

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Verona Township Council on Monday, March 21, 2022, 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 in-person and via Zoom video conferencing. 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 are present. Township Manager Joe D'Arco, Township Attorney Brian Aloia, Municipal Clerk Jennifer Kiernan and Interim Chief Financial Officer, Jen Muscara are also present.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Roman states there will be no Council Reports tonight to expedite the meeting with the continued discussion of the 2022 Municipal Budget.

Mayor Roman reads a proclamation recognizing March 29, 2022 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

Hearing Adoption or Amendment Ordinances:

ORDINANCE No. 2022-07

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA, COUNTY OF ESSEX,
STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2018-10, RE-
AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP'S ENERGY AGGREGATION PROGRAM**

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance No. 2022-07 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2022-07 is moved by Deputy Mayor McGrath; seconded by Councilwoman Holland.

Public Hearing:

None.

Council discussion.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS: Tamburro

Ordinance No. 2022-07 is adopted 4-1 and will be published according to law.

Proposed Ordinances:

ORDINANCE No. 2022-08

AN ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET

**APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A.
40A:4-45.14**

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 2022-08 is moved by Councilman McEvoy; seconded by Councilwoman Holland.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

Ordinance No. 2022-08 is introduced by a vote of 5-0. It will be published according to law and a public hearing will be held on April 4, 2022.

ORDINANCE No. 2022-09

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER A565-7 OF THE CODE OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF VERONA**

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 2022-09 is moved by Councilman Tamburro; seconded by Councilwoman Holland.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

Ordinance No. 2022-09 is introduced by a vote of 5-0. It will be published according to law and a public hearing will be held on April 4, 2022.

Minutes from the February 28, 2022 Meeting is approved unanimously.

Public Comment on Consent Agenda Items:

None.

RESOLUTION No. 2022-63

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

**AWARD OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONTRACT PURSUANT TO
THE FAIR AND OPEN PROCESS FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT
ACCREDITATION CONSULTANT**

WHEREAS, the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP) promotes and enhances the highest ethical and professional standards in law enforcement at all levels; and

WHEREAS, NJSACOP has pursued the concept and development of a voluntary statewide law enforcement accreditation program forming the NJSACOP Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission; and

WHEREAS, accreditation through NJSACOP acknowledges the implementation of policies and procedures that are conceptually sound and operationally effective; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Verona and the Verona Police Department recognize that the voluntary and transparent application of a public safety accreditation program is the benchmark for today's public safety agency; and

WHEREAS, on February 4, 2022 the Township of Verona advertised in the Verona Cedar Grove Times for bids for Contract #2022-04 - Competitive Contracting Solicitation for Police Department Accreditation Consultant setting the date for the return of bids as February 23, 2022; and

WHEREAS, on February 23, 2022 the Township of Verona received one (1) responsive and responsible bid for Contract No. 2022-04; and

WHEREAS, the Rodgers Group, LLC, 850 Bear Tavern Road, Ste. 303, Ewing, New Jersey 08628 submitted a proposal and was the lowest responsive and responsible bidder; and

WHEREAS, it is anticipated that the value of the service will exceed \$17,500; and

WHEREAS, the term of this contract is one (1) year and will end on December 31, 2022;
and

WHEREAS, the Interim Chief Financial Officer has certified that funds are available to cover the cost of these services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED 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. 2022-064

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

**ACCEPTING THE BIDS RECEIVED TO ENTER INTO A LEASE OR
EXTENSION OF A LEASE OF REAL PROPERTY FOR OPERATION OF
WIRELESS COMMUNICATION ANTENNAS AND RELATED FACILITIES
AT 880 BLOOMFIELD AVENUE**

WHEREAS, on February 10, 2022, the Township of Verona received one (1) bid submitted by DISH Wireless, LLC to enter into a new Lease of Real Property for Operation of Wireless Communications Antennas and Related Facilities at 880 Bloomfield Avenue - Contract # 2022-07; and

WHEREAS, the terms and conditions of the lease would remain the same as existing leases, including that the rent shall be at the submitted bid amounts and shall increase annually by either 2% or C.P.I., whichever is greater; and

WHEREAS, under the bid submitted, Verona will receive \$40,000.00 rent annually; and

WHEREAS, The Township Attorney has reviewed the bids and recommends accepting the bids conditioned upon the mutually satisfactory resolution of bid exception language submitted by bidders.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that the bid received from DISH Wireless, LLC for Lease or Extension of the Lease of Real Property for Operation of Wireless Communications Antennas and Related Facilities at 880 Bloomfield Avenue - Contract #2022-07 is accepted conditioned upon the mutually satisfactory resolution of bid exception language submitted by the bidder and the passage of the appropriate ordinance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon satisfactory resolution of the bid exception language an Ordinance shall be passed authorizing the new lease agreement and authorizing the execution of all necessary documents.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-065

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

**AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT WITH
HENDRICKS APPRAISAL COMPANY, LLC**

WHEREAS, the Township has a need for professional tax appeal appraisal and added assessment services; and

WHEREAS, the Township Manager has determined that the value of said services will exceed \$17,500.00; 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, Hendricks Appraisal Company, LLC, previously conducted tax appeal appraisal and added assessment services for the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Township Manager has recommended that a contract be authorized with Hendricks Appraisal Company, LLC to provide said services for the Township, when necessary not to exceed \$44,000.00.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that Hendricks Appraisal Company, LLC, 7 Hutton Avenue, West Orange, New Jersey 07052 is hereby awarded a contract for real estate appraisals when necessary, not to exceed \$44,000.00 without further authorization of the Township Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Business Entity Disclosure Certification and Determination of Value are to be placed on file with this Resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this contract is being awarded pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.5*.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a notice of this action shall be published once in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Manager and the Township Clerk are hereby authorized to enter into an agreement 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. 2022-066

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

**APPROVING THE CERTIFICATION LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF VERONA FIRE DEPARTMENT QUALIFYING FOR CREDIT
UNDER THE LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS PROGRAM (LOSAP) FOR
2021**

WHEREAS, The Township adopted Ordinance No. 10-99 which created the Length of Service- Awards Program (LOSAP) which was subsequently amended by Ordinance No. 2018-33; and

WHEREAS, *N.J.S.A. 40A:14-191* requires that the Fire Chief furnish the Township Council with an annual certification list of all volunteer members who have qualified for credit under the award program for the previous year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona that the list of the volunteer members of the Township of Verona Fire Department certified by the Fire Chief for the year 2021, a copy of which list is attached here as Exhibit A is approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this list has been posted for at least thirty (30) days in the respective fire companies.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-067

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 Rachael Wagner, for property located at 12 Lynwood Road 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 | \$199.76 | \$300.24 |

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, \$300.24 to Rachael Wagner, 12 Lynwood Road, Verona, NJ 07044

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-068

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

REFUND TAX COURT JUDGMENT

WHEREAS, notification has been received from the Tax Court reducing the assessment on property located at 546 Bloomfield Avenue owned by KWC & HZ Block 1703 lot 68 as follows:

| Year | Assessment Reduced | Tax Rate | Refund |
|------|--------------------|----------|----------|
| 2017 | 88,000 | 3.113 | 2,739.44 |
| 2020 | 89,700 | 2.864 | 2,569.01 |
| 2021 | 89,700 | 2.957 | 2,652.43 |

Total Refund \$7,960.88

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chief Financial Officer and Tax Collector be authorized to refund \$7,960.88 to:

Jennifer Jacobus Trustee for KWC & HZ Corp
201 Littleton Road, Suite 100
Morris Plains, NJ 07950

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2022-069

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

REFUND TAX COURT JUDGMENT

WHEREAS, notification has been received from the Tax Court reducing the assessment on property located at 655 Bloomfield Avenue owned by Lukoil North America LLC Block 1807 lot 5 as follows:

| Year | Assessment Reduced | Tax Rate | Refund |
|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 2019 | 129,700 | 2.770 | 3,592.69 |
| 2020 | 129,700 | 2.864 | 3,714.61 |
| 2021 | 129,700 | 2.957 | 3,853.23 |

Total Refund \$11,142.53

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chief Financial Officer and Tax Collector be authorized to refund \$11,142.53 to:

Zipp & Tannenbaum
280 Raritan Center Parkway
Edison, NJ 08837

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

New Business:

Continued Council discussion of the 2022 Municipal Budget. Library Director Claudine Pascale discusses the Library’s 2022 budget with the governing body. Construction Code Official Tommy Jacobsen discusses the Building Department and Construction Code’s budget. Supervisor of Public Works Chuck Molinaro discusses the water/sewer utility budget. Director of Administration & Economic Development Steven Neale discusses the Administration budget and Communications budget. Interim CFO Jen Muscara goes through the Capital budget and debt for the governing body.

Public Comment:

Paul Sciarra, 7 Crestmont Road, Verona, New Jersey

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the meeting is made by Councilman Tamburro; seconded by Deputy Mayor McGrath at 10:16 p.m. The next regular scheduled meeting of the Township Council is April 4, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jennifer Kiernan, Municipal Clerk


Alex Roman, Mayor

APPROVED: April 4, 2022