

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Verona Township Council on Tuesday, April 25, 2023, 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 Special meeting of the Township Council which is being held both in-person and broadcast via Zoom video conferencing. Notice of this Special Meeting was published in the April 22, 2023 edition of the Star Ledger. The agenda, along with written notice giving the time and date, 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 at least 48 hours preceding the start time of this meeting. The agenda and public handouts can be viewed online at 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.

Roll Call:

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

Mayor Roman states he will recuse himself from voting tonight as the two parcels of discussion are adjacent to his property. He calls for a general public comment period before turning the meeting over to Deputy Mayor McGrath.

Public Comment:

None.

Deputy Mayor McGrath requests Township Attorney Brian Aloia explain the purpose of tonight's meeting. Mr. Aloia states that since many of the documents for this meeting were received by Council late today, he recommends a quick Executive Session to go over the documents with the governing body before they are considered and discussed in the public session.

RESOLUTION No. 2023-085

A motion was made by Councilman Tamburro; seconded by Councilman McEvoy 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 Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

The public shall be excluded from discussion of an action upon the hereinafter specified subject matter.

1. Pending, Ongoing, or Anticipated Litigation and Contract Negotiations pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (7)*
2. Personnel Matters pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (8)*

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath, Roman

NAYS:

ABSENT (Recusal): Roman

Council enters into Executive Session at 6:07 pm and returns to Public Session at 6:28 pm.

Mr. Aloia gives an overview of the two properties including the bond ordinance and two resolutions for the acquisition of 217 & 225 Pompton Avenue (Block/Lot 104.31 and Block/Lot 104.32) to be used as a location for public safety buildings. Mr. Aloia reports there are some environmental challenges on the property including wetlands and a drainage ditch that goes under Pompton Avenue. Therefore, it is difficult to determine at this time, how much of the land is buildable. Mr. Aloia states that as the Township Manager recommends this property be purchased now, the Township can, at any time, sell the property if it is determined constructing a public safety building on that property does not benefit the Town.

Solutions Architecture has submitted a proposal to determine how much usable land there is and construct plans to work through that process with their engineers and DEP to determine what the Township can fit on those properties and how that would look leading to a phase II of detailed plans of a public safety building. There is a resolution to authorize the execution of a contract to purchase the properties and a resolution to authorize a contract with Solutions Architecture.

Council Discussion.

ORDINANCE No. 2023-17

**BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY
IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA, IN THE COUNTY OF ESSEX,
NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$1,750,000 THEREFOR AND
AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$1,666,500 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE
TOWNSHIP TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF**

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance No. 2023-17 by title into record.

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 2023-17 is made by Councilman McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Tamburro.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath

NAYS:

ABSENT: (Recusal) Roman

Ordinance No. 2023-17 is introduced 4-0, will be published according to law and a public hearing will be held on May 15, 2023.

Public Comment on Consent Agenda:

Kevin Ryan, Verona, New Jersey
Anthony Gardner, Verona, New Jersey
Chris Budesca, Verona, New Jersey

RESOLUTION No. 2023-086

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

**AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF CONTRACTS TO PURCHASE REAL
ESTATE**

WHEREAS, the Township has need to purchase property for additional public facilities;
and

WHEREAS, 217 and 225 Pompton Ave are contiguous properties in the Township that the Township is able to purchase to help meet the Township's need for additional public facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona that the Township Manager, or his designee, is authorized to execute the attached contract

and effectuate the purchase of 217 and 225 Pompton Avenue, Verona New Jersey and take all other necessary steps to effectuate the purchase.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath

NAYS:

ABSENT (Recusal): Roman

RESOLUTION No. 2023-087

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

**AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICE
AGREEMENT FOR ARCHITECTUAL SERVICES**

WHEREAS, the Township requires a qualified firm or Architect to provide professional architectural design services; and,

WHEREAS, Township advertised an RFP and reviewed the proposals received; and;

WHEREAS, the proposals were evaluated by the Township Manager and it was determined that Solutions Architecture having its principal office at 96 Pompton Ave, 2nd Floor, Verona, NJ 07044 (hereinafter "Architect") is qualified to provide the necessary architectural design services; and,

WHEREAS, the Council approved Solutions Architecture to provide architectural design services; and

WHEREAS, the Township has the need for the Architect to design a public safety building; and

WHEREAS, the Architect has submitted the attached proposal to perform the required services; and

WHEREAS, the Administration recommends retaining the Architect to perform the services described in the attached proposal for an amount not to exceed \$185,500 for calendar year 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona that the Township Manager, or his designee, is authorized to execute a contract with Solutions Architecture in accordance with the attached RFP submission and subject to the following:

1. The award of this contract is subject to finalization of the contract terms which shall include a clause that it may be terminated by the Township at any time and the Architect shall only be paid for the work performed up to the date of termination.
2. Any contract amendments or change orders which may become necessary shall be subject to the Township's ability to appropriate sufficient funds, which appropriation shall be at the sole discretion of the Township Council.
3. The Council hereby authorizes the Manager, or his designee, to execute any and all documents and take any and all actions necessary to complete and realize the intent and purpose of this resolution.
4. The Township is in receipt of the vendor's Contribution Disclosure and Stockholder Disclosure Certification.
5. Architect may be paid upon passage and certification of this resolution, and for a period of ninety (90) days thereafter, before the final execution of a contractual agreement. Said payments shall be in accordance with this resolution and the RFP as is fully delineated herein. If a finalized contract is not entered within ninety (90) days following the date of the herein resolution, all work and payments will be put on hold until the contract is finalized. The vendor shall be entitled to payment upon submission of an appropriate invoice for all work authorized and performed during the ninety (90) day period but not for any work performed thereafter until and unless the contract is finalized and fully executed by both parties.

6. The Manager, or his designee, is hereby authorized to execute an agreement as outlined herein with Solutions Architecture, 96 Pompton Ave, 2nd Floor, Verona, NJ 07044.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Tamburro, McEvoy, McGrath

NAYS:

ABSENT (Recusal): Roman

Mayor Roman returns to the dais and presides over the remainder of the meeting.

Public Comment:

Mike Boone, Verona, New Jersey

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the meeting is made by Councilman Tamburro; seconded by Deputy Mayor McGrath at 7:01 p.m. The next regular scheduled meeting of the Township Council is May 1, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jennifer Kiernan, Municipal Clerk


Alex Roman, Mayor

APPROVED: May 15, 2023