

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Verona Township Council on Monday, October 19, 2015 beginning at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers, 600 Bloomfield Avenue, Verona, New Jersey.

Call to Order:

Municipal Clerk reads notice of Open Public Meetings law.

Roll Call:

Mayor Kevin Ryan, Deputy Mayor Michael Nochimson; Councilman Bob Manley and Councilman Alex Roman. Also present are Interim Township Manager Mitchell Stern, Township Attorney Brian Giblin and Jennifer Kiernan, Municipal Clerk. Councilman Jay Sniatkowski is absent due to illness.

Mayor Ryan leads the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes from the October 5, 2015 meeting are moved for approval by Councilman Manley; seconded by Mayor Ryan. Vote: 4 ayes.

Mayor's Report:

Essex County Liaison Julius N. Coltre approaches the lectern and states he and the mayor walked Verona Park a few weeks ago and discussed possible improvements. Mr. Coltre refers back to Deputy Mayor Nochimson's concern about cracks in the pavement along Bloomfield Avenue and states the County Engineer is looking at next year's budget to take on that project. Deputy Mayor Nochimson suggests Mr. Coltre pass on his recommendation to have the County hold a concert summer series in Verona Park as a possible "shared effort" between Verona and the County.

Mayor Ryan asks Matt Laracy, Township CFO to the lectern. Mr. Laracy reports the payroll system is up and running. There have been a few hiccups, otherwise it is working great. He states he is looking to implement the new financial software system along with training in December and hopefully have the system online in January 2016.

Santi Condorelli, Vice President of Verona Unico approaches the lectern and thanks the Mayor and Council for the 33+ years of support they have continually provided the Annual Unico Labor Day Run. Over \$100,000 has been raised and donated to charities. He states that Verona Unico is interested in providing the Township with an electronic bulletin board at the Community Center. He asks that the Mayor and Council look into the cost, as Unico is encountering difficulty in identifying the total cost.

Mayor Ryan addresses the public regarding the Council vote on the CFO's salary. He states the implication made that the ordinance was passed to curry favor of the CFO was one he found personally insulting. He states it is okay to disagree with one's thought process, but he felt this was an attack on his integrity. He states he has met with several Township employees to clarify his position.

Manager's Report:

Interim Township Manager Mitchell Stern states Steven Neale has been crunching numbers in regards to a jitney service in town. He is looking at how many people will utilize the service and trying to determine if the service is cost effective. Pick up and drop off locations and times are needed to be identified. According to the results of the survey, 315 responses were generated. Seventy-three percent of those who responded would use the jitney- if the price was right. The most popular station by response was the Bay Street station. Mr. Neale will be meeting with the Caldwell mayor in the near future. Councilman Manley inquires if the jitney is in competition with DeCamp bus lines in running the same route. Mr. Neale is in the process of confirming that.

Mr. Stern discusses rolling out the resident portal which can be used to report problems on tree issues, missed garbage collection and other issues. Residents will have the ability to file online for building permits and applications and follow the progress online. Deputy Mayor Nochimson suggests the Township create an app to match the Township website for better mobile use and viewability on a cell phone. Mr. Stern states the Town's website is currently optimized for smaller screens. Councilman Roman states the typical cost of developing an app is between \$40,000 - \$50,000. Mr. Stern explains the Township has software already installed called Spatial Data Logic, which also has an app. There are plans to utilize and implement that app in the future.

Matt Laracy, CFO addresses the Council about the Capital plan. He reviews the items of necessity to be placed on the upcoming Capital ordinance. After going through the list, he requests Council communicate their

imperative issues before going to Bond Counsel and placing the ordinance on the next meeting agenda for introduction.

Councilmember's Reports:

Deputy Mayor Nochimson reports that Family Night was a success. He states he received an email in regards to the placing of speed bumps on Oakridge Road. The resident suggested a stop sign at Oakridge Road where Chestnut Road meets it. Township Engineer states that may not meet the warrants of the Department of Transportation.

He states that the original ordinance which listed the non-union salaries, including the CFO salary was delivered to Council in May 2015 and was pulled immediately before the meeting. He states those salaries were proposed by the former Mayor and Town Manager. He questions who set those figures. He remarks that a salary set at an additional 16-18% is a tough increase but states that this council is trying to transform government to be more efficient and smaller. He continues that the council has to deal with positions from the past and sometimes needs to breach policy to get good people.

The Deputy Mayor comments that there is not enough parking at Freedom Field and asks the Interim Township Manager to look for a solution or recommendation. Mr. Stern responds that the area on White Rock Road above Centennial Field has been approved for parking although there are no spaces marked. Township Engineer Jim Helb states that when Liberty Field is complete, people will have access to that parking lot and at that time the Township will delineate parking lines on White Rock Road.

Councilman Manley apologizes to Mayor Ryan for his off-handed comments at the last meeting. He holds the mayor's integrity in high regard and did not mean to offend his character. He responds to the Deputy Mayor's remarks in regards to the salary ordinance. He questions that if the Council were to go ahead with the former Township Manager's recommendation in one specific case, why not take that approach with the other non-union employees. He argues that the CFO salary was adopted without an evaluation while members of council used that reason for not giving non-union employees an increase.

He reports the Junior Woman's Club of Verona finished Verona Fights Hunger week with a collection of food double that of last year.

Councilman Roman discusses the salaries of senior management. He states that in 2014 a department head had a stipend of \$18,000 without authorization. Six department heads receive longevity which is 10% of their base salary. The overtime consumption for two top non-union employees totaled \$68,000. One overtime salary represented 25% of the departments total overtime budget. He recommends utilizing flex time so that regular work happens on regular time. He believes all the hours recorded were worked however, what he finds most appalling is the managerial structure for overtime. He wants to revise police and procedure in an attempt to regain trust.

The Councilman reports he attended the grand opening of Academy Apparel and thanks the Hill family and those who attended.

Resolutions:

Resolution #127 is an agreement between the Township of Verona and Cablevision Lightpath NJ LLC and its subsidiary company 4Connections LLC. Moved by Mayor Ryan; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #128 authorizes the Township Manager and Municipal Clerk to Submit a Grant Application for MA-2016-Durrell Street- 00391 to the Department of Transportation. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #129 authorizes the Township Manager and Municipal Clerk to Submit a Grant Application for MA-2016 South Prospect Street – 00432 to the Department of Transportation. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #130 establishes a lien on #45.16 for property maintenance for May/July in the amount of \$300. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes

Resolution #131 establishes a lien on #45.16 for property maintenance for August in the amount of \$150. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #132 establishes a lien on #10.2 for property maintenance for May in the amount of \$75. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #133 establishes a lien on #98.1 for property maintenance for May and July in the amount of \$300. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #134 establishes a lien on #98.1 for property maintenance for August in the amount of \$150. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #135 establishes a lien on #92.4 for property maintenance for July in the amount of \$150. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #136 establishes a lien on #92.4 for property maintenance for August in the amount of \$150. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #137 establishes a lien on #119.15 for property maintenance for May and July in the amount of \$300. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #138 establishes a lien on #119.15 for property maintenance for August in the amount of \$150. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #139 establishes a lien on #35.12 for property maintenance for May and July in the amount of \$300. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #140 establishes a lien on #35.12 for property maintenance for August in the amount of \$150. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Resolution #141 allows Council to enter into Closed Session to discuss matters pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b)(8) regarding negotiation of the terms and conditions thereof with employees, specifically the selection process for the position of Township Manager and to discuss matters pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b)(7), discussing the status of pending PBA litigation. Moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Councilman Manley. Vote: 4 ayes.

Public Participation: Motion to open public participation is moved by Councilman Manley; seconded by Deputy Mayor Nochimson. Vote: 4 ayes.

Gerry Shimonaski – 33 Kenwood Avenue, Verona, New Jersey  
Al De Old – 15 Howard Street, Verona, New Jersey

Motion to close public participation is moved by Councilman Manley; seconded by Councilman Roman. Vote: 4 ayes.

New Business:

Raffle #829 – Verona Music Parents Association - Off Premise 50/50 Raffle is approved by consensus.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn meeting is moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Deputy Mayor Nochimson. Vote: 5 ayes.

The meeting is adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

The next regular scheduled meeting is Monday, November 2, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Jennifer Kiernan*

Jennifer Kiernan, Municipal Clerk

*Kevin Ryan*

Kevin Ryan, Mayor