

Mayor Deborah Buzby-Cope called the regular meeting of the Township of Bass River Commission to order, on December 5th, 2022, at 7:00 pm.

Provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act were complied with, as notice was published to the *Beacon* and the *Atlantic City Press* stating the time, date and place of the meeting.

The following Commission Members were in attendance: Commissioner Nicholas Capriglione, Deputy Mayor Louis Bourguignon and Mayor Deborah Buzby Cope.

Mayor Cope led the Flag Salute and requested a moment of silence for Rich Ireton, and to remember those that perished December 7th, 1941 at Pearl Harbor.

Roll Call was taken, in attendance were: Commissioner Capriglione, Deputy Mayor Bourguignon, and Mayor Cope.

Commissioner Capriglione moved to approve the Minutes of November 7th, 2022. Commissioner Capriglione moved, Deputy Mayor Lou Bourguignon second the motion. It was so moved by the unanimous consent of the Commission.

ORDINANCES: None

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution # 74 of 2022. The Resolution was for the execution of a Treatment Works Approval or TWA; for the design and replacement of an existing Bath House in Bass River State Forest in the Township of Bass River.

Solicitor Joanne O'Connor received notification from Remington and Vernick, the engineers employed by the New Jersey Division of Property Management and Construction, who are re-doing a bathhouse within Bass River State Park and replacing a septic system as well. In order to apply for permits Bass River had to sign off on their TWA. What the paperwork states is; the Township approves of the work being done. The State is handling the work between the Division of Property Management and Construction and the NJ DEP. With Bass River Township's approval the Engineers can move forward to get permits from the State.

Mayor Cope moved, second by Commissioner Capriglione that Resolution 2022-74 be approved as read. It was so moved by the unanimous consent of the Commission.

RESOLUTION #75of

2022 announced by Mayor Cope Authorizing in Rem Foreclosure Proceeding. Solicitor O'Connor, explained that we are on our last round, number eight. They split up a couple of the rounds and what is being foreclosed on are the properties we have left. Properties were pulled out of the Complaint because of the high cost of the title work. They were not worth as much as the search was going to cost us. The Complaint is in the final round, soon as the Resolution was approved, the In Rem Counsel would file the final Complaint to foreclose on the properties.

Mayor Cope, moved, second by Commissioner Capriglione that Resolution #2022-75 be approved as read. It was so moved by the majority consent of the Commission.

Resolution # 76 of 2022 it was requesting approval of items of insertion of a special item of revenue authorizing an amendment to the 2022 adopted budget; the sum of \$210,000 for the NJ DOT Municipal Aid.

Mayor Cope moved, Commissioner Capriglione second, It was so moved by the unanimous consent of the Commission.

Resolution # 77 of 2022, authorizing the transfer of appropriations. Mayor Cope: explained that it is done at the end of the year and November or December are the only times it can be done. Funds are held in an account; if another account runs short and it needs more, money can be transferred from one account to make up for the shortage in another.

Mayor Cope moved for \$79,000, second by Deputy Mayor Bourguignon no discussion, and all were in favor.

Resolution # 78 Of 2022 Payment of Claims was announced by Mayor Cope. The amount to be paid was \$206,010.9. There was no discussion, however, Commissioner Capriglione abstained from Check numbers 2200577 and 2200537. The Mayor moved, Deputy Mayor Bourguignon second all were in favor.

REPORTS:

Solicitor's Report:

1. Solicitor O'Connor received a call from a gentlemen. He didn't disclose his name or the entity he was employed by. He was inquiring about the cultivation of Cannabis in the Township of Bass River. She hasn't heard from him since but, basically he wanted to know what the Township of Bass River's Zoning Ordinance stated, and asked if and we were restricting it. He also mentioned that he was looking for a large building at least 44 thousand square feet. Ms. O'Connor explained what the procedure is and how he would need to go about it. She wanted to make the Commissioners aware and told Mari Ann if she should hear from him to forward his call to her.
2. Ms. O'Connor also received a letter from Landmark Dividend. Basically, it's a company that will pay the Township for their Cell Tower agreement. They take no interest in the property, they buy out the rights to the lease so they can collect the lease amount for an extended period depending on how long it is. Once purchased they would turn around and would be in charge of collecting the rent from the tenant on the property. He offered to send Ms. O'Connor some more information. In the mean time she wants to look back on the lease with SBA Towers the entity that leases the Tower from the Township. She doesn't believe there is a right of first refusal. But she has to check and once she gathers more information that can provide them with what the monthly rent is; they can give her an estimate as that they would buy that lease out for. It would be for a fixed number of years 10-15 years and then the lease would revert back to the Township. Soon as she has more information she will pass it along.

Court Report: The Municipal Court Report is on file in the Municipal Clerks Office.

Safety Coordinator's Report:

1. Deputy Mayor Bourguignon informed the public that work starts on the bridge near Lake Absegami. They told the Deputy Mayor they are replacing the boards. The Deputy Mayor doesn't think it is the way to go the workers said it's a temporary fix and enough to hold it, until the actual repair begins. The Deputy Mayor asked why they don't just use concrete now, but he was told that is how the State wants it.
2. Deputy Mayor Bourguignon thanked our Emergency Service Volunteers for the quick response they had when Bass River had to two drug related calls. The Captain and the Chief of Galloway managed a quick response time as did the State Trooper that showed on the scene. He noted small towns have the same problems as large ones.
3. Deputy Mayor Bourguignon thanked the businesses for their cooperation and Howard Rothschild for helping the town. He also thanked Viking for the recent \$10,000 they donated to the New Gretna Fire Company. Deputy Mayor Bourguignon stated that businesses don't have to donate money and we should all be grateful for people who reach out and give the town a bit extra.

Other Reports: None

New Business:

Mayor Cope handed out Certificates of Appreciation for Bass River's Volunteers, and was surprised when she was handed one by Commissioner Capriglione, and Deputy Mayor Bourguignon. And Mayor Cope.

Mayor Cope held a Meeting with Chief Chuck Yuhl and various other members of Galloway EMS. Mari Ann was there also, to take notes. They were requesting a 42% raise in funds from Bass River Township. Bass River paid them \$ 10,000 in 2022, prorated at \$ 7,000. Chief Yuhl asked for an increase of about \$4,000 which would bring our cost to \$14,000. Mayor Cope told them she would work it into this year's budget. She was pleased with their response time and received many complements their response time and patient care. Commissioner Capriglione commented that \$14,000 was not a lot of money to give Galloway, considering we gave Squad # 85, \$13,000 and that was between 4-5 years for a very slow response time. Commissioner also commented that Galloway is in the process of a new building; that will be closer and will enable them to get here sooner.

OLD BUSINESS:

Kazuba's Junk Yard's Water Test was reviewed by our Engineers and was found to be in compliance. Their license was issued that evening after the meeting.

PUBLIC PORTION:

The Public portion was opened by Deputy Mayor Louis Bourguignon, and second by Commissioner Capriglione at 7:35pm, all were in favor.

Raymond Riden of 81 West road expressed concerns about changing zoning in the Village of Bass River Township from 3.2 to 1 acre. His concern is the impact it will have on the town. Mayor Cope

explained that the real impact would be a positive one. It would increase our rateables and lower our taxes. But Mr. Risen insisted that it would make a land owner land rich and tax poor. Mayor Cope asked him to attend the next Planning Board Meeting where the Tax Assessor will answer questions and explain the process in detail. Mr. Risen also thanked the town for helping him with a problem he was having with his property.

Carol Bitzberger of 39 Gold Decker Road asked if Mayor Cope was aware of the article in the Associated Press about the State cutting down two million four hundred trees with Pinelands permission. Mayor Cope explained that the State brought it to the Township's attention over two years ago. The location that they will be cutting down is back by the bombing range at the other end of Allen Road in the Lake Oswego area. Carol, stated that the article said it is near Stage Road. Mayor Cope explained that Allen road is off Stage Road, all the way at the end and, if a vehicle tries to travel through that area it's a good chance they will have a hard time getting through. Mayor Cope explained that the Bombing Range is responsible for fires that can get out of control every easily. The States plan is to clear as much of the trees as they can so they can to protect the town from incoming fires. In the mean time they are working on the roads back there. However if they follow up there the way they did on Greenbush Road and leave all the stumps in the ground the Mayor doesn't think there will be much of an improvement. Carol again asked if she was ok with what the State was planning to do, and the Mayor said of course not, their supposed to be small trees that is what their saying. Originally it went through Pinelands and was shot down and then it went through again and it passed; it's out of our hands.

Carol inquired if there was any progress with the Renters Board for Buttonwood. Ms. O'Connor explained that there were pros and cons to having a renter's board in the Township. She explained that she was in the process of collecting information to present to the Commission. However a group of tenants got together and took the owner of Buttonwood to superior court we don't know all of the results but what we do know is that there is a gag order so we can't find out any information from them.

With that Carol wished everyone a good holiday and thanked the Commissioners for the refreshments.

George Mathis was next to speak. He is of the impression that the owner of Buttonwood is retaliating against the group of tenants that took him to Superior Court. They are not allowed to use the campgrounds dumpster. Ashley Cramer asked why the tenants can't use the landfill's dumpster and Mayor Cope explained that every Campground and Mobile Park within the Township has their own means of trash removal by Ordinance. Ann Evans spoke about retaliation by the Park owner when she had problems with her septic.

Marion Assur asked if there was any progress with the school. Carol Bitzberger urged anyone wanting to ask questions about the sale of the school to attend the School Board Meeting on December 6th, 2022.

Ashley Crammer mentioned that the temporary work done on her road was not holding; and asked if there was any progress on the repair of her road Adams and Riverside. Mayor Cope told her that we should know about the CDGB DOT Grant by summertime.

Jerry Lampson of 71 North Maple Avenue asked about recycling. She suggested that Bass River might take advantage of a shared Service such as Little Egg Harbor. Mayor Cope explained that we do have a shared service with Tuckerton and they take our leaves and brush. Jerry noted that when going to the transfer station she saw a lot of recyclables plastic in junk boxes and would like to see us combine a shared service with Little Egg Harbor and allow them to pick up what she refers to as residual plastic. Mayor Cope stated that we have been in talks with Little Egg for shared services no permanent decision has been made. Deputy Mayor Bourguignon stated that he will look into the possibility of recycling the plastic but it will mean another dumpster and it is a very complicated process.

Carol Bitzberger asked what we are supposed to do now that Burlington no longer picks up our hazardous waste. Mayor Cope explained that we will check with the Burlington County and see if they are still accepting it if we bring it to Burlington County Dump. One of the residents suggested the Township could run it up with one of our trucks.

Deputy Mayor Bourguignon asked Solicitor O'Connor if she heard anything about Atlantic City Electric they left trees on many streets in town down, and uncleared brush. Ms. O'Connor explained that with all the times she has reached out to Atlantic Electric they never responded. She is going to follow up again.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35, all Commissioners were in favor. Next Board of Commissioners Meeting is on January 9th at 7:00pm.

