsel is made by Councilman Tamburro; seconded by Mayor Roman.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Tamburro, McEvoy, Roman

NAYS: Holland, McGrath

Public Comment:

Kevin Ryan, 92 Elmwood Road, Verona, New Jersey
George Kozachuk, 100 Morningside Road, Verona, New Jersey
Carrie Ford, 50 East Reid Place, Verona, New Jersey
Steve Jendi, 169 Forest Avenue, Verona, New Jersey

Mayor Roman states that Council will be entering into Executive Session but may return into the Public Session to take official action. Council enters into Executive Session at 9:13 p.m.

Council returns into Public Session at 11:36 p.m.

ORDINANCE # 2022-03

**FIXING THE SALARIES AND COMPENSATION OF THE PAID
OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR THE
2021 CALENDAR YEAR**

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 2022-03 is moved by Deputy Mayor McGrath; seconded by Councilman Tamburro.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2022-03 is introduced 5-0 and will be published according to law and a public hearing will be held at a Regular Meeting scheduled January 24, 2022.

ORDINANCE # 2022-04

**FIXING THE SALARIES AND COMPENSATION OF THE PAID
OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR THE
2022 CALENDAR YEAR**

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 2022-04 is moved by Councilman Tamburro; seconded by Councilman McEvoy.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman


NAYS: Holland

Ordinance No. 2022-04 is introduced 4-1 and will be published according to law and a public hearing will be held at a Regular Meeting scheduled January 24, 2022.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the meeting is made by Deputy Mayor McGrath; seconded by Councilman McEvoy at 11:41 p.m. The next regular scheduled meeting of the Township Council is January 24, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jennifer Kiernan, Municipal Clerk


Alex Roman, Mayor

APPROVED: February 7, 2022