

***MINUTES BASS RIVER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING OF MONDAY, May 1st, 2023***

Mayor Cope called the regular meeting of the Bass River Township Board of Commissioners to order at 7:00 p.m. Present at meeting were: Commissioner Capriglione, Deputy Mayor Louis Bourguignon, and Mayor Deborah Buzby-Cope. Also present: Solicitor JoAnne O'Connor and Deputy Clerk Mari Ann Capriglione. Members of the public were present at this meeting.

**FLAG SALUTE:**

Mayor Cope led the flag salute and read the sunshine statement.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Minutes of the regular meeting on May 1st, 2023 were presented to the Board for review. The motion to approve the minutes was moved by Deputy Mayor Bourguignon, second by Commissioner Capriglione. Votes: Cope-Yes, Bourguignon-Yes, Capriglione- Yes. All in favor and Minutes of the April 3rd, 2023 meeting were hereby approved.

**ORDINANCES:**

Ordinance # 6—2023 A Ordinance of the Township of Bass River, County of Burlington County, State of New Jersey, for repairs to the Bass River Plant and installation of new valves and wire in the solenoids appropriating \$ 45,000.00 from the Township of Bass River Capital Improvement fund.

Mayor Cope read Ordinance 6 of 2023. Our CFO Al Stanley explained it is not an Ordinance where we go out for bid, this is an Ordinance where we actually have the money in Capital Reserve so we can appropriate it.

Mayor Cope Moved, Commissioner Capriglione Seconded all voted in favor

**RESOLUTIONS:**

Resolution # 45—2023 of Bass River Township. County of Burlington, State of New Jersey, Authorizing an Amendment to the 2023 approved Municipal Budget.

Al: We introduced the Budget; the State gave us a little more State Aid Money in between and we added it to the Budget. It is not an increase in expenditures but an increase in the revenue side. To offset that we decreased the amount of surplus we are using in our Budget.

Mayor Coped moved, Commissioner Capriglione seconded. With no discussion all voted in favor.

Resolution #42 of the Township of Bass River, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey Authorizing the reading of the Municipal Budget by Title only.

No discussion Mayor Cope Moved Commissioner Capriglione Second all voted in favor.

**OPENED TO PUBLIC:** Mayor Cope Moved Commissioner Capriglione Seconded all in favor.

William Van Orden of 5811 Route 9 New Gretna asked what the wires and solenoids were being purchased for. Mayor Cope explained that they were for Off Shore Manor's Plant to keep it running. The town wanted to do that years ago. With no discussion Deputy Mayor Bourguignon made a motion to close Commissioner Capriglione seconded all voted in favor.

Mayor Coped thanked our CFO Al Stanley for a good year, all in attendance agreed.

Resolution #43-2023 of the Township of Bass River, County of Burlington, in the State Of New Jersey, Adopting the Municipal Budget for 2023. CFO Al Stanley remarked that we had a good year. And that not having to pay benefits or health care helped the bottom line. Deputy Mayor Bourguignon remarked that he is pleased with our new engineers. Al mentioned that the Auditors did a good job and Mayor Cope agreed.

Mayor Cope Moved Deputy Mayor Bourguignon seconded all voted in favor.

Resolution # 47-2023 Payment of Claims

TOTAL: \$391,800.87

Moved by Mayor Cope, seconded by Commissioner Capriglione all voted in favor.

NEW BUSINESS: Resolution #44-2923 passed. The agreement was signed between Burlington County, New Jersey, and Bass River Township for the New Jersey Urban County Cooperation Agreement. Solicitor O'Connor explained this was the signing of a shared service with Burlington County. Mayor Cope moved; Commissioner Capriglione seconded all voted in favor.

#### SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor O'Connor was finally able to contact a representative from Atlantic Electric who told her to get all information about the damage claim together in one package and email it to Atlantic Electric's Representative. He will forward it to the legal department of Exelon. She is in the process of doing that now. As Ms. O'Connor stated this has been two years in the making.

Solicitor O'Connor explained that Pinelands did not approve our revised Zoning Ordinance. Now the Director of the Pinelands Commission is working with our engineer to iron out what needs to be addressed. The prior engineer used an old version of our Zoning Ordinance that did not include 2017 amendments that were made so we have to get those back into the Zoning Ordinance. We are dealing with this as quickly as possible. She also explained it is at least a two month process. We still have to introduce it and then have a public hearing at the following meeting. Then it goes to Pinelands for their approval at their first meeting and their second meeting would be a Public Hearing to adopt it. It will take about four months. She also hopes to have it on our Agenda in June and then it should breeze through Pinelands because they have already reviewed it.

MUNICIPAL COURT REPORT: was given by Commissioner Capriglione.

Total monies taken in to Bass River was \$26,149.17 Bass River Township realized \$7,064.84

Washington Township took in \$989.74 and realized \$322.10

At this point Mayor Cope read a letter from Tom Williams, the President of the Bass River Board of Education. It stated that 6 months after the closing of the sale of the Bass River Elementary School the proceeds total is \$470,000. Finalization of the proceeds will be determined during the 2023-2024 school year. The monies will be held in reserve accounts. The New Jersey Department of Education along with the Superintendent, will determine how funds may be used. We have no increase in local taxes. Bass River did receive State Aid for 2023-2024 in the amount of one-hundred thousand.

In his letter, Mr. Williams did urge residents to attend the next Board of Education Meeting which will be held in June 2023.

Mayor Cope spoke about the progress being made on the Convenience Center, as per the DEP. Wood chips have been removed, and a claw has been brought in for lifting stumps. The fence has been replaced and the gate has been relocated. Eventually the DEP wants to cap the hill, it will be revisited at a later date. In the meantime our men are doing a surface clean up.

Deputy Mayor Bourguignon spoke about the DEP not really knowing what they want from towns. They want the environment preserved; however, they make the towns bear the burden of cost. He also explained that the Township has to replace all of the mulch in the Playground to certified Mulch another cost to the tax payers.

The bridges on Stage Road are being repaired. Howard Rothschild feels that it was poor planning to repair 4 bridges at once because it causes delays when trying to get to work.

PUBLIC PORTION: Was opened by Deputy Mayor Bourguignon and seconded by Commissioner Capriglione to the Public at 7:30pm. All voted in favor.

William Van Orden asked why they were working on Route 9 and Mayor Cope explained that it was because they want to fill in the cracks and holes in the road and make driving easier. Mr. VanOrden also offered services to the Township.

Dianne Naylor inquired about the pile of wood chips in the park parking lot. Deputy Mayor Bourguignon explained that the wood chips are for the residents to take. Mrs. Naylor also asked who is maintaining the school because the grass was up to her ankle. Mayor Cope explained that it is the responsibility of the new owners. If they don't maintain their property our Code Enforcer will be sent out and they run the risk of a Summons and appearance in Court.

The condition of various pieces of equipment were inquired about. Rick Adams offered a name of a company he works with that might be able to help repair or replace the needed equipment and offer services that will help clean up the landfill.

Carol Bitzberger asked if all of Bass River Township was being sprayed for Gypsy Moths. Mayor Cope explained that only the areas that the State found infested would be sprayed, and every year the area gets larger.

Flyers were handed out explaining how dangerous copycat cannabis, edibles and packaging can be if a child unknowingly accesses it.

Mr. Naylor said that there are problems with Farmland Assessment and that we are losing a lot of revenue. Mayor asked him to give her a copy of his paperwork and she would give it to Jay Renwick our Tax Assessor.

With that Deputy Mayor Bourguignon moved to close the meeting at 8:45 second by Commissioner Capriglione. All voted in favor

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Mari Ann Capriglione*  
Deputy Municipal Clerk