

TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG
MEETING MINUTES
6:30 PM Executive Session/7:30 pm Regular Session

July 3, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the Lopatcong Township Council was called to order by Mayor Wright. The meeting was held in the Municipal Building located at 232 S. Third St., Phillipsburg, New Jersey

A Prayer was offered followed by the Oath of Allegiance.

Mayor Wright stated “adequate notice of this meeting has been provided indicating the time and place of the meeting in accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975 by advertising a Notice in The Star Ledger and The Express-Times Warren County Zone and by posting a copy on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building.”

Present: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto, Mayor Wright. Also, present were Attorney Lavery and Engineer Wisniewski.

Motion to return to Regular Session by Council President Palitto, seconded by Councilman McQuade. All in favor.

Attorney Lavery summarized Executive Session Items one through three; an Attorney/Client Privilege matter regarding the EMS; Personnel matter regarding the Municipal Clerk and pending Tax Appeal settlement matter with CICF was added as No. 4. Motion to increase the Clerk’s salary by \$10,000 for assuming additional duties by Mayor Wright, seconded by Councilman Marinelli. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto and Mayor Wright.

NAYS: None

Attorney Lavery – Asked the Council for a motion to settle the Tax Appeal with CICF. Motion by Mayor Wright, seconded by Councilman McQuade. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto and Mayor Wright.

NAYS: None

Sworn In – Clerk Dilts swore in Terri Bisci as Deputy Municipal Clerk

Old Business:

Minutes – Approve Executive and Regular Sessions for June 5, 2024 on motion by Councilman McQuade, seconded by Councilman Marinelli. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto, Mayor Wright.

NAYS: None

Ordinance No. 24-11 – Second reading and public hearing of Bond Ordinance providing an Appropriation of \$932,500 for Various Capital Improvements in and by the Township of Lopatcong and Authorizing the Issuance of \$807,975 in Bonds and Notes for Financing Part of the Appropriation. Motion to hold a public hearing by Council President Palitto, seconded by Councilman McQuade. All in favor. No comments from the public. Motion to close the public hearing by Council President Palitto, seconded by Councilman McQuade. All in favor.

ORDINANCE NO. 24-11

BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$932,500 FOR VARIOUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, IN THE COUNTY OF WARREN, NEW JERSEY AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$807,975 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR FINANCING PART OF THE APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ORDAINED, BY THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, IN THE COUNTY OF WARREN, NEW JERSEY (not less than two-thirds of all members thereof affirmatively concurring) AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1:

The improvement described in Section 3 of this Bond Ordinance (the "Improvement") is hereby authorized to be undertaken by the Township of Lopatcong, in the County of Warren, New Jersey (the "Township") as a general improvement. For the said Improvement there is hereby appropriated the amount of \$932,500, such sum includes the sum of \$82,000 to be received as a Local Recreation Improvement Grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs in connection (the "Grant") with the improvement in Section 3(a)(5) and the sum of \$42,525 as the down payment (the "Down Payment") required by the Local Bond Law of the State of New Jersey, constituting Chapter 2 of Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes, as amended and supplemented (the "Local Bond Law"). The Down Payment is now available by virtue of provision in one or more previously adopted budgets for down payments or capital improvement purposes.

SECTION 2:

In order to finance the additional cost of the Improvement not covered by application of the Down Payment and the Grant, negotiable bonds of the Township are hereby authorized to be issued in the principal amount of \$807,975 pursuant to the provisions of the Local Bond Law (the "Bonds"). In anticipation of the issuance of the Bonds and to temporarily finance said Improvement or purposes, negotiable bond anticipation notes of the Township are hereby authorized to be issued in the principal amount not exceeding \$807,975 pursuant to the provisions of the Local Bond Law (the "Bond Anticipation Notes" or "Notes").

SECTION 3:

(a) The Improvements authorized and the purposes for which obligations are to be issued are as follows:

Improvements	Appropriation and Estimated Cost	Estimated Maximum Amount of Bonds or Notes	Period of Useful Life
1. Acquisition of various equipment for the Fire Department, including but not limited to SCBA bottles, ventmaster saws, turnout gear, hoses, natural gas detectors, ladder belts and thermal imaging cameras, all as shown on and in accordance with the plans and specifications thereon on file in the office of the Clerk and hereby approved.	\$69,000	\$65,550	5 Years
2. Acquisition of office furniture and barcode reader for the Police Department, including all work and materials necessary therefor and incidental thereto, all as shown on and in accordance with the plans and specifications thereon on file in the office of the Clerk and hereby approved.	48,500	46,075	5 Years
3. Various acquisitions and improvements for the Department of Public Works, including acquisition of mason dump truck and improvements to Department of Public Works parking lots, including all work and materials necessary therefor and incidental thereto, all as shown on and in accordance with the plans and specifications thereon on file in the office of the Clerk and hereby approved.	365,000	346,750	10 Years
4. Acquisition of a construction vehicle for the Building Department, all as shown on and in accordance with the plans and specifications thereon on file in the office of the Clerk and hereby approved.	50,000	47,500	5 Years
5. Improvements to various municipal properties, including but not limited to a Sally Port addition to the Police Department for security purposes and installation of Pickleball Courts, including all work and materials necessary therefor and incidental thereto, all as shown on and in accordance with the plans and specifications thereon on file in the office of the Clerk and hereby approved.	400,000	380,000	15 Years

Improvements	Appropriation and Estimated Cost	Estimated Maximum Amount of Bonds or Notes	Period of Useful Life
TOTAL ALL PURPOSES	\$932,500	\$807,975	

(b) The estimated maximum amount of Bonds or Notes to be issued for the purpose of financing a portion of the cost of the Improvement is \$807,975.

(c) The estimated cost of the Improvement is \$932,500 which amount represents the initial appropriation made by the Township.

SECTION 4:

All Bond Anticipation Notes issued hereunder shall mature at such times as may be determined by the municipal finance officer of the Township (the "Chief Financial Officer"); provided that no Note shall mature later than one year from its date. The Notes shall bear interest at such rate or rates and be in such form as may be determined by the Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer shall determine all matters in connection with Notes issued pursuant to this ordinance, and the signature of the Chief Financial Officer upon the Notes shall be conclusive evidence as to all such determinations. All Notes issued hereunder may be renewed from time to time subject to the provisions of Section 8(a) of the Local Bond Law. The Chief Financial Officer is hereby authorized to sell part or all of the Notes from time to time at public or private sale and to deliver them to the purchasers thereof upon receipt of payment of the purchase price plus accrued interest from their dates to the date of delivery thereof. The Chief Financial Officer is directed to report in writing to the Township Council of the Township at the meeting next succeeding the date when any sale or delivery of the Notes pursuant to this ordinance is made. Such report must include the amount, the description, the interest rate and the maturity schedule of the Notes sold, the price obtained and the name of the purchaser.

SECTION 5:

The capital budget of the Township is hereby amended to conform with the provisions of this Ordinance to the extent of any inconsistency herewith. The resolution in the form promulgated by the Local Finance Board showing full detail of the amended capital budget and capital program as approved by the Director, Division of Local Government Services, Department of Community Affairs, State of New Jersey is on file with the Township Clerk and is available for public inspection.

SECTION 6:

The following additional matters are hereby determined, declared, recited and stated:

(a) The Improvement described in Section 3 of this Bond Ordinance is not a current expense, and is a capital improvement or property that the Township may lawfully make or acquire as general improvements, and no part of the cost thereof has been or shall be specially assessed on property specially benefited thereby.

(b) The period of usefulness of the Improvement, within the limitations of the Local Bond Law, taking into consideration the respective amounts of all obligations authorized for such purpose, according to the reasonable life thereof computed from the date of the Bonds authorized by this Bond Ordinance, is 10.88 years.

(c) The Supplemental Debt Statement required by the Local Bond Law has been duly prepared and filed in the office of the Township Clerk and a complete executed duplicate thereof has been filed in the office of the Director, Division of Local Government Services, Department of Community Affairs, State of New Jersey. Such statement shows that the gross debt of the Township, as defined in the Local Bond Law, is increased by the authorization of the Bonds and Notes provided in this Bond Ordinance by \$807,975 and the obligations authorized herein will be within all debt limitations prescribed by the Local Bond Law.

(d) An aggregate amount not exceeding \$125,000 for items of expense listed in and permitted under Section 20 of the Local Bond Law is included in the estimated cost of the Improvements, as indicated herein.

SECTION 7:

Any funds or grant monies received for the purpose described in Section 3 of this Ordinance shall be used for financing said Improvement by application thereof either to direct payment of the cost of said Improvement or to the payment or reduction of the authorization of the obligations of the Township authorized therefor by this Bond Ordinance. Any such funds received may, and all such funds so received which are not required for direct payment of the cost of said Improvement shall, be held and applied by the Township as funds applicable only to the payment of obligations of the Township authorized by this Bond Ordinance.

SECTION 8:

The full faith and credit of the Township are hereby pledged to the punctual payment of the principal of and interest on the obligations authorized by this Bond Ordinance. The obligations shall be direct, unlimited obligations of the Township, and the Township shall be obligated to levy ad valorem taxes upon all the taxable property within the Township for the payment of the obligations and the interest thereon without limitation of rate or amount.

SECTION 9:

The Chief Financial Officer of the Township is hereby authorized to prepare and to update from time to time as necessary a financial disclosure document to be distributed in connection with the sale of obligations of the Township and to execute such disclosure document on behalf of the Township. The Chief Financial Officer is further authorized to enter into the appropriate undertaking to provide secondary market disclosure on behalf of the Township pursuant to Rule 15c2-12 of the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "Rule") for the benefit of holders and beneficial owners of obligations of the Township and to amend such undertaking from time to time in connection with any change in law, or interpretation thereof, provided such undertaking is and continues to be, in the opinion of a nationally recognized bond counsel, consistent with the requirements of the Rule. In the event that the Township fails to comply with its undertaking, the Township shall not be liable for any monetary damages, and the remedy shall be limited to specific performance of the undertaking.

SECTION 10:

This Bond Ordinance constitutes a declaration of official intent under Treasury Regulation Section 1.150-2. The Township reasonably expects to pay expenditures with respect to the Improvement prior to the date that Township incurs debt obligations under this Bond Ordinance. The Township reasonably expects to reimburse such expenditures with the proceeds of debt to be incurred by the Township under this Bond Ordinance. The maximum principal amount of debt expected to be issued for payment of the cost of the Improvement is \$807,975.

SECTION 11:

This Bond Ordinance shall take effect 20 days after the first publication thereof after final adoption, as provided by the Local Bond Law.

TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

PUBLIC NOTICE

BOND ORDINANCE STATEMENTS AND SUMMARIES

The bond ordinance, the summary terms of which are included herein, has been finally adopted by the Township of Lopatcong, in the County of Warren, State of New Jersey on July 3, 2024 and the 20-day period of limitation within which a suit, action or proceeding questioning the validity of such ordinance can be commenced, as provided in the Local Bond Law, has begun to run from the date of the first publication of this statement. Copies of the full ordinance are available at no cost and during regular business hours, at the Clerk's office for members of the general public who request the same. The summary of the terms of such bond ordinance follows:

Title: Bond Ordinance Providing An Appropriation Of \$932,500 For Various Capital Improvements In And By The Township Of Lopatcong, In The County Of Warren, New Jersey And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$807,975 Bonds Or Notes Of The Township For Financing Part Of The Appropriation

Purpose(s): Acquisition of various equipment for the Fire Department, including but not limited to SCBA bottles, ventmaster saws, turnout gear, hoses, natural gas detectors, ladder belts and thermal imaging cameras; Acquisition of office furniture and barcode reader for the Police Department; Various acquisitions and improvements for the Department of Public Works, including acquisition of mason dump truck and improvements to Department of Public Works parking lots; Acquisition of a construction vehicle for the Building Department; and Improvements to various municipal properties, including but not limited to a Sally Port addition to the Police Department for security purposes and installation of Pickleball Courts.

Appropriation: \$932,500

Bonds/Notes Authorized: \$807,975

Grants (if any) Appropriated: : \$82,000 to be received as a Local Recreation Improvement Grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

Section 20 Costs: \$125,000

Useful Life: 10.88 Years

M. Beth Dilts, Clerk

Motion to adopt this Ordinance on second reading by Councilman Marinelli, seconded by Council President Palitto. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto, Mayor Wright.

NAYS: None

Ordinance No. 24-12 - Second reading and public hearing of Bond Ordinance providing an Appropriation of \$17,000,000 for Improvements to the Lopatcong Park in and by the Township

of Lopatcong and Authorizing the Issuance of \$16,150,000 in Bonds and Notes for Financing Part of the Appropriation. Mayor Wright read aloud a history of the park. Back in the 1960's a group of Township residents formed the Lopatcong Recreation Committee. They formulated a plan to acquire land, build a pool, field house, playing fields, and pavilion. This committee continued to operate the park complex until 1999 when they approached the Township about handing over the complex to the Township to continue the operations. At that time, Mayor Steinhardt and Council entered into an agreement to transfer the property at zero dollars to the Township. In 2006 the first renovation was undertaken to build the quad, softball and baseball fields, soccer fields, basketball courts and walking trails along the park leaving room for the future build of a concession stand and bathroom facilities. The Township operated the park until the Covid pandemic which shut down most of the operations in 2020. Once the pandemic was over, the pool was not operable and no longer met code requirements along with many other issues. The pavilion is in need of renovation as well as the field house. Maintenance of the park, trails, parking lots, buildings and payment of utilities is a cost already born by the taxpayers. The programs that operate there today are many sports offered for the children through the Lopatcong Athletic Association and events run by the Township. Council hired a park planner in 2022 to provide a Master Plan of what the new municipal park would look like based on what the residents wanted to see. Numerous meetings were held, zoom for most, and surveys were taken. The people spoke and data was collected. The plans have been designed based on what the residents want to see and are now complete. The cost estimate is \$17 million dollars. The Township auditor has provided a sound financial plan for the payment of the park over time by retiring old debt, paying off other obligations that would be used to pay down the park development costs over the next 20 years or so. Over the years, there has been a lot of misinformation circulated about the park facilities and their operation costs. The Township has 20 years of data collected on the revenue and expense side of operating the pool and renting the pavilion and fields. When planning the rebuild of the facilities, the plan is to have buildings operational year-round and provide party rentals at all facilities and develop programs and events much like what's taking place at the Chrin Building and the Forks Community Center in Pennsylvania. These programs will pay for themselves. For example; Zumba, aqua Zumba, yoga, summer camp, after school events and programs, programs for seniors, Pilates, pickleball lessons and movies, just to name a few. The EMS building, if acquired, will house the Hunterdon EMS and possibly other squads that want to work in our area. There is space for senior programs and much more. There is also ample parking to offset the parking areas inside the complex. It is not going to take 18 years to build.

Motion to hold a public hearing by Council President Palitto, seconded by Councilman McQuade. All in favor.

Bob Bruce – 11 Harwich Road – Like many Lopat residents my concern is the impact this pool will have on property taxes. Before you vote on Ordinance 24-12 authorizing appropriations of \$17 million; \$16,150,000 raised in bonds and notes, there's pertinent questions on this decision that effects every Lopat resident. I attended Council meetings for three years now and the subject of whether the pool should be replaced first came up in Council meetings. Our previous Mayor, Mr. Mengucci and our current Councilman, Mr. Belcaro, not here tonight, spoke with concern about whether rebuilding this pool is a wise decision. Mayor Mengucci spoke about how the Township did this from the time this pool was built in 1967. He stated that since then, many people now have their own back yard pools and many residents of Lopat now live in cluster townhome developments that have pools. His feelings seem to be that the attraction of a town pool had significantly lessened from when it was built and thus poses a financial uncertainty due to lack of resident support. I couldn't locate census data for Lopat in 1970 but in 2000 Lopat was reported to have 5880 residents. As of 2022 that was reported to be 9421; a 60% increase. Councilman Belcaro has stated that the number of family members have declined at the time that the pool closed were only roughly 60; that would be 60 families for a reported 3987 households; roughly only 1.5% of households supporting the pool. Councilman Belcaro seemed to indicate, like Mayor Mengucci, that rebuilding the pool might not be such a sound

decision. On more than one occasion, we have been told that rebuilding this pool would not result in tax increases but when asked if tax increases would be necessary to maintain this rebuilt pool and park complex, Mayor Mengucci said yes, taxes would go up to maintain it. Mr. Mayor can you explain why Council feels there are enough families willing to support this pool, what revenue projections, if any, are the basis for that feeling, how many members are projected and what membership fees and given that the maintenance of this pool/park will raise taxes, can you explain how the Council arrived at that determination that taxes will be raised and how much of the tax increase is forecast?

Mayor Wright – All right. We had a survey – we had a park planner that cost \$60,000.

Bob Bruce – I was here.

Mayor Wright – Were you at the Zoom meetings when we had the Zoom meetings?

Bob Bruce – Yes, sir.

Mayor Wright – Did you do the survey?

Bob Bruce – I saw the survey.

Mayor Wright - 732 people took the survey, and have you visited the Lopat park in the last 12 months; 658 said yes. Which county parks have you been to? Lopatcong Park rated 90%; we have 9/10 thousand people; 700 people said they wanted this pool; well 658. We are going to listen to the people – what are we going do for our kids? Just because some people have pools and some developments have pools – what about the people who don't? A lot of people aren't given free pools, a lot of people don't have condos that have pools. They have regular homes, they struggle, they want their kids to have somewhere to go/do. Mr. Mooney said we can handle this without raising taxes; we are already paying everything to run the park now; we pay insurance, upkeep – new buildings will be a lot earlier to keep with what we're doing with the old buildings. I think we can do it; the Board thinks we can do it.

Mr. Bruce – And the maintenance sir?

Mayor Wright – We're doing the maintenance now.

Mr. Bruce – Yes, but I understood from Mr. Mayor Mengucci that

Mayor Wright – Mr. Mengucci's not the mayor now.

Mr. Bruce – Yes, I know but that's what he said.

Mayor Wright – We decided and we think that it can be done; it will be less for us to do. We won't have to do as much.

Mr. Bruce – Okay, to follow up now on the thing that I'm addressing and I understand this is the second hearing and these are all pertinent questions sir, so, I'm continuing to rebut what was said which is that 700 families out of roughly 9,000 residents so, you surveyed about 8%- you got answers from about 8% of the population.

Mayor Wright – We'll see what the rest of this night comes.

Mr. Bruce – Well, sir Mr. Mayor Mengucci had recommended before he stepped down that we have a non-binding referendum on the November ballot. That suddenly disappeared and was replaced by a survey. I submit to you sir that if instead of only getting responses from 700 you might have gotten more of a response had you put it out on the ballot as suggested.

Mayor Wright - We keep wasting time - families want the park, we can't keep playing games wait for another year people want the swim team back. The swim team wants to come back. How

many here don't want it; very few. Let's see by the end of the night; who's for and who's not. All right, I appreciate your time.

John Kecherson – 38 Jade Lane – So, the fact that we're going into debt for \$17 million dollars. I feel like the taxpayers of Lopatcong deserve to know the following – 1. - Council has represented that because of some bonds are being paid off, there will be no tax increases associated with borrowing \$17 million dollars which has always been stated in pretty big terms. When discussed at the June 15, 2022 Council meeting, the CFO stated that bonds that were originally \$5.6 million were being paid off in 2027 and that money could go towards the park. Specifically, how could pay off \$5.6 million dollars, offset the borrowing of \$17 million dollars to the point where it won't raise our taxes. No. 2 - there was a discussion during the March 26, 2024 special Council meeting regarding the 5% downpayment required for the park, and CFO stated we'll just have to increase taxes for the downpayment. If the CFO states taxes will need to be raised for the 5% downpayment, how does this jive with the Councils' position that taxes won't increase to pay for the park. No. 3 - according to the park master plan, the pool and park will cost more than \$18 million dollars and will take 15 to 18 years to complete. Was this information provided to Lopatcong taxpayers during the park meetings or was the public simply told in big terms that the park can be built without raising taxes? No. 4 - as Mayor Mengucci stated multiple times that the park and pool could be built without raising taxes but taxes would definitely increase in order to maintain and staff the park. During the previous Council meeting Beth talked about an office for the park manager, office space for something like 6 to 8 lifeguards, so prior to going into debt for \$17 million dollars, what will the tax increase be to maintain and staff the park and 5. - as Mayor Mengucci argued against the pool stating that because of the declining membership the pool had lost money for years. During June 15, 2022 special Council meeting also argued against the pool noting the pool would benefit about 60 families. According to the park master plan, the pool portion of the park is going to cost us \$9.6 million dollars. Does the Council truly feel that it's worth going into \$9.6 million in debt to benefit 60 families. To be clear, I'm not against having a nice park and pool. What I am against is Council taking on massive debt on the taxpayer's behalf for something that is not needed but only nice to have. Hopefully, the Council can answer these questions honestly and thoroughly but if not, you owe it to the people you represent and vote no until such time as honest and thorough answers can be provided.

Mayor Wright – I know that Mr. Mooney and Kim, our CFO

CFO Browne – You made a comment about the CFO saying about increasing the budget, that was to increase the Capital Improvement Fund so we would have enough money for the downpayment which that occurred in 2023; cause we have to put 5% down.

Mr. Kecherson – This was from the special meeting this month, back in March of this year.

CFO Browne – Right, so, that's what we did last year actually to come up with most of the down payment for that.

Mr. Kecherson – But you said, in March of this year, we'll just have to increase taxes – I just watched the video today.

CFO Browne- Right, but that might have been having to do with the fire truck

Mr. Kecherson – No, no – it was specifically for the down payment of the pool. I actually recorded it; I can play it for you if you like.

CFO Browne – Well, I know that the in 2023 we raised that money in the Capital Improvement Fund for this.

Mr. Kecherson – But in 2024 you said we're short, we're just going to have to increase taxes. It's on the video.

John Mooney – Auditor – If, I may, if that was said, I want' available at that meeting. What we did last year in the 2023 budget was we utilized more surplus, more fund balance that the town had on hand to bring into the budget to increase the Capital Improvement Fund so, that we did not increase taxes last year solely for the purpose of raising the Capital Improvement Fund which is the downpayments that comes up, you know that's the difference between the \$17 million and the \$16,125,000 that you're going to borrow. Back in March of 2023, we were tasked with doing projections at different intervals; one was at \$15 million, one was at \$18 million and one was at \$20 million over a 20-year period and a 25-year period based upon bond counsels' suggestion of the useful life of the building. The useful life of the building has come in at 17.3 years, so, the projection is a little bit off, but theoretically, you are raising within your budget on an annual basis \$1.7 million dollars to paydown existing debt service. By the time these bonds would hit and you'd be paying them back, those bonds that you have now, you have \$500,000 of serial bonds which is permanent debt that has a structured annual payoff and you also have bond anticipation notes for roughly \$4 million dollars which are for the roads and various equipment. If you stay on track of where you are now and add no other existing debt, that's the key, you'll be able to pay this \$16.1 million dollars off using the \$1.7 million dollars that you put in the budget annually, as it is, all right, that money will not go away that will stay in the budget but instead of paying existing debt down, now that goes towards paying off the park bonds and it's a blend of municipal debt, municipal tax and open space tax. This is an open space project. Currently, you're using \$200,000 a year from open space to pay down your existing bonds so, nothing's going to change as far as where the money can be raised. It can be done and the models that we've done have proven that but it is a matter of your interest rate. When we did the projections, we projected interest to be 4.25%; now as, you know, inflation has gone through the roof and we could see another tax increase a tax increase from the Feds, interest rates could go up and there could be a potential interest issue that you're going to have to deal with. Bond Counsel has told us, we had an issue recently, when it went for 4.1% so that's lower than what we were projecting so in that case we would do better than what the projections were showing but everything that we've seen in our projections show that if you keep \$1.7 million dollars in your budget on an annual basis, not only will you pay off the existing debt that you have, but you'll also be able to pay off this debt for the pool without increasing taxes. At the end, if the interest rate goes up or if you go and you authorize more debt, that could factor in and increase taxes but as it stands now, where you are at, that debt that's falling off will be used to pay off this debt.

Mr. Kecherson – We're authorizing extra debt all the time it seems here.

CFO Browne – Well, the \$17 million means the total; doesn't mean, we're not going to borrow against that until we need it which you're talking next year and we won't borrow \$17 million.

Mr. Kecherson – Well if the park, according to the master plan, is going to cost \$18....

CFO Browne – But it's going to be in stages.

Mr. Kecherson – Sure, but it's still debt; you're still spending the money whether it's in stages or not.

Talking over each other

Mr. Kecherson – Ten years you're still going to have to pay for it.

Auditor Mooney – Right but if you're borrowing \$5 million dollars at a clip then you are paying interest on \$5 million in that first year not \$16 million dollars in that first year.

Anthony Perlingero 50 Kyle Drive – There is a lot of talk here about 17-year debt, 15-year debt; I can't believe for one second that we're not going to have something come up that we need right away; another fire truck or first aid squad; a building roof whatever; so, there's going to be additional debt which is going to incur higher taxes for all of us. My question to you is very

simply as this, people voted on the pool, why are we spending money for an entire park complex? Is it an all or nothing deal or can it be

Mayor Wright – They voted on the park not just the pool, it was the whole thing.

Anthony Perlingero – I personally don't think the entire project is necessary. If we want to go with the pool, let's go with the pool. I guess, I just don't see it.

Mayor Wright – Couple issues; like the baseball quad fields when they were put in, they were put in wrong; water goes back towards the home plates and it's all wrong back there. We have to get refreshment stands where they can make money so the LAA can make money and then rent which all helps pay the bills.

Anthony Perlingero – Being that there's so much confusion and there's so much animosity about spending the money; how about we have another special meeting where we have something to get the people within the community together instead of pushing them apart.

Mayor Wright – We had, how many meetings did we have?

Clerk Dilts – We had at least two public meetings and they were by Zoom, so everyone could participate

Anthony Perlingero – That's a problem though.

Mayor Wright – Oh no, that's what people wanted.

Clerk Dilts – Then there were a lot of surveys and they were open for months; the surveys that's how the people were able to get their opinions on the record.

Dennis Drake – 6 Byron Drive – For everyone here, I'm the swim coach so I'm going to be pro pool. I just want to make a couple of big points. One – the pool is part of the park. In fact, it's the crown jewel of the park. The swim team has been around since 1969; the year the pool opened. Since, that time, we've had 120/160 kids every single year to use the pool being on the swim team. Talking about 60 families; that's 60 Lopat families but the pool survives on more than just 60 families; there is hundreds of dollars every day coming in on daily gate fees, there's other people, other businesses, myself included, who might rent the pool and use it for other things and on top of that, there is lifeguard classes, CPR classes, first aid classes, triathletes train there, Marine troops train there – I know so because I train them when they're getting ready to go into the Navy or Marines, there is numerous senior and aquatic, adult aquatic classes – Aqua Zumba, Aqua yoga – there's a summer camp there. The kids from the summer camp, there's at least 100 of them in addition to the 120 on the swim team that use the pool, boy scouts use the pool for their swimming requirements. The other thing is too the pool is part of the park; we are not doing this ala cart. I think it makes no sense to do this ala cart. Are we going to have a separate vote on soccer fields. There is only 40 families in Lopatcong that use the soccer fields. Are we going to have a separate vote on the football field, a separate vote on the walking track because maybe, I go to Lopat park and I don't see two people at a time actually walking around when I go so, maybe that's not worth it. The whole point is, anytime, you going to invest something in a community center, there's always going to be a minority of people that use it but, it's a community center. It's worth it. The other thing is to, the pool survived because of all the outside support that we got. This is a rare opportunity; it's one of the few times, one of the few resources where you will have hundreds of people from Alpha, from Greenwich, from Harmony, from Phillipsburg – they come and they pay us, use their finances to support our community centers. I mean if you went to Alpha and said to the population of Alpha and Harmony can give us \$30,000 a year of your taxpayer money to support our pool, they'd say no, but if you just open up the pool for those people to join, they will join. A lot of our budget was from outside support so, the pool is and the park itself, because of its location, is a community regional center that we actually get the biggest benefit from here in Lopatcong. Something else too, the \$16 million is not all actually for the pool, that is to pay for the entire park. In terms of the pool budget, most

years the pool broke even or made a little bit of money. I know so, because several times that I asked Beth for the numbers; the last year the pool was open it made \$12,000.00. So, the pool doesn't lose money, but in terms of its base operating budget like the lifeguards it has to hire, managers to hire; the pool covers its own costs. So, the pool made about \$120,000 and to run it costs about \$120,000 so the pool isn't losing money every year; it is a great community resource that both seniors and youth and everybody in-between uses and it actually acts as a regional center. It really highlights Lopatcong and we actually have other communities supporting our pool. Out of \$16 million, how much is the pool?

Mr. Kecherson - \$9.6.

Dennis Drake - One of the things to consider is you can't just leave the pool sitting there like that. You are going to have to remove all that cement, all that plumbing, probably cost \$3 to \$4 million to total clear out that. So, the point is \$2.2 and we get nothing but grass or we pay \$9 million and we get a community resource center for everybody that is well worth it. I'm in favor of youth sports. I'm in favor of a community center. I'm in favor of Lopatcong. To me, that's all worth it. It's not like we are increasing debt, we are not, right, we are shifting the expiring debt.

Maryann Cobble – 1315 Belvidere Road – I've been a resident since 1969 and I've always enjoyed my proximity to the park. I remember when our kids used to go up to the pool every day. I don't have full knowledge of the numbers and the spending but if I remember correctly like you said, the pool and a lot property was given to the Township so I wonder how the debt would be, I mean how much would the property be worth once the improvements are made. I mean that's got to be a big number.

Mayor Wright – It's going to help the homes in the area also.

Maryann Cobble – Yeah and I agree with the gentleman that was just up here; what happens if we don't do anything? I mean there won't be any community center.

Mayor Wright – You are giving nothing to residents.

Maryann Cobble – I don't think you can sit by and not do anything.

Mayor Wright - We will be giving nothing to the residents. Thank you, Maryann. Anyone else, please.

Judy Liptak – Kyle Drive – My statement this evening is solely my opinion and not that of any other organization. Tonight, I have a few questions I hope Council will take the time to answer this evening. I'm not against a beautiful park for our community but I have a strong opposition to spending \$17 million on a park without a public vote. What happened to that proposal to have this project put up for a vote that will give us the true analysis of who is in favor and not in favor of this project. Why I understand the importance of recreational facilities for our community, it comes down to wants and needs like any sound budget should have. I believe that the allocation of such a large sum of money for this project is not justified especially considering the current needs of our town in the current park usage. This is a want, not a need and during these economic times we need to be very weary of the debt that we take on. There are more pressing issues such as a fire truck that will cost us millions of dollars. Why are we using a bond to pay for a park when we need a fire truck. Why go into more debt for both. We also have pressing public safety issues and the education of our children that require immediate attention and funding. Our resources must be used in a way that benefits the entire community and addresses the most urgent needs. Despite what you are told we do not need a luxury park and pool with both a competition lap section and a lazy river for our property values. There are many wealthy communities in this area that do not have a \$17 million dollar park and pool. Furthermore, if before making such a decision, the tax payers should know how much it will actually cost to run and maintain the park not just open-ended answers of we already do it. This has a direct tax

impact. This is not a tax-free project like it has been proposed. What are those projected costs going to do? What are they going to be? We should have those numbers. What will the cost of membership be? Do we know what that is going to be? Will the pool be a true community pool or will there be out of state and out of town memberships, swim teams from various areas and camps that we're welcome in the past that made our pool more of a business than a community, place for our community to be? Why did the old pool lose all the membership? In the end because it was a business not just a community space. We should not be increasing to build a regional community center. Additionally, why aren't we using all the money this town is breaking in from all the warehouses we are forced to live with. We should be using our resources on public safety, education and infrastructure; all the things we need and all citizens will benefit from not just a small group of seasonal pool membership holders, out of state camps and members. In the end the town should look around at the many local parks in the surrounding areas that are beautiful and they don't have the luxury of having a pool on the taxpayers back. I urge this town council to reconsider this project, gather all financial facts, consider a townwide vote and explore more cost-effective alternatives that will provide recreational opportunities for our residents without placing such a heavy financial burden on our town. Thank you for considering my concerns.

Donna Schneider – 26 Meadowview – I had a statement but I just have more questions instead of saying a statement. You said about 8% of the people responded to the survey, correct? We have 9,000 residents so that's roughly like 8% right. So, 8% of the people responded and then you said just earlier well let's see how tonight goes. I don't see 8,400 people in the audience to determine the vote that would say the majority of the people want the pool so, you know, that's a big one. You know, you guys have said, Mayor Mengucci said the pool does not make money and whatever was said here despite that, it's true, the pool does not make money. That's not the most important thing but it is an important thing. You know, we have warehouses because Mr. Belcaro said people can't afford to live in Lopatcong. He would build warehouses everywhere he could because people can't afford to live here anymore. Yet now we have a \$17 million dollar park and pool project. It just doesn't make any sense. If people can't afford to live here, how are they going to deal with the burden of this because we already know taxes will go up. You have no reserves.

Mayor Wright – Did you hear any comment that we'll be a burden from our CFO or our auditor?

Donna Schnieder – It will be a burden.

Mayor Wright – Says you.

Donna Schneider - Because taxes go up - because it was just determined and excuse me, I don't need your sarcasm.

Mayor Wright - Well, you're telling me, you're giving me your opinion, that's all it is

Donna Schneider – No. Mr. Mooney just said that the taxes will go up if you have any more debt which you probably will have, which means your taxes will go up.

Mayor Wright - To what, it will go up 2 cents – look what we've been doing with this town. We already have a firetruck in the works everything is going well. By next year, everything will be done.

Donna Schneider - Everything, nothing else will break in the Township.

Mayor Wright – We have rules and we have regulations we have to follow. We can't just say, hey guess what here's \$2.8 million for a fire truck; we have to follow rules. I don't know where you get your information. You're out there telling people that what we're saying here is not true.

Donna Schneider - Yes, it is

Mayor Wright - No, it's not.

Donna Schneider - Yes, it is

Mayor Wright - You know the pool makes no money?

Donna Schneider - Yes, I do

Mayor Wright - Where's your proof?

Donna Schneider - I did, I had it.

Mayor Wright - You had it

Donna Schneider -Yes, I know you're saying is a liar because he said the pool made no money.

Mayor Wright - You're making a statement

Donna Schneider - That's right because the mayor before you made the same statement and you sat there and said nothing. You didn't say how'd you know Mr. Mengucci.

Mayor Wright - I had no idea

Donna Schneider - Right, but then, so then don't say I don't have any idea.

Mayor Wright - But you're telling people what the truth is you're saying

Donna Schneider -Yes, because Mr. Mengucci said yes, your taxes will go up to maintain the pool. That was a definite; he said that was a definite your taxes will go up to maintain the pool, not to build it, to maintain it.

Talking over each other

Donna Schneider – Well, to maintain it. Well, it's on the video so you can go watch it. It's on the video

Mayor Wright – I watched January 17th and thought it was fabulous.

Donna Schneider – I remember that. Yeah, also one more thing you have sidewalks in disrepair, you've got roads in disrepair; this place is a disaster; your infrastructure is a mess.

Mayor Wright - We've done more roads and sidewalks fixed more than anybody has. This Council in the last how many years; 12 years.

Donna Schneider - Who fixed the sidewalks, the town?

Mayor Wright - We've got grants, yeah, we're getting paid for it so it doesn't cost the taxpayer.

Donna Schneider - The sidewalks for the residents that they have to walk on in their developments; you're telling me that the town pays for those?

Mayor Wright - That's their own sidewalks

Donna Schneider - Exactly, but you plant the trees

Mayor Wright – So what, you want to pay for resident's sidewalks

Donna Schneider - Yeah, because you guys planted the trees. Your engineers you hired planted the trees

Councilman Marinelli – We didn't. Don't say we did; that was done 20 years ago.

Mayor Wright - That was done 20 years ago

Donna Schneider - It doesn't matter when it was done. You are the Council representing it and those trees were not planted by our residents so,

Mayor Wright – Well, we're talking about the pool and the park.

Donna Schneider - Yeah, but we're also talking about the money.

Councilman Marinelli – That was Bob. Nothing you can do about it now.

Talking over reach other

Donna Schneider - But you can control it if you didn't spend \$17 million dollars on park and pool and you could just do it for less money so thank you.

Mayor Wright – Anybody else, please.

Councilman Marinelli – It said out on the thing that it was going to take 18 years to build this park and I don't know where they're getting this from. The engineer designs it. Once they break ground, what's it roughly going to be to build this park? Roughly.

Engineer Wisniewski – Sure, yeah, the anticipated, once we have the design completed and the schematic plans completed and once, we receive final authorization from Council, we're expecting, you know, once the final designs are completed and the project is bid and awarded, we're expecting a two-year construction schedule for this project.

Councilman Marinelli – So, I don't know where these people are putting this on the internet for 18 years.

Mr. Kecherson – That's in the park master plan, that's in the Park Master Plan – you ought to take a look at it. I can give you a copy.

Councilman Marinelli – I don't need it sir. They might be doing more work on it, maybe adding things to the park; maybe they're going to do things but the park that they're going to build, once they break down, is roughly two years.

Engineer Wisniewski - The intention is two years. I think the initial park master plan had outlined improvements being phased over a longer period of time so, I don't know that's the approach of this Council to phase it over a very extended period as was presented originally in that Master Plan.

Mr. Bruce – There was five, phase was delayed for the playground – is that not the case now sir? That's all going to be done in one phase?

Mayor Wright – I think that's the second phase.

Engineer Wisniewski – That will be the second phase but the Township has received a grant for the playground as well so those funds need to be expended within two years as part of the grant agreement with the NJDCA so that will be, that has to be implemented as part of this phase of the work otherwise, the \$100,000, just under a \$100,000 of what we received will be lost so we can't delay that.

Councilman Marinelli – Again, just my opinion, I'm going on 61, I lived in this town for 55 years, I coached in this town, I worked in this town all my life, as a police officer and chief, I'd rather have the kids some place to go to that park and that pool then hanging out in the streets or getting in trouble. Now, do you want to be P'burg where they hang out in streets where they have to worry about the cars and everything else or do you want to give them some place safe to be? You can't tell me that none of you have been up there during the fall or spring during any type of sport and see how crowded that park gets. I coached football there; it's amazing, soccer must have 500 kids playing out there. Probably some of your kids and yet here you are complaining about it. I agree it is a big number; it is, but you know what, that's what it takes to build it and again, that's just my opinion.

Council President Palitto – As a Council, our ultimate goal is to serve Lopatcong for the benefit of all its residents. I believe the new pool and park renovation will help us achieve our goal. As we previously mentioned, putting in a new pool and renovating the park for no additional cost to the taxpayers what we will bring is activities for all resident's interests. At our recent recreation meeting, I asked about activities for seniors. I explained that right now we do not really have facilities to provide such activities but with the new pool/park renovation, activities will be available for seniors as well as many other interest groups in town. We know residents have concerns about costs but once the new pool and park renovations are completed; first, we have money in our budget for some of these costs, further, I believe these new opportunities and activities that will become available will help offset these costs. As I often say, recreation is not just for kids and it's not just for sports. The pool and park should be for the enjoyment to all of Lopatcong that's why I believe the best way to achieve our goals, is to proceed with the new pool and park renovation.

Councilman McQuade – Mayor, I grew up in Phillipsburg and moved here in 1993; been here for 33 years. The park and the pool was the focal point of this town for many, many years; throughout my whole life actually. When I was a young boy, I used to come to this park as opposed to my own park in Phillipsburg. This is the focal point and just like the mayor said and we rely on our financial people to tell us what's our best course of action... and they've given us very good sound advice. I'm an advocate of the park. I'm going to vote for this park including the pool. I'm going to echo the sentiment of the mayor and our financial people as well as Mr. Drake who said it eloquently, there is no better way that could be said by Mr. Drake; it is the reason why we should have this pool. That's all I have to say.

Mayor Wright – You have a comment? Come on up to the mic. and state your name please.

Lyn Strouse – 110 S. Sixth Street – How long did it construct the existing playing fields and walking trail? I know the contractor that did it, Bob Viersma. He did okay. It was over two years all right so, I think your construction estimate of two years to build everything is way off base. I don't see it getting done for four years; can't work in the wintertime, got mud, everything else. There's a lot of contingencies that come up. I don't see it happening I've been in construction all my life I built many communities. It's not going to happen.

Councilman Marinelli – Still a far cry from 18, isn't it?

Lyn Strouse – I never said anything about 18; I could care less about that but I'm just saying let's just be a little bit more accurate.

Councilman Marinelli – That's your opinion. You're right, they're contingencies. You can't lean on the weather; a lot of things. So, let's be honest; adults are saying that it can't be two years; there might be contingencies where it's four years but that's not our fault. That's the weather.

Lyn Strouse – But don't say it's going to be done in two years.

Engineer Wisniewski – It's not two years from tonight.

Councilman Marinelli – It's two years from breaking ground.

Lyn Strouse – I understand that. I don't see it being done in two years and these people, you're saying that, and they're going to expect it, it's wrong. Thank you.

Mayor Wright – Thank you. I have one more, quick thing; I got an email last night from a gentleman who asked to have his voice heard. "Mayor Wright, I am unable to attend the meeting tomorrow but would like to voice my support for the project. I've always believed that if you are not investing in a town, it is slowly dying. While nobody likes their taxes to go up, I believe the cost of a bond on our taxes, would be well worth the investment for many years to come. Thank you for your vision and desire to make Lopatcong Township a place people will want to invest

and move to. That was from Mr. Terry Lawler from the Township. Anyone else? Any other comments.

Motion to close the public hearing by Council President Palitto, seconded by Councilman Marinelli. All in favor.

ORDINANCE NO. 24-12

BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$17,000,000 FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO LOPATCONG PARK IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, IN THE COUNTY OF WARREN, NEW JERSEY AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$16,150,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR FINANCING PART OF THE APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ORDAINED, BY THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, IN THE COUNTY OF WARREN, NEW JERSEY (not less than two-thirds of all members thereof affirmatively concurring) AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 12:

The improvement described in Section 3 of this Bond Ordinance (the "Improvement") is hereby authorized to be undertaken by the Township of Lopatcong, in the County of Warren, New Jersey (the "Township") as a general improvement. For the said Improvement there is hereby appropriated the amount of \$17,000,000. Such sum includes the sum \$850,000 as the down payment (the "Down Payment") required by the Local Bond Law of the State of New Jersey, constituting Chapter 2 of Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes, as amended and supplemented (the "Local Bond Law"). The Down Payment is now available by virtue of provision in one or more previously adopted budgets for down payments or capital improvement purposes.

SECTION 13:

In order to finance the additional cost of the Improvement not covered by application of the Down Payment, negotiable bonds of the Township are hereby authorized to be issued in the principal amount of \$16,150,000 pursuant to the provisions of the Local Bond Law (the "Bonds"). In anticipation of the issuance of the Bonds and to temporarily finance said Improvement or purposes, negotiable bond anticipation notes of the Township are hereby authorized to be issued in the principal amount not exceeding \$16,150,000 pursuant to the provisions of the Local Bond Law (the "Bond Anticipation Notes" or "Notes").

SECTION 14:

(a) The Improvements hereby authorized and the purposes for the financing of which said obligations are to be issued is for improvements to Lopatcong Park, which includes but is not limited to, pool and bath house, four season pavilion, field house, concessions stand, open air pavilion and site work, including all work and materials necessary therefor and incidental thereto, all as shown on and in accordance with the plans and specifications therefor on file in the Office of Engineering.

(b) The estimated maximum amount of Bonds or Notes to be issued for the purpose of financing a portion of the cost of the Improvement is \$16,150,000.

(c) The estimated cost of the Improvement is \$17,000,000 which amount represents the initial appropriation made by the Township.

SECTION 15:

All Bond Anticipation Notes issued hereunder shall mature at such times as may be determined by the municipal finance officer of the Township (the "Chief Financial Officer"); provided that no Note shall mature later than one year from its date. The Notes shall bear interest

at such rate or rates and be in such form as may be determined by the Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer shall determine all matters in connection with Notes issued pursuant to this ordinance, and the signature of the Chief Financial Officer upon the Notes shall be conclusive evidence as to all such determinations. All Notes issued hereunder may be renewed from time to time subject to the provisions of Section 8(a) of the Local Bond Law. The Chief Financial Officer is hereby authorized to sell part or all of the Notes from time to time at public or private sale and to deliver them to the purchasers thereof upon receipt of payment of the purchase price plus accrued interest from their dates to the date of delivery thereof. The Chief Financial Officer is directed to report in writing to the Township Council of the Township at the meeting next succeeding the date when any sale or delivery of the Notes pursuant to this ordinance is made. Such report must include the amount, the description, the interest rate and the maturity schedule of the Notes sold, the price obtained and the name of the purchaser.

SECTION 16:

The capital budget of the Township is hereby amended to conform with the provisions of this Ordinance to the extent of any inconsistency herewith. The resolution in the form promulgated by the Local Finance Board showing full detail of the amended capital budget and capital program as approved by the Director, Division of Local Government Services, Department of Community Affairs, State of New Jersey is on file with the Township Clerk and is available for public inspection.

SECTION 17:

The following additional matters are hereby determined, declared, recited and stated:

(a) The Improvement described in Section 3 of this Bond Ordinance is not a current expense, and is a capital improvement or property that the Township may lawfully make or acquire as general improvements, and no part of the cost thereof has been or shall be specially assessed on property specially benefited thereby.

(b) The period of usefulness of the Improvement, within the limitations of the Local Bond Law, taking into consideration the respective amounts of all obligations authorized for such purpose, according to the reasonable life thereof computed from the date of the Bonds authorized by this Bond Ordinance, is 17.37 years.

(c) The Supplemental Debt Statement required by the Local Bond Law has been duly prepared and filed in the office of the Township Clerk and a complete executed duplicate thereof has been filed in the office of the Director, Division of Local Government Services, Department of Community Affairs, State of New Jersey. Such statement shows that the gross debt of the Township, as defined in the Local Bond Law, is increased by the authorization of the Bonds and Notes provided in this Bond Ordinance by \$16,150,000 and the obligations authorized herein will be within all debt limitations prescribed by the Local Bond Law.

(d) An aggregate amount not exceeding \$2,500,000 for items of expense listed in and permitted under Section 20 of the Local Bond Law is included in the estimated cost of the Improvements, as indicated herein.

SECTION 18:

Any funds or grant monies received for the purpose described in Section 3 of this Ordinance shall be used for financing said Improvement by application thereof either to direct payment of the cost of said Improvement or to the payment or reduction of the authorization of the obligations of the Township authorized therefor by this Bond Ordinance. Any such funds received may, and all such funds so received which are not required for direct payment of the cost of said Improvement shall, be held and applied by the Township as funds applicable only to the payment of obligations of the Township authorized by this Bond Ordinance.

SECTION 19:

The full faith and credit of the Township are hereby pledged to the punctual payment of the principal of and interest on the obligations authorized by this Bond Ordinance. The obligations shall be direct, unlimited obligations of the Township, and the Township shall be obligated to levy

ad valorem taxes upon all the taxable property within the Township for the payment of the obligations and the interest thereon without limitation of rate or amount.

SECTION 9:

The Chief Financial Officer of the Township is hereby authorized to prepare and to update from time to time as necessary a financial disclosure document to be distributed in connection with the sale of obligations of the Township and to execute such disclosure document on behalf of the Township. The Chief Financial Officer is further authorized to enter into the appropriate undertaking to provide secondary market disclosure on behalf of the Township pursuant to Rule 15c2-12 of the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "Rule") for the benefit of holders and beneficial owners of obligations of the Township and to amend such undertaking from time to time in connection with any change in law, or interpretation thereof, provided such undertaking is and continues to be, in the opinion of a nationally recognized bond counsel, consistent with the requirements of the Rule. In the event that the Township fails to comply with its undertaking, the Township shall not be liable for any monetary damages, and the remedy shall be limited to specific performance of the undertaking.

SECTION 20:

This Bond Ordinance constitutes a declaration of official intent under Treasury Regulation Section 1.150-2. The Township reasonably expects to pay expenditures with respect to the Improvement prior to the date that Township incurs debt obligations under this Bond Ordinance. The Township reasonably expects to reimburse such expenditures with the proceeds of debt to be incurred by the Township under this Bond Ordinance. The maximum principal amount of debt expected to be issued for payment of the cost of the Improvement is \$16,150,000.

SECTION 21:

This Bond Ordinance shall take effect 20 days after the first publication thereof after final adoption, as provided by the Local Bond Law.

TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

PUBLIC NOTICE

BOND ORDINANCE STATEMENTS AND SUMMARIES

The bond ordinance, the summary terms of which are included herein, has been finally adopted by the Township of Lopatcong, in the County of Warren, State of New Jersey on July 3, 2024 and the 20-day period of limitation within which a suit, action or proceeding questioning the validity of such ordinance can be commenced, as provided in the Local Bond Law, has begun to run from the date of the first publication of this statement. Copies of the full ordinance are available at no cost and during regular business hours, at the Clerk's office for members of the general public who request the same. The summary of the terms of such bond ordinance follows:

Title: Bond Ordinance Providing An Appropriation Of \$17,000,000 For Improvements To Lopatcong Park In And By The Township Of Lopatcong, In The County Of Warren, New Jersey And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$16,150,000 Bonds Or Notes Of The Township For Financing Part Of The Appropriation

Purpose(s): For improvements to Lopatcong Park, which includes but is not limited to, pool and bath house, four season pavilion, field house, concessions stand, open air pavilion and site work, including all work and materials necessary therefor and incidental thereto, all as shown on and in accordance with the plans and specifications therefor on file in the Office of Engineering.

Appropriation: \$17,000,000

Bonds/Notes Authorized: \$16,150,000

Grants (if any) Appropriated: N/A

Section 20 Costs: \$2,500,000

Useful Life: 17.37 Years

M. Beth Dilts, Clerk

Motion to adopt this Ordinance by Mayor Wright, seconded by Councilman Marinelli. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto, Mayor Wright.

NAYS: None

Ordinance No. 24-13 – Second reading and public hearing to Amend Chapter 199 of the Code of the Township of Lopatcong entitled “Stormwater Management” to Reflect Amendments to the New Jersey Stormwater Management Rules at N.J.A.C. 7:8, adopted July 17, 2023. Motion to hold a public hearing by Council President Palitto, seconded by Mayor Wright. All in favor. No

comments from the public. Motion to close the public hearing by Councilman Marinelli, seconded by Councilman McQuade. All in favor.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-13

SECOND NOTICE OF AN ORDINANCE

NOTICE is hereby given that a regular meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey, held on Wednesday, July 3, 2024 at the Municipal Building, 232 South Third Street, Phillipsburg, New Jersey, the following Ordinance was presented and passed on the final reading. The Ordinance was then ordered to be published according to law by title only.

Ordinance to Amend Chapter 199 of the Code of the Township of Lopatcong Entitled “Stormwater Management” to Reflect Amendments to the New Jersey Stormwater Management Rules at N.J.A.C. 7:8, adopted July 17, 2023

Said Ordinance may be read and inspected at any time at the Office of the Municipal Clerk, Lopatcong Township Municipal Building, 232 S. Third Street, Phillipsburg, New Jersey Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 4:30 pm.

Margaret B. Dilts, MMC

Motion to adopt this Ordinance on first reading by Councilman Palitto, seconded by Councilman McQuade. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto, Mayor Wright.

NAYS: None

New Business:

Ordinance No. 24-14 – First Reading to Amend, Revise and Supplement Chapter 227 Section 20A “Vehicles Over Designated Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) Excluded from Certain County Streets” to Include Additional County Roads.

ORDINANCE: 2024-14

**ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN,
STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 227
SECTION 20A “VEHICLES OVER DESIGNATED GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT
RATING (GVWR) EXCLUDED FROM CERTAIN COUNTY STREETS” TO INCLUDE
ADDITIONAL COUNTY STREETS**

WHEREAS, The Township Council of the Township of Lopatcong previously passed ordinance 2023- excluding vehicles over gross vehicle weight ratings of 4 tons and 10 tons from certain County streets within the Township to protect the health and safety of the residents of the Township; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 39:4-197.2 provides that any municipality, which maintains a paid police force, may, by ordinance, resolution, or regulation, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 39:4-197 and with the consent of the governing body of the County, regulate traffic and parking along and upon any County road or part thereof, lying within its corporate limits, in the same manner and to the same extent that is authorized by law to regulate the same upon municipal roads and streets; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council wishes to amend Chapter 227 section 20A to include additional County roads, specifically County Route 519 located within the Township of Lopatcong, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 39:4-197; and

WHEREAS, the County of Warren passed County Resolution 658-23 excluding vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating exceeding 13 tons from Country Route 519; and

WHEREAS, the municipality shall be responsible for maintenance, replacement and conformance of such signs and traffic control devices, except that the municipality shall be required to notify and obtain the approval of the County Engineer as to the placement and location of any such signs and traffic control devices prior to installation.

WHEREAS, This Ordinance shall become effective upon final adoption, publication of the requisite public notice by the municipality and erection and placement of all signs, traffic control devices and traffic control signals in the locations where the regulation is effective as required by law; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council believes that such an amendment to Chapter 227 is in the best interest of the Township and its residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Council of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that the above recitals are hereby incorporated by reference; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED by the Township Council of the Township of Lopatcong that Section 227 Section 20A entitled “Vehicles Over Designated Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) Excluded from Certain County Streets” is amended as follows:

§ 227-20A. Vehicles Over Designated Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) Excluded From Certain County Streets.

SECTION 1

Vehicles over the gross vehicle weight rating are hereby excluded from the streets or parts of streets described except for the pickup and delivery of materials on such streets:

Name of Street	GVWR (tons)_	Limits
Liberty Road (CR 637)	10	Between CR 519 and NJ 57
Belvidere Road (CR 646)	4	Between Harmony Township boundary line and Lincoln Road
CR 519	13	Mile marker 42.05 to mile marker 29.95 at Route 57

SECTION 2

Severability. The various parts, sections and clauses of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable. If any part, sentence, paragraph, section or clause is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Ordinance shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 3

Repealer. Any ordinances or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed as to their inconsistencies only.

SECTION 4

Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication as provided by law.

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the foregoing Ordinance was introduced to pass on first reading at a regular meeting of the Council of the Township of Lopatcong held on Wednesday, July 3, 2024, and ordered published in accordance with the law. Said Ordinance will be considered for final reading and adoption at a regular meeting of the Township Council to be held on Wednesday, August 7, 2024 at 7:30 PM or as soon thereafter as the Township Council may hear this Ordinance at the Municipal Building located at 232 So. Third St., Phillipsburg, New Jersey, at which time all persons interested may appear for or against the passage of said Ordinance.

Margaret B. Dilts, MMC

Motion to approve on first reading by Council President Palitto, seconded by Councilman Marinelli. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto, Mayor Wright.

NAYS: None

Ordinance No. 24-15 – First Reading to Amend and Supplement Section 173-191 “Information to be Given to All Tenants”, Require Landlords to Provide Hard Copies of All Notices Pertaining to the Lease to Tenants and Create Section 173-19.2 entitled “Property Management Companies” Imposing the Requirements of the Chapter onto Property Management Companies Retained by Landlords.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-15

ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING SECTION 173-191 “INFORMATION TO BE GIVEN TO ALL TENANTS” OF CHAPTER 173 – RENT CONTROL – TO REQUIRE LANDLORDS TO PROVIDE HARD COPIES OF ALL NOTICES PERTAINING TO THE LEASE AGREEMENT(S) TO THE TENANTS AND TO CREATE SECTION 173-19.2 ENTITLED “PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANIES” IMPOSING THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CHAPTER ONTO PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANIES RETAINED BY LANDLORDS

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren, State of New Jersey has been made aware that residential landlords are urging tenants to register for online portals to receive necessary notices pertaining to established lease agreements; and

WHEREAS, certain residential tenants are elderly and do not have readily-available access to the internet; and

WHEREAS, this limited internet access inhibits certain residential tenants from being made aware of certain impacts on their financial obligations; and

WHEREAS, to ensure that all relevant notices are provided, and that tenants have the opportunity to review same, the Township Council wishes to impose a requirement onto all residential landlords that hard copies of the necessary notices are provided to the affected tenants; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council believes that such amendment is in the best interest of the Township and its residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Council of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that Section 173-19.1 of Chapter 173 – Rent Control – be amended and supplemented to require landlords to provide hard copies of all notices pertaining to the lease to the tenant and that Section 173-19.2 entitled “Property Management Companies” be created to impose same requirements onto property management companies, as follows:

SECTION I:

Additions to this Chapter shall be delineated by underlined text, thusly.

Deletions to this Chapter shall be delineated by strikethrough text, ~~thusly~~.

§ 173-19.1. Information to Be Given to All Tenants.

A landlord renting to a tenant shall be required to provide a hard copy of the lease to the tenant when the parties first enter into a lease, when the landlord and tenant enter into a new lease, or when the landlord and tenant enter into a lease renewal. The landlord shall further provide to the tenant hard copies of all notices pertaining to the lease. This shall include but not be limited to notices regarding rent, pet fees, late fees, and insurance premiums. The failure of the landlord to do so shall constitute a violation of this Chapter.

§ 173-19.2. Property Management Companies.

Property Management Companies retained by landlords shall be subject to the same requirements of this Section as the landlords.

SECTION II:

All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistencies.

SECTION III:

If any article, section, subsection, paragraphs, phrase or sentence is, for any reason, inconsistent with the Code of the Township of Lopatcong, or is held to be unconstitutional or invalid, said article, section, subsection, paragraph, phrase or sentence shall be deemed severable.

SECTION IV:

This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon final passage and publication as provided by law.

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the foregoing Ordinance was introduced to pass on first reading at a regular meeting of the Council of the Township of Lopatcong held on Wednesday, July 3, 2024, and ordered published in accordance with the law. Said Ordinance will be considered for final reading and adoption at a regular meeting of the Township Council to be held on Wednesday, August 7, 2024, at 7:30 PM, or as soon thereafter as the Township Council may hear this Ordinance, at the Municipal Building, 232 South Third Street, Phillipsburg, New Jersey, at which time all persons interested may appear for or against the passage of said Ordinance.

Margaret B. Dilts, MMC

Motion to adopt this Ordinance on first reading by Council President Palitto, seconded by Councilman McQuade. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto, Mayor Wright.

NAYS: None

Ordinance No. 24-16 – First reading to Establish Chapter 41 entitled “Personnel Policy and Practices” to Create Section 41-01 entitled “Anti-Nepotism Policy”.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-16

ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY ESTABLISHING CHAPTER 41 ENTITLED “PERSONNEL POLICY AND PRACTICES” OF THE LOPATCONG TOWNSHIP CODE TO CREATE SECTION 41-01 ENTITLED “ANTI-NEPOTISM POLICY”

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, seeks to provide fair and equal opportunities by developing and adopting sound personnel practices which are based upon merit and safeguard against the potential for undue influence and/or favoritism; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council has deemed it in the best interest of the public health, safety, and welfare to establish chapter, entitled “Personnel Policy and Practices” of the Code of the Township of Lopatcong to establish an anti-nepotism policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Council, Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren, State of New Jersey as follows:

SECTION 1:

Chapter 41 of the Code of the Township of Lopatcong, entitled “Personnel Policy and Practices” is hereby amended and supplemented by creating a new section, Section 41-1 entitled “Anti-Nepotism Policy” as follows:

§ 41-1.1 Title.

This Section shall be cited as the “Anti-Nepotism Policy” of the Township of Lopatcong.

§ 41-1.2 Purpose.

It is the purpose of this section to eliminate the potential for preferential treatment of relatives of the appointing authority, not to deprive any citizen of any equal opportunity for employment with the Township.

§ 41-1.3 Prohibited.

- A. The prohibitions set forth in this Section shall not apply to appointments to the various Boards, Commissions, and/or Ad Hoc Committees of the Town.
- B. This Section and the prohibition against certain hiring contained herein shall be applied prospectively only from the effective date of its enactment and shall not in any way be construed to prohibit or make unlawful any current employment relationship or situation or promotion of any person currently employed by the Town as of the effective date of this Section, which may technically be violative of the terms hereof but for its prospective application. For purposes of interpreting this Section, persons appointed to positions of employment with the Town for a set term shall be considered current employees, notwithstanding the fact that the term may have ended. Such persons holding positions of employment with the Town under a set term may be hired to any position in the Town, rehired, reappointed or promoted, as the case may be without violating this Section.

§ 41-1.4 Definitions.

As used in this Section, the following terms shall have the meaning indicated:

ELECTED OFFICIAL – An individual holding the position of Mayor or Township Councilman.

RELATIVE – A spouse, domestic partner, cohabitant, parent, child, adopted child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, first cousin, in-law, (applies to parents and siblings of a spouse), half-relative (applies to parents and siblings of a spouse), half-relative or step-relative (applies to parents and siblings), or a person with whom a significant committed relationship exists (living together for more than twelve (12) months).

DEPARTMENT HEAD, MANAGERIAL EXECUTIVE AND UNCLASSIFIED SUPERVISORY EMPLOYEE – Any employee of the Township having supervisory duties and powers over another employee(s) within the respective department of the Township.

§ 41-1.5 Restriction in Hiring, Promoting, and Supervision of Employees.

The following restrictions shall apply in the hiring and promotion of employees to employment positions for the Township of Lopatcong:

Hiring: Unless otherwise prohibited by law or New Jersey Department of Personnel Rules, but notwithstanding the terms of any collective bargaining agreement to the contrary:

- A. No person who is relative, as defined in Section 41-1.4, of an elected official, department head, managerial executive, or unclassified supervisory employee shall be appointed, hired, employed or permitted to work for the Township of Lopatcong in a career service position, as defined in the New Jersey Civil Service Act.
- B. No person who is a relative, as defined in Section 41-1.4, shall be employed by or transferred to a position of employment with the Township, where that person will be supervisor of or be supervised by another relative who is an existing employee within the same department
- C. Promotion. Notwithstanding the prospective application as to the remainder of this Chapter as described above, no elected official or supervisor, as defined in Section 41-1.4, in any department may participate in the promotion process or hiring process in that department of any existing employee who is a relative, as defined in Section 41-1.4, of such elected official or supervisor, as the case may be, unless otherwise required by law or New Jersey Department of Personnel Rules. Such elected official or supervisor shall abstain from participation in such personnel action as it applies to such relative.
- D. If an existing employee of the Town becomes subject to this policy because of changes in marital, domestic partner/cohabitant or relationship status, one of the related persons must resign their unclassified position within ninety (90) days.
- E. It shall be the affirmative duty of a related elected official, department head, managerial executive, unclassified supervisory employee, or employee to immediately disclose any circumstances which may constitute a violation of this policy. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary and/or legal action which can include removal from employment position.

§ 41-1.6 Current Employees

Except as may be otherwise expressly provided for herein, this Chapter shall not affect the employment of any present Township employee and/or any existing contractual obligations with employees by the Township of Lopatcong, nor shall this Chapter affect seasonal part-time employment. The application of this policy only applies prospectively to all individuals seeking employment with the Township of Lopatcong following the effective date of this Ordinance.

SECTION 2:

Severability. The various parts, sections and clauses of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable. If any part, sentence, paragraph, section, or clause is adjudged

unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder off this Ordinance shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 3:

Repealer. Any ordinances or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed as to their inconsistencies only.

SECTION 4:

Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication as provided by law.

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the foregoing Ordinance was introduced to pass on first reading at a regular meeting of the Council of the Township of Lopatcong held on Wednesday, July 3, 2024, and ordered published in accordance with the law. Said Ordinance will be considered for final reading and adoption at a regular meeting of the Township Council to be held on Wednesday, August 7, 2024 at 7:30 PM or as soon thereafter as the Township Council may hear this Ordinance at the Municipal Building located at 232 So. Third St., Phillipsburg, New Jersey, at which time all persons interested may appear for or against the passage of said Ordinance.

Margaret B. Dilts, MMC

Motion to adopt this Ordinance on first reading by Councilman Marinelli, seconded by Councilman McQuade. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto, Mayor Wright

NAYS: None

Consent Agenda:

Motion to adopt this Consent Agenda by Council President Palitto, seconded by Councilman McQuade. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President Palitto, Mayor Wright.

NAYS: None

R 24-101

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN AND
STATE OF NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING CONSENT AGENDA FOR COUNCIL'S
CONSIDERATION

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey do hereby approve and authorize a Consent Agenda to move routine items of business requiring no discussion; and

WHEREAS, there are listed Items one through three on the Consent Agenda.

1. Resolution - Authorize Redemption of Tax Sale Certificate No. 2022-006 on Block 12, Lot 7 in the amount of \$15,329.96, Premium \$16,000.00.
2. Resolution – Authorize Grant Application to the NJ Dept. of Transportation the Stryker's Road Phase I Improvement Project.
3. Approve Application to LGCCC for Bingo and Tricky Tray to be conducted by the Rotary Club of Phillipsburg.

CERTIFICATION

I, Margaret B. Dilts, Municipal Clerk of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by Council at a meeting held on Wednesday, June 5, 2024.

Margaret B. Dilts, MMC

Resolution No. 24-102 – Authorize Redemption of Tax Sale Certificate No. 2022-006 on Block 12, Lot 7 in the amount of \$15,329.96, Premium \$16,000.00.

R 24-102

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN AND
STATE OF NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING REDEMPTION OF TAX SALE CERTIFICATE
NO. 2022-006 ON BLOCK 12, LOT 7

WHEREAS, at the Lopatcong Township Municipal Tax Sale held on December 15, 2022 a lien was sold on Block 12, Lot 7 also known as 149 North Prospect Street for delinquent taxes; and

WHEREAS, this lien known as Tax Sale Certificate No. 2022-006 was sold to EVOLVE Bank and Trust and then assigned to fundpality II, LLC; and

WHEREAS, on June 12, 2024, the Certificate No. 2022-006 has been satisfied in the amount of \$15,329.96, Premium \$16,000.00.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED on this 3rd day of July 2024 that the Chief Financial Officer is authorized to issue a check in the amount of \$15,329.96, Premium \$16,000.00 for the redemption of Tax Sale Certificate No. 2022-006 to:

Fundpality II, LLC
100 N. LA Sallie, Suite 710
Chicago, IL 60602

CERTIFICATION

I, Margaret B. Dilts, Municipal Clerk of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct Resolution adopted by Council at a meeting held on Wednesday, July 3, 2024.

Margart B. Dilts, MMC

Resolution No. 24-103 – Authorize Grant Application to the NJ Dept. of Transportation the Stryker's Road Phase I Improvement Project.

R 24-103

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN AND
STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO AUTHORIZE GRANT APPLICATION WITH THE NEW
JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE STRYKERS ROAD PHASE I
IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey approve the submission of a grant application and execute a grant contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the Strykers Road Phase I Improvement Project; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Council of Lopatcong formally approves the grant application for the above stated project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor/Council and Clerk are hereby authorized to submit an electronic grant application identified as MA-2025-Strykers Road Phase I Improvement Project-00267 to the New Jersey Department of Transportation on behalf of the Township of Lopatcong.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor/Council and Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the Township of Lopatcong and that their signature constitutes acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approves the execution of the grant agreement.

CERTIFICATION

I, Margaret B. Dilts, Municipal Clerk of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by Council at a meeting held on Wednesday, July 3, 2024.

Margaret B. Dilts, MMC

Application Bingo/Tricky Tray – Approve application from Rotary Club of Phillipsburg.

Council Reports:

Councilman McQuade – Nothing additional.

Councilman Marinelli – No

Council President Palitto – Thanked the DPW for placing “No Littering” signs on Strykers Road and for cleaning up the branches from the storms recently. Community Day is scheduled for August 24th with a rain date of August 31st.

Mayor Wright – DPW does and continues to do a great job with the branches, trees and other debris related to recent storms. Mayor Wright noted that he has had a lot of phone calls recently regarding businesses that want to come into the town and will report back any information. The fire truck is on track at \$2.3 million dollars; high on priority list and will be moving forward with that. Had a call from people regarding placement of solar in the area and further information will be put forth when available.

Engineer Wisniewski – A grant application was filed last week with NJDOT local aid for Strykers Road Harmony Township line/Belview Road intersection to James Avenue – first phase which include sidewalk, curb ramps followed by milling and paving along the roadway. Jade Lane will be paved in the next couple of weeks.

Fire Chief LaFord – For the month of June, the Fire Dept. responded to 20 incidents with an average response time of 8 minutes; year-to-date 116 calls. Met with ISO who assists with insurance premiums by reviewing the fire suppression capabilities from a 6X to a 55X.

EMS Report – Month of June the Phillipsburg EMS ran 463 calls of which Lopatcong Township was 105. Year-to-date the call total is 2,703 of which Lopatcong was 713 – 26% of the call volume.

Brian Weeks – DPW Superintendent noted that the brush and tree limbs should be put out from the storm as soon as possible.

Department Reports - Council President Palitto made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Marinelli. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President McQuade, Mayor Wright

NAYS: None

Payment of Bills – Council President Palitto made a motion to approve the bills for payment, seconded by Mayor Wright. Roll call vote:

AYES: Councilman Marinelli, Councilman McQuade, Council President McQuade, Mayor Wright

NAYS: None

Public Comment:

Lyn Strouse – 110 S. Sixth Street – Lives next to Key City Diner for 43 years. February 7th went before Council to petition to have the dumpsters moved from the east end of the building to the west end of the building and he noted he was assured this would be done. He went to the Planning Board Meeting last week to have them moved. Planning Board Chairman said he did not want to do – he thought that was crazy. Double J can do what they want. Why was I assured at the Council Meeting of February 7th that they would be moved but they were not. Council President Palitto vacation of the paper street was not done. Owners of Key City are improving that situation with more frequent pickups and are enclosing the dumpsters and it was also said that it was not practical – safety of the people/vehicles. Attorney Lavery confirmed the Planning Board approved this. He also noted that Mr. Strouse should call the Board of Health. Attorney Lavery said the Council does not have the power to do that – only the Planning Board can.

Joan Pollock – 221 S. Sixth Street – She said she was representing the people of Sixth Street about the speeding. She came three years ago and since that time the situation is the same. She suggested that a stop sign be placed at every intersection on Cromwell Street. Mayor Wright indicated he would pass this information along to the Chief and get some more enforcement out there. Asked why the Zoning Office and the Animal Control Officer do not return phone calls.

John Betz – Thanked Council for bringing forth the ordinance 24-15. Mentioned the Rent Board Meeting is on July 18 – read a portion of the Constitution of America.

Donna Schneider – 26 Meadowview – Congratulated Terri and Patty on their new positions. Asked if there were plans for solar on any of the buildings? Clerk Dilts informed her that solar exists on the bathhouse building now. Where is the solar looking to go? Mayor Wright said he has no idea at this time. She went on to disagree with Mayor Wright's explanation of the content of an email sent by Bob Bruce.

Lori Ciesla – Was present to speak as the Warren County Commissioner and Liaison for Lopatcong first thanking the Mayor, Chief of Police and Clerk for their work on the Vehicle Weight Rating Ordinance as Lopatcong was the first to adopt this all the municipalities are using Lopatcong's ordinance as a template. The signs are up and fines are noted on the signs. Regarding the County Bicentennial and the semi-quincentennial of the Country, the County has joined Revolution New Jersey to be involved in the preparation of the 250th birthday of the Country as well as prepare for the County's Bi-Centennial celebration. On another note, the County provides a lot of services to

offer residents. There is a program “Hometown Hero Banners” around town that has been done in the area and would be a nice thing for Lopatcong since we are coming up on the 200 birth day of the County and the 250th birthday of the Country.

Harvey Walters – 325 S. Third St. Thanked Lori and Jim Mengucci their hard work here in Lopatcong.

John Kecherson – 38 Jade Lane – He noted that last month Bill Wright went on a tirade against a private citizen who dared to ask him to clarify the questionable hiring of an Allentown mayor as purchasing agent and to reinstate a meeting agenda item that would allow more transparency at town council. He accused Mayor Wright of making false accusations and that he threatened to have the person removed from the meeting. A video posted on Next Door was full of lies Mr. Kecherson said Mayor Wright had said. Mr. Kecherson also expressed comments and opinions on the job posting and award of purchasing agent job to Randy Piazza, Phillipsburg’s Mayor.

Judy Liptak – Kyle Drive – Statements she will make are hers and not of any other organization. She also made a statement of her interpretation of the heated discussion Mayor Wright had with Bob Bruce

Mayor Wright called for an adjournment of the meeting as both members of the public and Council engaged in a heated discussion, seconded by Councilman McQuade. All in favor.

Submitted by:

Margaret B. Dilts, MMC
Clerk/Administrator

William D. Wright
Mayor