TOWNSHIP OF VERONA
COUNTY OF ESSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY

RESOLUTION No. 2024-223

A motion was made by Councilwoman McGrath; seconded by Councilwoman Holland that the following resolution be adopted:

CALLING ON THE LEGISLATURE TO PERMIT ON-LINE NEWS PLATFORMS TO QUALIFY AS LEGAL NEWSPAPERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF MUNICIPALITIES PUBLISHING LEGAL NOTICES

WHEREAS, various statutes require municipalities to publish legal notices in an official newspaper for numerous governmental actions such as meeting notices, ordinances, resolutions, municipal land use actions, or public bidding; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 35:1-2 requires that in order for a newspaper to qualify as a legal newspaper for the publication of official advertisements it must be printed and published in the English language within the state at least once a week for at least one year continuously; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 35:1-2.2 establishes the following qualifications for newspapers publishing official notices: newspapers must be printed entirely in the English language, be printed and published within the State, have a general paid circulation in the municipality where their publication office is situated for not less than two years and have been entered for two years as second class mail under US postal laws and regulations; and

WHEREAS, as technology has advanced, news publication has changed from voluminous newsprint to greater on-line reporting with fewer print pages; and

WHEREAS, this change has impacted municipalities, ranging from difficulties in having public notices printed, even though meeting print newspapers' deadlines, to fewer reporters covering local meetings and community events; and

WHEREAS, to fill the void, online news platforms have evolved to become the local source of news for many municipalities, however, they do not meet the statutory definition of legal newspapers and are unable to publish official notices; and

WHEREAS, at the same time a recent PEW Research Center survey on the news habits and attitudes of U.S. adults ages 18 and older, conducted in association with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, found that 81% get some of their news through websites, apps, or social media, in fact, about four in ten often get their news online.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, New Jersey urges the State legislature to amend the various statutes to permit municipalities to use qualified on-line news platforms to publish official notices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution is forwarded be the members of New Jersey District 40, Assemblyman Al Barlas, Assemblyman Christopher P. DePhillips and State Senator Kristin M. Corrado.

ROLL CALL:
AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro
NAYS:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND EXACT COPY OF A RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 12, 2024.

Jennifer Kiernan
JENNIFER KIERNAN
MUNICIPAL CLERK

TOWNSHIP OF VERONA, NJ
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