

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Verona Township Council on Monday, August 19, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 600 Bloomfield Avenue, Verona, New Jersey, and via Zoom video conferencing

Call to Order:

The Municipal Clerk reads the notice of Open Public Meetings Act.

Roll Call:

Mayor Tamburro, Deputy Mayor McEvoy, Councilman Roman, Councilwoman Holland, Township Manager Joseph D'Arco, Deputy Township Manager Kevin O'Sullivan, Township Attorney Brian Aloia and Municipal Clerk Jennifer Kiernan are present. Councilwoman McGrath is not present this evening.

Mayor's Report:

The Mayor reports that the Open Space Trust Fund Advisory Committee met. He thanks the police department, DPW and OEM for the storm response to last night's storm and encourages residents to be prepared when the National Weather Service issues a warning. He wishes the students, teachers and support staff best wishes for their return to school in September.

Essex County Liaison J. Coltre reports that the 9/11 Memorial Service will be held at Eagle Rock Reservation. The Senior Wellness program will take place on 9/24 from 10am-2pm. On 9/29 the Fall Festival will be held at the Environmental Center from 11am-3pm.

Manager's Report:

Township Manager Joseph D'Arco reports on the RFP for the Bloomfield Ave streetscape will be received 9/5. He speaks about Everett Field and the Bloomfield Avenue Veteran Banners and also the pickle ball courts at the VCP.

The Deputy Manager introduces Adam Farragher from Mantis Innovation who is presenting the solar feasibility study tonight.

Mr. O'Sullivan leads a final discussion on Everett Field where the Council directs the administration to prepare the bond ordinance for the next meeting to finance the preliminary design costs for the field.

The Deputy Manager discusses the wastewater infrastructure and provides updates on the road projects, Everett Field and the pickle ball courts at the Verona Pool. He discusses the sign sponsorships and various grant programs and applications and that the final recommendations on the pool rate study will be ready by October 1. He also reports on smoke testing, PFAS and the Township wells and states that bid documents are being finalized for the Town Hall windows and repointing project.

Council Members Report:

Deputy Mayor McEvoy thanks public works and emergency services for their work in the storm. He reports that Sustainable Verona Green Team had a meeting with more details to come at the next meeting.

Councilman Roman also thanks public works and emergency services and wishes Councilwoman Holland a Happy Birthday.

Councilwoman Holland mentions that most of the advisory committees have taken a break from meeting in August and want to recognize the advisory committees and looks forward to meeting with them in September. She acknowledges the significant rain events that have occurred and urges the public to prepare for significant weather events as we are still in hurricane season. She wishes everyone a safe Labor Day holiday and states that she will be running with her daughter for the first time in the Labor Day Classic.

Public Comment:

Chris Budes, Verona, New Jersey
Corey Shor, Verona, New Jersey
Lori Gannon, Verona, New Jersey

Ordinances for Public Hearing/Adoption:

ORDINANCE #2024-28

AMENDING THE STANDARDS OF THE C-2 (PROFESSIONAL OFFICE AND BUSINESS ZONE DISTRICT) BY ESTABLISHING ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES AS A CONDITIONAL USE AND COWORKING SPACE AS A PERMITTED USE

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-28 into the record.

Motion to move the ordinance is made by Councilman Roman; seconded by Deputy Mayor McEvoy.

Public Hearing:

None

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

ABSENT: McGrath

Ordinance No. 2024-28 is adopted 5-0 and will be published according to law.

Consent Agenda:

Minutes from the August 5, 2024 meeting are approved unanimously.

ACCEPTING THE AWARD OF THE 2024 NATIONAL OPIOID SETTLEMENT

WHEREAS, the Township of Verona has been awarded a grant in the sum of \$5,723.64 from the State of New Jersey for the 2024 National Opioid Settlement to help Verona with the abatement of the opioid epidemic across the country; and

WHEREAS, the Township's contribution toward the grant will be 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 \$5,723.64.

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: Holland, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

ABSENT: McGrath

RESOLUTION No. 2024-144

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Roman that the following resolution be adopted:

AUTHORIZING THE INSERTION INTO THE CY2024 MUNICIPAL BUDGET PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 (CHAPTER 159, P.L. 1948) OF A SPECIAL ITEM OF REVENUE IN THE FORM OF THE NATIONAL OPIOID SETTLEMENT GRANT

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services (the "Director") may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of any county or municipality when such items shall have been made available by law and the amount thereof was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and,

WHEREAS, said Director may also approve the insertion of an item of appropriation for an equal amount; and,

WHEREAS, the Township of Verona has received \$5,723.64 from the State of New Jersey in the form of the National Opioid Settlement Grant and wishes to amend its CY2024 Municipal Budget to include this amount as a revenue.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, State of New Jersey hereby requests the Director to approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the CY2024 Municipal Budget in the sum of \$5,723.64 which is now available as revenue from:

Miscellaneous Revenues - Section F:
Special Items of General Revenue Anticipated with Prior Written Consent of Director of Local Government Services -
Public and Private Revenues Offset with Appropriations:
National Opioid Settlement Grant

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director to approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the CY2024 Municipal Budget in the like sum of \$5,723.64 appropriated under the caption of:

General Appropriations:
(A) Operations - Excluded from "CAPS"
Public and Private Revenues Offset with Appropriations:
National Opioid Settlement Grant

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution will be electronically filed with the Director for approval as required by law.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro
NAYS:
ABSENT: McGrath

RESOLUTION No. 2024-145

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Roman that the following resolution be adopted:

REFUNDING ESCROW PAYMENT

WHEREAS, Escrow fees, for the Board of Adjustment, were received from Michael Dischley and the fees have been held in Trust; and

WHEREAS, certification has been received from our Engineer to release these funds, from Trust, as follows:

ESCROW AMOUNT	EXPENSES	AMOUNT TO BE REFUNDED
\$500.00	\$149.20	\$350.80

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, \$350.80 to Michael Dischley.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

ABSENT: McGrath

RESOLUTION No. 2024-146

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Roman that the following resolution be adopted:

PERMITTING ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, permits the exclusion of the Public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exists.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

The public shall be excluded from discussion of an action upon the hereinafter specified subject matter.

1. Purchase, Lease or Acquisition of Real Property pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (5)*
2. Pending, Ongoing, or Anticipated Litigation and Contract Negotiations pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (7)*

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

ABSENT: McGrath

Addendum

RESOLUTION No. 2024-147

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor McEvoy; seconded by Mayor Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA PLANNING BOARD TO CONDUCT A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER PROPERTY LOCATED 383 BLOOMFIELD AVENUE AND DESIGNATED AS BLOCK 708, LOT 1 IS A NON-CONDEMNATION AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6 authorizes the governing body of any municipality, by resolution, to have its planning board conduct a preliminary investigation to determine whether an area of the municipality is a non-condemnation "area in need of redevelopment" pursuant to the criteria contained in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Verona (the "Township Council" or the "Council") considers it to be in the best interest of the Township of Verona (the "Township") to have the Township of Verona Planning Board (the "Planning Board") conduct such an investigation of property located 383 Bloomfield Avenue and designated as Block 708, Lot 1 on the official Tax Maps of the Township (the "Property"), to determine whether such Property, qualifies as a non-condemnation redevelopment area; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council authorizes and directs the Planning Board to conduct a preliminary investigation to evaluate and study the Property to determine whether the designation of

the Property as a non-condemnation redevelopment area is appropriate and in conformance with the statutory criteria contained in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law; and

WHEREAS, the preliminary investigation referenced herein shall be designed to evaluate and study the Property to determine whether the designation of the Property, as a non-condemnation redevelopment area is appropriate and in conformance with the statutory criteria contained in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law; and

WHEREAS, subject to the results of the preliminary investigation referenced herein, a non-condemnation redevelopment area determination concerning the Property, if so made, would authorize the Township to use all those powers provided by the Legislature for use in a redevelopment area and under the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq., other than the use of eminent domain to acquire all or a portion of the Property.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Town of Verona that:

1. The Planning Board is hereby directed to conduct a preliminary investigation to determine whether property located at 383 Bloomfield Avenue and designated as Block 708, Lot 1 on the Tax Maps of the Township of Verona, qualifies as a “non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment” as described in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6.a, according to the criteria set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law; and
2. The Planning Board is hereby further directed to study the property located at 383 Bloomfield Avenue and identified as Block 708, Lot 1 on the Tax Maps of the Township of Verona; to develop a map reflecting the boundaries of the proposed non-condemnation redevelopment area; to draft a preliminary investigation/report; and to provide public notice and to conduct public hearings pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6; and
3. The Planning Board shall, after completing its public hearing as referenced in Paragraph 2 immediately above, recommend that the delineated area, or any part thereof, be determined or not be determined, by the Township Council, to be a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

ABSENT: McGrath

New/Old Business:

Council discusses an ordinance on Committee meeting attendance. San Chavan, Township Planner is present to participate in a discussion to authorize the Planning Board to conduct a preliminary investigation to determine whether property located at 383 Bloomfield Avenue be designated as a Non-Condensation Area of Redevelopment.

Public Comment:

None

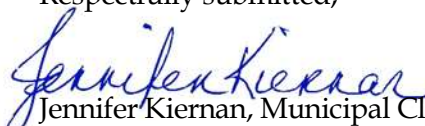
Council goes into Executive Session at 9:06 p.m. No action will be taken afterwards.

Council enters back into Public Session at 10:10 p.m.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn is made by Councilman Roman at 10:11 p.m.; seconded by Councilwoman McGrath. The next meeting is September 9, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,


Jennifer Kiernan, Municipal Clerk


Christopher Tamburro, Mayor

APPROVED: September 23, 2024