

**MINUTES OF THE OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
UPPER DEERFIELD, IN THE COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND, HELD ON
THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2023 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING,
HIGHWAY 77, SEABROOK, NEW JERSEY, PURSUANT TO NOTICE**

Present were James Crilley, John Daddario, Thomas Speranza, and Joseph Spoltore, all being members of the Township Committee. Also present were Rocco Tedesco, Solicitor; Roy Spoltore, Township Administrator/Clerk; Janeen Rossi, Deputy Clerk; Amy Colaneri, CFO; and Chad Ott, Public Works Supervisor. Scott Smith was unable to attend.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman James Crilley, and he read the following public meeting announcement.

"This meeting is being held in accordance with the "Open Public Meetings Act." Notice of the meeting has been provided and published as required by law in the Daily Journal and The Press, Cumberland County Edition. Notice has also been posted in the Municipal Building. The Clerk shall enter this statement in the minutes of this meeting. In compliance with State Fire Safety Statues the Chairman instructs those present how to exit the room in an emergency.

James Crilley gave an invocation followed by the flag salute led by Joseph Spoltore.

At this time James Crilley, Chairman opened the meeting for public comment.

Jeremy Warburton, Deputy Chief of Station 32, asked everyone to stay professional and respectful during the discussion of Seabrook Volunteer Fire and Rescue. There being no other public comments James Crilley, Chairman called for the approval of minutes for the Meeting August 3, 2023. On a motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by John Daddario to dispense with the reading of the minutes, and to accept the minutes as received, unanimously approved, on a roll call vote of 4-0.

James Crilley, Chairman called for a public hearing on an ordinance entitled, Adopting Chapter 260 of the Ordinances of the Township of Upper Deerfield prohibiting any person or entity from making, continuing, causing to be made or continued any loud, unnecessary or unusual noise or any noise which does or is likely to annoy, disturb, injure or endanger the comfort, response, health, peace or safety of others. On motion of Joseph Spoltore, seconded by Thomas Speranza to open the meeting for a public hearing on the proposed ordinance, and unanimously carried. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to distribute copies to those present. There being no public comments on the motion of John Daddario, seconded by Thomas Speranza, to close the public hearing and unanimously carried. On motion of Thomas Speranza seconded by Joseph Spoltore to approve and adopt proposed ordinance, unanimously carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT ORDINANCE

James Crilley, Chairman called for a public hearing on an ordinance entitled, Amending the Highway 77 redevelopment Plan to provide for the Single Site Redevelopment of Block: 1201, Lots 1& 3. The Clerk read the proposed Ordinance by title. On motion of John Daddario, seconded by Thomas Speranza to open the meeting for a public hearing on the proposed ordinance, and unanimously carried. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to distribute copies to those present. Barbara Ostberg of Oak Hill Drive asked where the property was located. Sandy Acevedo of Old Burlington Road asked for clarification of the single site redevelopment. Rocco Tedesco, Township Solicitor explained that this ordinance approves a specific use and development guidelines for this project in the redevelopment zone. The potential developer's Attorney, Peter Chacantias, stated that Sika Corporation is planning to construct a mortar mix manufacturing plant in Upper Deerfield and eventually a distribution center. The Corporation globally is known as a leader in the development and production of systems and products for commercial and residential construction, as well as the marine, automotive, and

renewable energy manufacturing industries. Paul Sabo, of Truman Ave and Donald Johnson of Old Burlington Road if there would be explosive chemicals at the plant. Rocco Tedesco, solicitor, stated that any concerns about the company's operation can be addressed at their site plan review before the Planning Board. This ordinance is amending the redevelopment plan for the specific plan and guidelines the corporation is proposing. There being no other public comments on the motion of Joseph Spoltore, seconded by John Daddario, to close the public hearing and unanimously carried. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by Joseph Spoltore to approve and adopt proposed ordinance, unanimously carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT ORDINANCE

James Crilley, Chairman called for a public hearing on an ordinance entitled, Authorizing the Expenditure of Capital Reserve Funds for Improvements to the Municipal Buildings & Facilities. The Clerk read the proposed Ordinance by title. On motion of Joseph Spoltore, seconded by John Daddario to open the meeting for a public hearing on the proposed ordinance, and unanimously carried. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to distribute copies to those present. There being no public comments, on the motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by John Daddario, to close the public hearing and unanimously carried. On motion of Joseph Spoltore, seconded by Thomas Speranza to approve and adopt proposed ordinance, unanimously carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT ORDINANCE

James Crilley, Chairman called for a public hearing on an ordinance entitled, Bond Ordinance Providing for the Construction of a Replacement Water Tower, by and in the Township of Upper Deerfield, in the County of Cumberland, State of New Jersey. Appropriating \$3,700,000 therefore and authorizing the issuance of \$3,700,000 bonds or notes to finance the cost thereof. The Clerk read the proposed Ordinance by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by John Daddario to open the meeting for a public hearing on the proposed ordinance, and unanimously carried. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to distribute copies to those present. Roy Spoltore, Township Administrator, stated that this is Bond Ordinance provides for the replacement of the Seabrook Water Tower built in 1937 and the construction of a new Water Tower adjacent to the old water tower. The Township will be receiving a grant for \$500,000.00 with the remainder to be borrowed at a low interest rate long term note from NJEIT. Darla Whipple, of Third Avenue stated she was surprised by the cost of a Water Tower. Ross Bear, 23 Eisenhower Drive stated wanted to know why this project was just being approved. Ross Bear of Eisenhower Drive asked why the project was proposed when the rates were high. Mayor Crilley stated this is a project that has been in the works for years. Kenneth Hill of Tunbridge Drive stated that the project's costs will probably be reflected in a higher water/sewer rate. There being no other public comments on the motion of John Daddario, seconded by Joseph Spoltore, to close the public hearing and unanimously carried. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by Joseph Spoltore to approve and adopt proposed ordinance, unanimously carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT ORDINANCE

James Crilley, Chairman called for a public hearing on an ordinance entitled, Amending Chapter 28 of the Township Code Designating Fire Companies 31 and 33 as the Volunteer Fire Companies authorized to provide firefighting services in Upper Deerfield Township pursuant to N.J.S.A 40A:14-68, and Terminating the authorization and contract previously granted to Seabrook Volunteer Fire AKA Seabrook Volunteer Fire and Rescue now known as Company 32. The Clerk read the proposed Ordinance by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by John Daddario to open the meeting for a public hearing on the proposed ordinance, and unanimously carried. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to distribute copies to those present.

James Crilley, Chairman called on Fire Chief Mooneyham Station 31 and Fire Chief Schafer Station 33. Chief Mooneyham explained that the process to merge fire stations has been discussed between Fire Chiefs, Firefighter's and Committee Members for years. He noted that station 32 originally approached station 31 to

merge. Fire Chief Schafer reiterated that both stations will welcome any firefighter who wants to join either department. He added that the task of any firefighter is to protect the community and they will continue to provide coverage. Rocco Todesco, Township Solicitor asked Chief Mooneyham if the Leadership from Station 32 participated in any merging discussions. Chief Mooneyham stated that both the Chief and Deputy Chief were among those present and participated in all merging discussions. Megan Schafer, of Eisenhower Drive asked where the money would go if Fire Station 32 closes. Mayor Crilley stated that some of it will be reallocated to other stations to upgrade much needed equipment. Sandy Acevedo of Old Burlington Road stated she does not support the closing of Fire Station 32 and other areas should be found in the budget to save funds. Mark Petrunis of Rosenhayn Avenue stated more fire personnel are needed throughout the Township and the Township should not put price tag on life and safety. Mr. Petrunis added that the money proposed to be spent on the water tower is unreasonable. Mayor Crilley reiterated that the water tower is beyond repair, beyond salvage and the water tower is needed for the Township's water system.

Darlene Barber of Big Oak Road states she is concerned with the choice of closing Company 32 which serves the minority population of the Township. John Daddario replied that the report looked at the needs of the township and not any class of population. Mayor Crilley suggested Ms. Barber read the sub-committee report to answer any of her questions. He added that the report has been available in excess of a month for the public to view. Thomas Speranza added that the report identifies creating two fire departments, one in the north section of the Township and the other in the south. Jeremy Warburton stated that Fire Station 32 is not antiquated. He added that the company has paid for many improvements to the building over the years and has not had any issues with housing their existing equipment. Barbara Ostberg of Oak Hill Drive was concerned about the safety of the residents and wanted to keep the station open. A resident of Eisenhower Drive stated he supports keeping the Fire Station open. Bruce Peterson, of Sentry Drive, former committeeman, stated that times are tough these days. The Township lost close to a half a million dollars in state aid around 2008, has been cutting spending and implemented various shared services to keep local taxes low. The issue is the cost of a new fire truck in 2023, which is projected to cost anywhere from one million to 1.5 million dollars. How many fire trucks can the township afford to buy. He added that if the Township has to go to a paid fire department in the future, the Township will go to a single fire company.

Jim Wenger, of Seeley Road stated he is a farmer and Seabrook Fire Company has provided him with excellent service. Paul Sabo of Truman Drive wanted fire station 32 to stay open and suggested having a fair on the recreation fields in the summer to raise money. Dennis Cook of Oak Hill Drive talked about the fire in Hawaii and felt the Township budget for fire was low and was willing to pay more in taxes. Norman Cuff of Quinton NJ works at Pappas and stated fire company 32 has been there for the company. Ken Hill of Tunbridge Drive asked various questions pertaining to the information contained in the report and asked if the schools, county agencies and state police were contacted. He felt the decision was rushed. Dottie Hunt of Centerton Road asked if any of the remaining departments could be expanded and what would happen to Seabrook Fire building. The committee responded that station 33 has room to expand and Rocco Tedesco added that the ordinance does not terminate the entity only the recognition as a fire company in the township. Jeff Mitsui of Valley Avenue stated his father was a firefighter at station 32 and public safety is important.

Kyle Hoehe of Irving Avenue felt more time is needed to evaluate the report. He asked if fire companies could bill for their service similar to the ambulance. Trish McGinley of Finley Road asked why APR funds were used for Nitrate removal and felt a 2-cent local tax increase was not unreasonable. Nicholas Lowe of Lowe's Nursery stated his family has been in the township for over 100 years and members of station 32. He felt closing station 32 would place a burden on the two remaining companies. He added that the issue should be tabled, and more information should be gathered. Gwen Mitsui of Valley Avenue asked why station 32 was chosen as it is the most central company of the fire halls and the proximity to schools, businesses and multifamily housing. Mark Petrunis of Rosenhayn Aveune stated that people want the station open, suggested looking at other options to raise funds and stated that response time is important.

There being no other public comments on the motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by John Daddario, to close the public hearing and unanimously carried. On motion of John Daddario, seconded by Thomas Speranza to approve and adopt proposed ordinance. A roll call vote proceeded:

John Daddario stated he has been the liaison to the fire companies for the past 16 years and there have been talks of consolidating fire companies for the past five years. Originally station 32 was talking to station 31 about merging. After that, station 32 was talking with station 33 about merging. The plan provides for two strong fire companies while maintaining control over the local taxes. Mr. Daddario voted yes.

Joseph Spoltore thanked everyone who came forward. A majority of the questions are answered in the report. Volunteers are to be commended for the service they provide. There are long-term financial issues in funding the fire companies and all the other funding requirements. Mr. Spoltore voted yes.

Thomas Speranza thanked everyone for coming out. He stated he has been serving in public safety for thirty-five years. The chiefs have said the plan will work. The state mandates budget guidelines municipalities must follow. Mr. Speranza votes yes.

James Crilley thanked the volunteers for the service they provide. Discussion of consolidation came from the fire companies. The fire chiefs have assured the committee that it would be a seamless transition. He added he listens to the stories from the tax collector about the hard financial times residents are having. The plan presents two well-funded and trained companies, keeps the tax rate stable and public safety has been assured by the chiefs. Mr. Crilley voted yes.

The ordinance was approved 4-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT ORDINANCE

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Awarding Bids for Home Rehabilitation Contracts 2022-1 through 2022-4. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by Joseph Spoltore, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Appointing Part time Emergency Medical Technician – Bringham & McGrath. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Joseph Spoltore, seconded by Thomas Speranza, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Awarding Ricky Slade Construction, Inc. for Site Preparation & Improvement for Restroom Buildings at the Seabrook Recreation Complex. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by Joseph Spoltore, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Payment of Bills in the amount of \$ 1,565,008.94. Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by Joseph Spoltore, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 4-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

COMMITTEE REPORTS

John Daddario did not have a report this evening.

Joseph Spoltore reported that the Planning Board discussed a potential food truck ordinance. The board felt a strong support for the existing brick-and-mortar food service businesses, and contemplated the unfair competition that food trucks might create, and the board agreed that food trucks should not be permitted to operate in direct competition, but they would be permitted to operate at special events.

Thomas Speranza reported that the individuals who were stealing cars are at it again. They have not been to Upper Deerfield yet, but they are operating in the South Jersey area. Mr. Speranza asked everyone to keep the vehicle doors locked and take the key fobs with you.

Mayor Crilley did not have a report this evening.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Roy Spoltore, Administrator stated the department reports for July were contained in this evening's packet. The Sunset Lake playground equipment has been delivered to the contractor. The equipment should be installed in early September.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Rocco Tedesco did not have a report this evening.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A reporter from NJ.com identified herself as being present for the meeting. With no other public comments and no further business to come before the Committee, on a motion by Thomas Speranza, seconded by Joseph Spoltore to adjourn the meeting, and unanimously carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Janeen Rossi, Township Deputy Clerk

Roy J. Spoltore, Township Clerk