

**MAURICE RIVER TOWNSHIP
BILL & AGENDA REVIEW MEETING
Monday, February 17, 2014– 7:30 P.M.**

This meeting has been advertised in accordance with the statutes of the State of New Jersey.

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Sarclette

Roll Call

- A. Unsafe Structure Hearing – Block 223, Lot 24, 3280 Route 47, Whitelam
- B. Gordon Gross, OEM & HO/ZO Report
- C. Allen Foster, CMFO Report
- D. Discussion Items
 - 1. Vendor/Solicitation Ordinance
 - 2. Review RFP's - Heating & Cooling Building Specialist
- E. Misc. Report of Operations
- F. Township Committee Concerns
 - 1. Chamber of Commerce - Options
- G. Review of Agenda for February 20, 2014
- H. Public Comment
- I. Review of Bills
- J. Adjournment

Monday, February 17, 2014, 7:30 P.M.
Bill Review & Agenda Meeting

PRESENT: Andrew Sarclette, Mayor
Patricia Gross, Deputy Mayor
Kathy Ireland, Committeeman
Frank DiDomenico, Solicitor
Allen Foster, CMFO
Linda L. Costello, Acting Municipal Clerk

This meeting has been advertised in accordance with the statutes of the State of New Jersey.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Sarclette, present
Mrs. Gross, present
Mrs. Ireland, present

Mayor Sarclette called the meeting to order; the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Unsafe Structure Hearing

Mr. DiDomenico advised that Harry Whitelam was notified of the scheduled unsafe structure hearing for 3280 Route 47, Block 223, Lot 24. Mr. DiDomenico advised due diligence was conducted. A title search reflected two mortgages held by Colonial Bank and a tax lien held by US Bank Custodian for CCTS; both parties were copied with notifications. All parties acknowledged receipt of certified mail. Mr. DiDomenico advised he spoke with a representative for Colonial Bank and they are not making any collection attempts.

Mr. DiDomenico asked if anyone in the audience was attending on behalf of Harry Whitelam or interested parties. No response.

Mr. DiDomenico advised adequate notice was provided to Mr. Whitelam and no response was received.

Mr. DiDomenico swore in Gordon L. Gross, C.O. and Housing/Zoning Officer.

DiDomenico: Did you send notice of unsafe structure to Mr. Whitelam?

Gross: Yes, via regular mail and certified mail.

DiDomenico: Were the notices dated in November 2013?

Gross: Yes

DiDomenico: Who took photos of the property?

Gross: I did

DiDomenico: Were the pictures taken as of September 30th.

Gross: Yes, and I took more today.

DiDomenico: Was the property improved, the same or worse?

Gross: Worse.

DiDomenico: Can you describe in general terms the general condition of the property?

Gross: Poor and unsafe. The outside of the structure is decaying, roof compromised, electric and plumbing has been gutted; air conditioning removed; full of mold; keep shutting doors; rear of building collapsing; large holes in walls, steps to second story unsafe.

DiDomenico: In your estimation is the building beyond repair?

Gross: Yes

DiDomenico: Have any repairs been made?

Gross: No. Another unsafe area exists. There is an open grease pit with no lid behind the building. The property is being used as a dump site and rest stop. Dead cats and a dead raccoon are on the property.

DiDomenico: Is there an issue with the septic?

Gross: Yes, always has been. There is nothing on the ground now since septic is not being used.

DiDomenico: Is the property dangerous to the public?

Gross: Yes

DiDomenico: Is the structure fit to be used as a restaurant?

Gross: Not without major repairs.

DiDomenico: Is the structure suitable as a residential use?

Gross: Not as is.

DiDomenico: Approximately how long has the property been empty?

Gross: Two years.

Mr. Sarclette commented that neither the owner nor lienholders appear to be interested.

Mr. DiDomenico reported on results of title search and judgments against the property.

Mrs. Gross asked if the bank would consider the property valuable. Mr. DiDomenico stated the banks usually don't want the liability.

Mr. Gross suggested boarding and securing the building, cleaning up the property and fencing in so people cannot go behind the building. Mr. Sarclette asked if the building should just be demolished rather than spend money on boarding and securing the structure.

Mr. Sarclette made a motion declaring the property unsafe, a danger to the public and uninhabitable. Motion seconded by Mrs. Ireland.

Roll Call: Ayes – Ireland, Sarclette Nays – None Abstain – Gross

Mr. DiDomenico will send a letter to all lienholders of the action taken.

It was noted the grease pit should be emptied and filled with gravel or dirt.

Gordon Gross, OEM Coor. and Housing/Zoning Officer

Mr. Gross stated nothing has been done at 3 Bay Avenue, owner: Pontarelli. He stated the unsafe structure hearing was held and a second request for an extension was denied. Not a thing has changed. He noted the mobile home and garage are in the road right-of-way and half the roof is missing.

Mr. Gross advised 1 Bay Avenue is almost complete, owner: Martinelli. Mr. Gross advised there is a hole created by the demolition which is on Township property. A demolition permit was obtained and the structure is down to the footings. There is a hole in the crawl

space area. Mr. DiDomenico suggested a temporary fence and Danger-Keep Out signage. Mr. Gross will get in touch with the owner.

Mr. Gross advised nothing has been done at the Corson property.

Mr. Gross advised an order to vacate was given at 49 High Street, Leesburg, owner: Murphy. The appeal period will end March 16th. At that time he will reissue an unsafe structure notice. Mr. Gross stated the fire companies are repetitively called to the property and there is an illegal wood stove. He has had the owners in court at least five times.

Mr. Gross advised there is a water problem at the OEM building in the corner bathroom. He would like to see improvements made including installation of a shower in the corner bathroom and carpeting upstairs. He advised all four fire companies have bought into a training program and they would like to use the former courtroom as a classroom. He advised the County will certify it as a training room. He anticipates a cost of \$5,000.00 to \$7,000.00 for the improvements. Mr. Sarclette asked Mr. Gross to get quotes on the suggested upgrades to the OEM building.

Mr. Sarclette asked about the heat noting there was a recent concern with the electric and constant draw of baseboard heat. Mr. Gross advised everything is back together and working. Mr. Sarclette stated the electrician suggested upgrading the panel box. Mr. Gross will ask our electrical inspector to do a courtesy inspection. There was a question if natural gas is used at the building.

Mr. Gross advised Atlantic City Electric donated \$850.00 to the coordinator's dinner which is held annually the third Thursday in June. Mr. Gross is working on obtaining a grant for low band receivers. The RERP grant is coming up and he will be reapplying for detour and accident ahead signs. The gator has been upgraded through the NJ Forest Fire grant and reimbursement is pending. There is a possibility an amphibious track vehicle will be donated to OEM. Mr. Gross noted the potential generator for the Municipal Hall is still possibly, however funds are being shifted.

Mr. Gross advised the flood maps in his office are for flood insurance ratings which are determined by FEMA. He noted right now, Maurice River Township has the lowest rate without being in a Commercial Rating Service, which none of Cumberland County is in. He advised this is very intense and requires full-time flood plain managers be hired. Additional free board to elevations to also required. Our current ratings are #4 for Construction-ISO and #9 – Flood. Mr. Gross advised in 2000 he was certified as a flood plain manager. He noted none of the structures in Maurice River Township received damage below the flood elevations, only decks were damaged. He advised residents must obtain elevation certificates; it costs approximate \$375.00 to have a surveyor do an elevation and seal the certificate.

Mr. Sarclette stated at the last meeting it was indicated cleaning the ditches will help but that won't change insurance issues. It was noted there is pending Federal legislation to delay the insurance regulations.

Mr. Gross advised there are 8" deep potholes on County Route 616. Mr. Sarclette asked if the Township assumes responsibility if we fill in the potholes. Mr. DiDomenico advised if

the County has been put on notice they are liable and the Township would only be making an unsafe situation safer. Mr. Sarclette will contact the County.

Allen Foster, CMFO Report

Mr. Foster advised the report provided show up to date appropriation revenues. He advised the Annual Financial Statement was submitted last week. There was an increase of \$400,000.00 in surplus. He advised based on his calculations and current projection of the 2014 budget worksheet the tax rate would remain the same. Mr. Foster advised the 2014 budget must be introduced no later than March 14th and state aid figures are not available until February 25th. Mr. Foster advised there is a significant increase in health benefits of 6%; he would like to pay off the debt service; foreclosure line item increased to \$35,000.00; trust reserves for compensated leave and snow removal will be adjusted.

Mr. Sarclette asked about the backhoe and loader purchases. Mr. Foster did not believe three quotes were obtained.

Mr. Foster asked about three-year capital budget planning. He needs estimated costs, funding sources and length of projects to include. He noted last year road improvements were included. Mr. Foster reviewed departmental budget requests.

A work session meeting to introduce the 2014 budget was scheduled for March 4, 2014 at 7:30 P.M. in the Senior Center.

Discussion Items

1. Vendor/Solicitation Ordinance - Consensus is to leave the second reading of Ordinance #627 on the February 20th agenda.
2. RFP's – Heating & Cooling Building Specialist
Mr. DiDomenico advised six proposals were received and all met the minimum requirements. He will provide a written report after complete review of the packages.

Misc. Report of Operations

Mrs. Ireland advised the East Point project went well. She noted the Thompson's Beach road is not satisfactory, however the beach is beautiful. Mr. Morrissey has papers to sign off on the projects. Mrs. Ireland advised Larry Niles wants to add sand to the beach fronts but the groups are at odds and question the quality of the sand.

Mr. Sarclette advised he asked Mr. Morrissey to stop at the school. Mr. Morrissey will shoot elevations when he is working on the salt shed. Mr. Sarclette advised Mr. Rafine was the low quote for the removal of the salt shed wall. There is discussion on the paving of the shed and driveway and three quotes must be obtained.

Mrs. Gross asked about the non-profit organization and whether the township has anything to do with it. She stated George Kumor and Penny Wells were asking questions she was not

able to answer. Mrs. Ireland responded that the Choose Maurice River non-profit was established for education, recreation and promotion of the Township.

Mrs. Gross reported that Ken Whildin did a complete survey of the street lights in Delmont and 20% of the lights are not working. She commented that if we are paying for lights they should work. She believes the Township should continue with a complete survey of street lights, noting Atlantic City Electric does not want to be advised of all the problems at once.

Township Committee Concerns

1. Chamber of Commerce Options

Mrs. Gross stated it was awkward when she and Kathy were talking with Tony Stanzione regarding affiliation with Chambers of Commerce. She advised the Committee had decided to support Commercial Township and provide information regarding Millville's Chamber, but felt Bridgeton was too far. Mrs. Gross did not think it was a good idea to pay Mr. Stanzione for a Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Ireland asked if Mr. Stanzione gave her any information. Mrs. Gross responded he said he could run a Chamber for a small fee. Mr. Sarclette commented that he thought we were going to work with Commercial Township or start our own.

Mrs. Gross noted there is a leaky sink at Leechester Hall and the toilets were not flushing properly at the last dance. It was noted the Road Department is supposed to run water periodically at the Hall to assist with water flow and the water conditioning system.

Mr. Sarclette asked if there was progress on an In Rem list. Mrs. Costello advised Long & Marmero could not provide a per action quote, only hourly. Mr. DiDomenico suggested picking a priority to start foreclosure and see how much is charged.

Mr. Sarclette suggested letters be sent to owners of DeCarlo lots with arrears and offer quit claim option at Township cost.

Mr. Sarclette asked Mrs. Costello to check for boiler plate easements regarding cleaning of ditches.

Mr. Sarclette suggested quotes be obtained for general work needed including an electrician, plumber and general maintenance and adoption of a resolution designating and authorizing the lowest bidder.

Review of Agenda

The Acting Clerk next reviewed the draft agenda for the upcoming February 20, 2014 meeting.

Public Comment

Mrs. Ireland made a motion to open the public comment session, seconded by Mrs. Gross.
Roll Call: Ayes – Gross, Ireland, Sarclette Nays – None

There being no public comment, Mrs. Ireland made a motion to close the public comment session at, seconded by Mrs. Gross.

Roll Call: Ayes – Gross, Ireland, Sarclette Nays – None

Review of Bills

The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to the review of bills for approval at the February 20, 2014 meeting.

Mrs. Ireland made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Gross.

Linda L. Costello
Acting Municipal Clerk