

BOROUGH OF LAUREL SPRINGS  
REGULAR MEETING OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
MONDAY, August 9, 2021  
MAYOR THOMAS A. BARBERA PRESIDING

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG AND MOMENT OF SILENCE** was led by Mayor Barbera

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW** – Mayor Barbera stated that adequate notice of this meeting was given by emailing the Retrospect and the Courier-Post on January 5, 2021 and posting on the Borough Website and bulletin board in the Borough Hall.

**ROLL CALL** recorded as present: Cruz, DiGregorio, DiMarco, and Redstreak; absent: Riondino and DelPidio

**ENGINEER'S REPORT** – Jeff Hanson, Environmental Resolutions, Inc.

1. 2020 Road Improvement Program

NJDOT approved the combination of both the FY2019 and FY2020 projects together into one (1) bid package / contract. The bid opening was held on Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 2:00 PM. Recommendation for construction contract award will be made for the first September Governing Body meeting once the bids have been reviewed by the Borough Solicitor and CFO. It is anticipated that construction will be completed during the Fall of 2021 or Spring of 2022 depending upon the Contractor's schedule.

2. 2021 Road Improvement Program

In November, the Borough received correspondence from NJDOT awarding a FY2021 Municipal Aid Grant in the amount of \$174,930.00 for the reconstruction of Trenton Avenue and Virginia Avenue. The surveying work was started by ERI during the Week of August 2, 2021 and is anticipated to be completed on August 9, 2021. Once the base plan is completed, we will begin drafting the Construction Plans and Specifications for bidding of the project. It is anticipated that construction of the project will be done during the Spring / Summer of 2022.

3. FY2022 NJDOT Local Aid Grant Application

A grant application for the reconstruction of Poplar Avenue (Lindsay Avenue to West Elma Avenue) and Washington Avenue (Central Avenue to Chestnut Avenue) on June 30, 2021. We will apprise the Governing Body of any updates we receive with regard to the status of the application.

**OTHER PROJECTS**

4. 2020 Laurel Lake Dam Safety Inspection Report

We received correspondence dated March 23, 2021 from NJDEP Division of Dam Safety & Flood Engineering indicating that the 2020 Laurel Springs Dam Safety Inspection Report is satisfactory. The Borough is required to perform the minor maintenance and repairs detailed in that report as a condition of the DEP approval. The next report will be due in 2024.

5. Master Plan Re-Examination Report

ERI has revised the draft Master Plan Re-Examination Report as per the review by the Ordinance Review Subcommittee. The report will now be submitted to the Governing Body and the Combined Land Use Board for their consideration and comment prior to finalization and adoption.

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Councilman Redstreak questioned the drainpipe stormwater issue at Tomlinson and West Atlantic, to which Mr. Hanson responded that he is hopeful with two inlets and perforated pipe can capture the stormwater.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Work Session Meeting of July 12, 2021 - The motion to approve by Councilman Redstreak was seconded by Councilman Cruz, with Cruz, DiMarco, and Redstreak in favor, none opposed and DiGregorio abstaining.

**RESOLUTIONS**

- #076-2021 - AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AGREEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS SUBSEQUENT TO PUBLIC SALE AND PURCHASE OF BOROUGH-OWNED REAL PROPERTY KNOWN AS BLOCK 37, LOT 1.01, 908 STONE ROAD  
WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12-13 which authorizes the sale of real property not needed for public use, the Governing Body of the Borough of Laurel Springs determined that Block 37, Lot 1.01 was not necessary for public use and that said property would be of better value to the Borough as a privately-owned tax ratable; and  
WHEREAS, the Governing Body further resolved, subsequent to a Public Auction held on June 15, 2021, at which the minimum bid was not met. that it again be offered for public sale and that the minimum price for Block 37, Lot 1.01 be \$25,000.00; and  
WHEREAS, accordingly a Public Auction was held on August 3, 2021, and Joe Watson, of Laurel Springs Auto Service and Sales, 900 Stone Road, submitted a bid of \$25,000, which met the specified minimum bid, and at which no other bidders were present; and  
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Laurel Springs, County of Camden, State of New Jersey, accepts the bid of Joe Watson, Laurel Springs Auto Service and Sales, 900 Stone Road, Laurel Springs, NJ 08021 in the amount of \$25,000; and  
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Solicitor is hereby authorized to prepare any and all documents and agreements required to transfer ownership of 908 Stone Road, Block 37, Lot 1.01 from the Borough of Laurel Springs to Mr. Watson, and any modifications as may be agreed to by the Borough Solicitor, so long as said modifications do not change the fundamental intent set forth by Borough Council in Resolution 075-2021; and  
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Mayor, Borough Clerk, Borough Administrator, Chief Financial Officer and Borough Solicitor, and such other officials as may be necessary are hereby authorized to execute such closing documents as may be required to complete this transaction, including agreements of sale, deed, title company documents, closing statement, and other such necessary documents.
- The motion to approve by Councilman Redstreak was seconded by Councilman Cruz, with Cruz, DiMarco, Riondino, DelPidio and Redstreak in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.
- #077-2021 - TO EXTEND GRACE PERIOD FOR THIRD QUARTER 2021 TAXES  
WHEREAS, property taxes are payable on August 1, 2021; and  
WHEREAS, the Borough Tax Collector under normal circumstances mails tax bills prior to July 15 of each year; and  
WHEREAS, delays in the release of Certified Tax Rate precluded the Borough from printing the Tax Bills on a timely basis; and  
WHEREAS, it is the intention of the Borough Council to grant property owners adequate time to pay third quarter taxes due August 1, 2021.  
WHEREAS, the Final 2021/Preliminary 2022 Tax Bills (original) were mailed 7/23/2021.

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NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and the Council of the Borough of Laurel Springs, County of Camden, State of New Jersey that the Tax Collector is directed not to charge interest on third quarter taxes received by the close of business on Thursday, August 19, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Laurel Springs, County of Camden, State of New Jersey that the Tax Collector is directed to charge statutory interest from August 1, 2021, on all third quarter taxes received later than close of business on Thursday, August 19, 2021.

- The motion to approve by Councilman Redstreake was seconded by Councilman Cruz, with Cruz, DiMarco, Riondino, DelPidio and Redstreake in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.
- #078-2021 - RESCINDING RESOLUTION #072-2021 TO ESTABLISH AN ESTIMATED MUNICIPAL TAX LEVY PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 72, P.L. 1994

WHEREAS, Resolution #078-2021 was approved upon the motion of the of Councilman Redstreake, seconded by Councilman Cruz, with Cruz, DiMarco, Riondino, DelPidio and Redstreake in favor, none opposed and no abstentions; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Laurel Springs within the following week received the municipal Tax Rate from Camden County Board of Taxation allowing the Borough to mail the 2021 tax bills within an acceptable time frame nullifying the stated need of said resolution;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Laurel Springs that Resolution #072-2021 is hereby rescinded.

- The motion to approve by Councilman Redstreake was seconded by Councilman Cruz, with Cruz, DiMarco, Riondino, DelPidio and Redstreake in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.
- #079-2021 - AUTHORIZING THE PUBLICATION OF A NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD CONTRACT UNDER A CRANFORD COOPERATIVE PRICING AGREEMENT FOR ONE (1) 2021 FORD EXPLORER

WHEREAS, the Borough of Laurel Springs ("Laurel Springs" and/or "Borough") intends to participate in the Cranford Municipal Cooperative Pricing System, to purchase One (1) 2021 Ford Explorer Police 4D Utility AWD; and

WHEREAS, the Borough is permitted to participate in Cooperative Pricing Systems pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11(5) and became a member of the Cranford National Cooperative Pricing System on March 23, 2015; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Borough to award a contract to Gentilini Ford and Chevrolet pursuant to their proposal submitted in response to the Competitive Request for Pricing; and

WHEREAS, information regarding the contract may be found at the office of the Borough Clerk, 723 West Atlantic Avenue, Laurel Springs, NJ 08021 during regular business hours; and

WHEREAS, the Borough desires to publish a "Notice of Intent to Award" for the aforementioned contract to Gentilini Ford and Chevrolet which is attached to and made apart hereof.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Laurel Springs as follows:

1. The provisions of the WHEREAS clauses set forth above are incorporated herein by reference and made a part hereof.
  2. The Borough Clerk is hereby directed to publish the attached Notice of Intent to Award in the legal newspaper of the Borough of Laurel Springs.
- The motion to approve by Councilman Redstreake was seconded by Councilman Cruz, with Cruz, DiMarco, Riondino, DelPidio and Redstreake in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.
  - **RESOLVED TO PAY \$796,120.96 FROM CURRENT ACCOUNT AND \$58,016.91 FROM TRUST AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS**

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**COMMITTEE REPORTS** – copies of submitted reports are on file and available for review.

- **DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, BOARDS, SERVICES/PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL**- Councilman Redstreak said the Sewer Report for July is very low with not much trouble only one stoppage. July 22<sup>nd</sup> Ordinance Review meeting wrapped up the Master Plan. The Zoning Map is wrapped up. He reported on an Electric Vehicle Seminar which he finds interesting for a half square mile town, and wonders if the town should jump on the infrastructure and vehicles. He distributed a handout. He further speculated if the town should build a charging infrastructure facility and reviewed the material. Public Works is running smoothly with no issues. The Train Station has progressed and is ready to paint. Mayor Barbera has heard the county may like to see charging stations at the PATCO Highspeed Line. It currently takes a while to charge a vehicle. It may be a little early in the technology. There was discussion of natural gas vehicles progressing from first generation to second generation, likewise you may soon totally charge a vehicle within 15 minutes.
- **DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS & GROUNDS** – Councilman Cruz added to the Electrical Vehicle conversation saying it a big push getting out of diesels and moving to electric, and the grants to encourage this are very good. He reported on the painting of the Train Station and said the Cord Mansion elevator inspection did not pass; it requires a vent to be installed.
- **DIRECTOR OF MUNICIPAL COURT** – Councilwoman DiGregorio presented the Municipal Court Report for the month of June 2021.
- **DIRECTOR OF RECREATION** – Councilman DelPidio was absent.
- **ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE** – Councilman Riondino was absent.
- **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** – Councilwoman Di Marco reported on training opportunities forwarded by Children Family Services who reached out and about Sterling Book Smiles which acquires books for children who need them. She designed an ad for the Camden County History Heritage Magazine.
- **DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY – POLICE AND FIRE** – Chief Mazziotta presented the Police Report for July 2021. Chief Cheeseman presented the Fire Report for July 2021.
- **MAYOR'S REPORT** – Mayor Barbera reviewed his activities back to the May 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS** - none

**NEW BUSINESS/CORRESPONDENCE**

- 306 Mount Vernon Avenue – Borough Administrator Cheeseman gave explanation of how this 25-foot strip of land became disconnected from its adjoining lot through the tax sale process and became borough owned years ago. It is a non-buildable lot and contains the driveway for 308 Mount Vernon Avenue. 308 Mount Vernon Avenue has now been purchased and has inquired about purchase. The Property is assessed at \$3,000 but the fair market value is at least \$5,000. There is a legal requirement to notify adjoining property owners. Motion to offer land for sale in accordance with law and all processes of law by Councilman Redstreak was seconded by Councilman Cruz, with Cruz, DiGregorio, DiMarco and Redstreak in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.
- NJ League Conference is November 16-19, please let Cathy know by September 24<sup>th</sup> if you are planning to attend – there was discussion of Conference Training and the virtual conference in 2020.
- Stone Road Apartments – Mayor Barbera commented on the apartments on Stone Road where it intersects Broadway which are being improved drastically outside and over time the new owner hopes to improve the apartments inside. He notified tenants that he was not renewing leases and has already been notified that some will be moving out. Tax abatements are being discussed to help him move the rentals to market value rates, which is what is hoped for. There was discussion of what tax programs are available. Perhaps a five-

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year arrangement. Land taxation must be paid, and consideration is being given to taxing the improvements at 50% for 5 years, starting with 20% incremental increases. It probably will be reassessed and is likely going to go up, so this would be an incentive for the improvements. There was discussion of the regulations for evictions during the pandemic. There have been several meetings with the owner and redevelopment attorney. The owner owns several apartment complexes and has a good track record. Market rate is currently about \$1,400 to \$1,600 per month. The owner seemed pleased and interested in working through the process, and Council expressed a desire to offer any incentives as the owner is trying to make it look good and be ascetically pleasing. There was conversation that it was unfortunate that folks will be leaving, but there certainly are upsides. There was discussion about the importance of nice family settings for apartments and the mathematics of the tax assessment versus tax abatements. The improvement aesthetics for the town is a win. Councilman Redstreak made a motion to authorize the Mayor, Borough Administrator and Redevelopment Attorney to negotiate a tax abatement plan with owner of 625 Stone Road, which was seconded by Councilman Cruz with Cruz, DiGregorio, DiMarco and Redstreak in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC - none**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup> Board of Education @7pm @Laurel Springs School
- Thursday, August 19<sup>th</sup> Combined Land Use Board @7pm @Rec Center
- Monday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> Work Session Meeting @ 7pm @ Rec Center
- Wednesday, September 1<sup>st</sup> Recreation Commission @7pm @Rec Center
- Monday, September 6<sup>th</sup> Labor Day, Borough Offices are closed.
- Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> JIF Safety Meeting @12:30 pm @Firehouse
- Monday, September 13<sup>th</sup> Laurel Green Team @6pm @Rec Center
- Monday, September 13<sup>th</sup> Regular Council Meeting @ 7pm

**ADJOURNMENT** –There being no further business a motion was made by Councilman Redstreak with all in favor to adjourn at 7:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Dawn T. Amadio, RMC, Municipal Clerk