

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Verona Township Council on Monday, July 27, 2020, beginning at 7:00 p.m. 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 which is being held via Zoom video conferencing; specifically, the time, date and public internet link and telephone call-in information, was posted in the Municipal Building, on the Township's website, and sent to the official newspapers of the Township, the Verona-Cedar Grove Times and the Star Ledger and MyVeronaNJ.com and TAPinto, the official online news source(s), 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 channel and VTV.

Roll Call:

Mayor Jack McEvoy, Deputy Mayor Alex Roman, Councilman Kevin Ryan, Councilman Ted Giblin and Councilwoman Christine McGrath. Township Manager Matthew Cavallo, Victoria Lucido of the Aloia Law Firm, Township Attorney, Municipal Clerk Jennifer Kiernan and Bob Benecke of Benecke Economics are also present.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor McEvoy states that Julius Coltre, Essex County liaison is not present this evening. Mr. McEvoy states the flags are at half-staff in honor of Congressman John Lewis of the 5th District of the State of Georgia. Mr. McEvoy holds a moment of silence for Congressman Lewis, an activist who stood for equal rights, voting rights and humanity rights. He believed in peaceful protests. He is the first black lawmaker to lie in State at the Capitol.

Mr. McEvoy reminds residents to take garbage with you when leaving Verona Park. He reports that Hilltop Park has experienced deliberately set fires. He urges anyone with information to contact the Verona Police Department. He attended the virtual Meet the Mayors Event where Newark Mayor Ras Baraka presented Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo with an award for working with Newark in replacing the lead pipes by securing \$120 million for the project.

Mayor McEvoy reads letters from residents commending the DPW Supervisor and Municipal Clerk.

Manager's Report:

Mr. Cavallo reports on the financial outlook for the Township. He states this year's celebration of National Night Out is cancelled due to COVID-19. He reports that municipal lot #2 was cleaned today. The Township has been working with local restaurants to ensure they have adequate space for outdoor dining. Reserving a section of lot #2 allows for three (3), four (4) or five (5) restaurants in the area to use the space for outdoor dining.

Mr. Cavallo reports that at the last Planning Board meeting, Lawrence Lonergan was re-elected as Chairperson, James Kirby was elected as Vice Chairperson and the Board adopted the settlement agreement with Bobcar.

Councilmember's Reports:

Deputy Mayor Roman has no report this evening.

Councilman Ryan has no report this evening.

Councilman Giblin implores residents to wear masks in Verona Park and urges the public to respect one another and social distance. He also states that many residents have reached out to him expressing their appreciation of the Township's efforts in opening the pool.

Councilwoman McGrath attended the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting where discussion took place about the pool, limited summer programs and fall sports. She thanks Community Services Director Jim Cunningham, the Recreation Department and the Committee for all their hard work. Ms. McGrath also addresses online comments that misrepresent her statements made at the last meeting. She reiterates that she is undecided on the stance of allowing recreational marijuana retail sales in Verona and says the best course of action is to wait for the referendum in November and wait to see if it passes and becomes law, then make an informed decision. She stresses that what people want is for their elected officials to look at positions analytically, which the Council does, and will continue to do in the future.

ORDINANCE No. 2020-17

BOND ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF PROPERTY IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA, IN THE COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY KNOWN AS BLOCK 501, LOT 83 AND BLOCK 1201, LOT 3.01 ON THE TAX MAP OF THE TOWNSHIP, APPROPRIATING \$12,800,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$12,190,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance No. 2020-17 by title into record.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2020-17 is moved by Mayor McEvoy; seconded by Deputy Mayor Roman.

Public Hearing: Chris Reilly, 60 Sunset Avenue, Verona, New Jersey
Dan Crinion, 2 Birch Lane, Verona, New Jersey
John Quattrocchi, 44 Afterglow Way, Verona, New Jersey

Council discussion on Ordinance No. 2020-17.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McGrath, Giblin, Ryan, Roman, McEvoy

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2020-17 is adopted 5-0 and will be published according to law.

Public Comment on Consent Agenda Items:

Rob Caruso, 42 Marion Road, Verona, New Jersey

Minutes of the July 13, 2020 regular meeting are approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION No. 2020-135

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

ACCEPTING THE AWARD OF THE 2020 ESSEX COUNTY RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE TRUST FUND LOCAL AID PROGRAM GRANT FROM THE COUNTY OF ESSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY

WHEREAS, the Township of Verona has been awarded a grant in the sum of \$150,000 from the Essex County Recreation and Open Space Trust Fund Local Aid Program; and

WHEREAS, this funds will assist Verona with funding improvements to the playground at the Verona Community Center; and

WHEREAS, the Township's contribution toward the grant will be the zero dollars.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that the Township of Verona is hereby authorized to accept for this grant in the amount of \$150,000.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Manager, Municipal Clerk and any other officer deemed appropriate are hereby authorized to execute any and all documents necessary to accept this grant.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McGrath, Giblin, Ryan, Roman, McEvoy

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2020-136

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

**AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AGREEMENT WITH VALLEY HEALTH
MEDICAL GROUP FOR ALCOHOL & DRUG TESTING**

WHEREAS, Valley Health Medical Group provides alcohol and drug testing services to support workplace alcohol and drug testing program and policies; and

WHEREAS, the Township has a policy, pursuant to Federal Department of Transportation regulations, for alcohol and drug abuse testing of employees with Commercial Drivers' Licenses;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey approves of entering into an agreement with Valley Health Medical Group for alcohol and drug abuse testing for a period of two years effective July 1, 2020.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Manager, Municipal Clerk and any other officer deemed appropriate are hereby authorized to execute any and all documents necessary to enter into the agreement.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McGrath, Giblin, Ryan, Roman, McEvoy

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2020-137

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

**AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF AN AMENDED STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR THE VERONA MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE GRANT FOR FISCAL YEAR
2019-20 AND FISCAL YEAR 2020-21**

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 2020-038 was passed by the Township Council on January 6, 2020 authorizing the submission of the strategic plan for the Verona Municipal Alliance Grant for Fiscal Year 2020-21; and

WHEREAS, the State has extended the 2019-20 Fiscal Year to extend through September 30, 2020 which requires a 2019-20 strategic plan to be amended to include a 5th Quarter and an amendment of the 2020-21 strategic plan that was authorized by Resolution No. 2020-038; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (GCADA) established the Municipal Alliances for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in 1989 to educate and engage residents, local government and law enforcement officials, schools, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, parents, youth and other allies in efforts to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse in communities throughout New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council recognizes that the abuse of alcohol and drugs is a serious problem in our society amongst persons of all ages; and therefore has an established Municipal Alliance Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council further recognize that it is incumbent upon not only

public officials but upon the entire community to take action to prevent such abuses in our community; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council has applied for funding to the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (GCADA) through the County of Essex.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, State of New Jersey does hereby authorize submission of an amended strategic plan for the Verona Municipal Alliance Grant for fiscal year 2019-20 to include a 5th Quarter in the amount of:

Drug Enforcement Demand Reduction Fund (DEDR)	\$1,502.50
Local Match	\$375.63
<u>In-Kind Match</u>	<u>\$1,126.88</u>
GRANT TOTAL	\$3,005.01

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Council hereby authorize submission of an amended strategic plan for the Verona Municipal Alliance Grant for fiscal year 2020-21 in the amount of:

Drug Enforcement Demand Reduction Fund (DEDR)	\$12,225.00
Local Match	\$3,056.25
<u>In-Kind Match</u>	<u>\$9,168.75</u>
GRANT TOTAL	\$24,450.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Council acknowledges the terms and conditions for administering the Municipal Alliance grant, including the administrative compliance and audit requirements.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McGrath, Giblin, Ryan, Roman, McEvoy

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2020-138

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

REFUNDING ESCROW PAYMENT

WHEREAS, Escrow fees, for the Board of Adjustment, were received Flat Iron, LLC, for property located at 744 Bloomfield Avenue 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
\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00

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, \$1,000.00 to Flat Iron, LLC, 20 Montclair Avenue, Verona, NJ 07044.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McGrath, Giblin, Ryan, Roman

NAYS:

ABSTAIN: McEvoy

RESOLUTION No. 2020-139

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

REFUNDING ESCROW PAYMENT

WHEREAS, Escrow fees, for the Board of Adjustment, were received Executive Kids, for property located at 271 Grove Avenue Building F 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
\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00

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, \$1,000.00 to Executive Kids, 271 Grove Avenue Building F, Verona, NJ 07044

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McGrath, Giblin, Ryan, Roman, McEvoy

NAYS:

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-140

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

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE LIEN

WHEREAS, the Construction Code Official determined that the owner of the Block 902, Lot 10 on the Tax Maps of the Township of Verona, commonly known as 111 Linden Avenue, to comply with the Township property maintenance code, specifically lawn maintenance of the property; and

WHEREAS, clean up was performed by Martin Contracting on behalf of the Township on June 26, 2020 totaling the amount of \$2,200.00; and

WHEREAS, these charges shall be imposed on the property in the form of a municipal lien for above services pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 54:5-8* and to any other applicable State of Federal regulation.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, New Jersey, that the Tax Collector be and is hereby authorized and directed to take all appropriate actions to impose on the property commonly known as 111 Linden Avenue, Verona, New Jersey (Block 902, Lot 10) a municipal lien in the amount of the tax lien certificate (\$2,200.00), where upon the Tax Collector shall, within ten (10) days of encumbering of the property, send official notice of said encumbrance via certified mail, return receipt requested and regular mail to any and all other lien holders or creditors with a secured interest in the property.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McGrath, Giblin, Ryan, Roman, McEvoy

NAYS:

New Business:

The Township Manager reports that, as noted on tonight’s agenda, the governing body’s consideration of the request of GTI New Jersey for a letter of support for a medical cannabis dispensary located at 30 Pompton Avenue, Verona, New Jersey is tabled until the August 10,

2020 regular meeting.

The Council makes the following appointments by a unanimous vote motioned by Mayor McEvoy; seconded by Deputy Mayor Roman and unanimously agreed upon:

1. Board/Committee/Commission Appointments
 - a. Green Team
 - i. Frank Ceccacci Environmental Comm. Term Ending 6/30/2021
 - ii. Johnathon Hayter Public Member Term Ending 6/30/2021
 - b. Planning Board
 - i. Tim Camuti Class IV Member Unexp. Term Ending 6/30/2021
 - c. Rent Control Board
 - i. Alex Graziano, Esq., Board Attorney Term Ending 6/30/2021

Public Comment:

Hugh Giordano, 57 Argyle Avenue, Blackwood, New Jersey
Stephen DeBello, 31 Brookside Terrace, Verona, New Jersey
Dan Motley, 129 Franklin Street, Verona, New Jersey
Maryanne Maher, 38 Elmwood Road, Verona, New Jersey
Dan Crinion, 2 Birch Lane, Verona, New Jersey
Rob Caruso, 42 Marion Road, Verona, New Jersey
Paul Sciarra, 7 Crestmont Road, Verona, New Jersey
Camille Intelisano, 88 Lynwood Road, Verona, New Jersey
Stephen Pope, 22 Chestnut Road, Verona, New Jersey
Gary Bottoms, 123 Forest Avenue, Verona, New Jersey
Maria Squilanti, 6 Belleclaire Place, Verona, New Jersey
Jeffrey Testa, 49 Mountain Road, Verona, New Jersey
Todd Squilanti, 6 Belleclaire Place, Verona, New Jersey

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 pm is motioned by Councilman Giblin; seconded by Councilman Ryan.

The next regular scheduled meeting is August 10, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Kiernan
Jennifer Kiernan, Municipal Clerk

Jack McEvoy
Jack McEvoy, Mayor

APPROVED: