

**MINUTES OF THE OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
UPPER DEERFIELD, IN THE COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND, HELD ON
THURSDAY MARCH 7, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING,
HIGHWAY 77, SEABROOK, NEW JERSEY, PURSUANT TO NOTICE**

Present were James Crilley, John Daddario, Scott Smith, 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; Brian Murphy, Township Engineer and Chad Ott, Public Works Supervisor.

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 Scott Smith.

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

Margrethe Jerspersen of Northville Road asked if the Township could get legal fees paid by the Concerned Citizens group to cover the Township's legal fees. Rocco Tedesco responded that the courts rarely award legal fees. With no other public comments, James Crilley, Chairman called for the approval of minutes for the meeting of February 15, 2024. Joseph Spoltore made a motion, second by Thomas Speranza, to dispense with the reading of the minutes and to accept the minutes as received, were unanimously approved by a voice vote.

James Crilley, Chairman called for a discussion and introduction of an ordinance entitled, Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14) The Clerk read the proposed Ordinance by title. On motion of Joseph Spoltore, seconded by Scott Smith to approve and adopt proposed ordinance on the first reading and setting the date for public hearing on March 21, 2024, at 7:00 pm and was carried 5-0 on a roll call vote. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to advertise same in the Daily Journal as required by law and copies to be made available upon request.

INSERT ORDINANCE

James Crilley, Chairman called for a discussion and introduction of an ordinance entitled, Deleting Sections 405-65 Through Section 405-68 and Replacing in its Entirety with a New 405-65 and 405-66 of the Code of the Township of Upper Deerfield. The Clerk read the proposed Ordinance by title. Rocco Tedesco explained that this ordinance complies with recent changes made by state statutes pertaining to Performance Bond requirements and escrow fees. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by Scott Smith to approve and adopt proposed ordinance on the first reading and setting the date for public hearing on March 21, 2024, at 7:00 pm and was carried 5-0 on a roll call vote. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to advertise same in the Daily Journal as required by law and copies to be made available upon request.

INSERT ORDINANCE

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Authorizing Coin Drop for Upper Deerfield Township Fire Company #3. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, second by John Daddario, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Imposing Lien on Block 2401, Lot 40 – 208 Landis Avenue – Martinez. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of John Daddario, seconded by Scott Smith, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Authorizing the Tax Collector to Adjust Taxes for a Wartime Service- Connected 100% Disability- Knight. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by Joseph Spoltore, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Authorizing Tax payments to be Refunded- Lidl Appeal. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by Scott Smith, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Authorizing Tax payments to be Refunded. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of John Daddario, seconded by Scott Smith, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Appointing Violations Clerk - Martinez. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by Joseph Spoltore, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

James Crilley, Chairman called for a resolution Payment of Bills in the amount of \$ 227,822.63. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by John Daddario, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

COMMITTEE REPORTS

John Daddario reported the Fire Marshall appointed Chief of Station 33, John Schaefer as Violations Official. He has issued over 250 Fire Lane Violations, which should deter anyone from parking in the Fire Lanes at the shopping centers. Public Works Supervisor Chad Ott and the Public works crew have done a tremendous job keeping the inlets clear, so the roads don't flood during the rain storms.

Scott Smith reiterated that Chad and the Public Works crew do a great job.

Joseph Spoltore stated that the Environmental Commission is also pleased that Public Works crew has been getting the pollinating areas of the Munyon property ready for planting.

Thomas Speranza stated the Sheriff's Department had officers on Northville, Centerton and Love Lane in reference to the speeding of vehicles during school arrival and dismissal times. A homicide in the township is under investigation by the State Police.

Mayor Crilley reported that Friday March 15, 2024 3:00-5:00 pm Big Brother Big Sisters of Cumberland and Salem Counties will have its Ribbon Cutting Event at 60 Landis Avenue. On March 16, 2024, 10 am at the Levoy Theater in Millville will be showing the premier of "The Paradox of Seabrook Farms," a history of the Seabrook family who created Seabrook Farms and the diverse community of refugees and immigrants that lived and worked there. The finance committee met and made a recommendation to increase the tax rate by 1.3 cents. The Township has gone three years without any tax increase. However, with operating expenses and inflation increasing it is necessary to have this modest increase. Large budget line item increases were necessary for Emergency Medical S/W, Insurance, Pension, Health Benefits and litigation. The Budget line item for street lighting is \$175,000 which is a very large part of our budget, but it provides our residence with safety on municipal, county and state roads.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Roy Spoltore reviewed the draft 2024 general budget. The budget cap increased \$170,764 utilizing previous cap banks and the COLA ordinance. This year's budget will be \$25,716 under the budget cap. Numerous line items had to be increased EMS S/W, insurance, health benefits, pension, postage, and Clerk O/E to name a few. Capital Improvement expenditures increased \$21,000 over last year. Items to be purchased included \$65,000 for the down payment on the new fire ladder truck, \$100,000 towards a new ambulance, \$200,000 for road improvements and purchase of pick up for public works, small SUVs for construction and zoning and improvements to municipal buildings. The Committee reviewed the General Budget handout and agreed to introduce the budget at the next meeting with the 1.3 cent increase. The Township also received a AA- bond rating from S&P.

The application for the DCA Recreation Grant was extended by the State until April 2024. At the Planning Board meeting on February 26, 2024, Ultra Clean was approved on the 25,000 square foot addition to their building. The Skeba project has changed engineers to deal with storm water management issues. The Rabies Clinic will be held on March 30, 2024, 9-11:00 am at fire company #3. The amended fence ordinance is in your packet and will be introduced at the next meeting. The primary changes include keeping the fence 30 inches off the property line, no invasion plants as a hedge row, keeping the trees out of the right of way and requiring a permit to put up a fence. The committee approved a request from a bike group to utilize Bostwick Lake as a midpoint for their ride in May. The bike group will provide an insurance certificate for all entities. The elected officials training is available online for the ACMJIF and a letter from the JIF explaining the reasons for insurance increases in 2024 was in this evenings packet.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Brian Murphy, Township Engineer stated the Seabrook water tower's pilings are in and the foundation is under construction. Around May, the steel will be received, and construction will begin. Brian asked the committee what name should be placed on the tower and what color the tower should be painted. The Committee preferred "Upper Deerfield" and thought the school and Township colors should be utilized.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Rocco Tedesco, Solicitor substituted as Planning Board Solicitor at the last Planning Board meeting and suggested that the Planning Board application be reviewed to mirror parts of the county application pertaining to property description and proposed use. Constructing a water line under the railroad appears to be resolved

and the planning board checklist appears to be complete for Bristol Ponds. They are also working on the affordable housing aspect of the project. Sika closed and purchased the property, within the next month or so, Sika should be back before the committee. The State Police HLEO Officer, Trooper Capiferro, has sent a statement regarding the functions of the State Police in regard to Animal Cruelty. Trooper Capiferro suggested the Township refer all animal complaints directly to the State Police and they will determine if Shore Animal Control needs to be contacted. Mr. Tedesco spoke with Trooper Capiferro and informed him that the Township will not take responsibility for cruelty cases.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Margrethe Jespersen of Northville Road asked if it was possible to include a 5G antenna on top of the new water tower for cell phone signal. Rocco Tedesco informed her that signal strength is up to the carriers. She also asked if the Township could buy certified used vehicles. Roy Spoltore responded that the Township has to follow state bid laws and it may cost more. Nancy Ridgeway of Irving Avenue asked if EMS services receive payment if providing mutual aid in another municipality. Roy Spoltore responded that EMS services bill for any call to location if the person is transported to the hospital. Dallas Peterson of Shadow Brooke Drive asked how many vehicles accident calls the EMS receive? Roy Spoltore stated that the EMS had over 2,000 calls.

With no other public comments and no further business to come before the Committee, on a motion by Joseph Spoltore, seconded by Scott Smith to adjourn the meeting, and unanimously carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Janeen Rossi, Township Deputy Clerk

Roy J. Spoltore, Township Clerk