

**PUBLIC MEETING
MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

**January 4, 2022
DELRAN, NJ**

CALL TO ORDER

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Sunshine Statement: Be advised that proper notice has been given by the Township Council in accordance with the sunshine law in the following manner. Notice advertised in the Burlington County Times and Camden Courier Post on December 28, 2021 and posted on the bulletin board on the same date.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Smith, Mr. Jeney, Ms. Parejo, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Burrell were present.

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Catrambone, Mayor, Mr. Siciliano, Solicitor, and Ms. Larkin, Deputy Clerk.

ORDINANCE(S) ON FIRST READING

**TOWNSHIP OF DELRAN
ORDINANCE 2022-01 CALENDAR YEAR 2022
ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION
LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK**

Mr. Lyon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jeney to adopt Ordinance 2022-01 on first reading.

There being no questions, the roll was called.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Jeney, Ms. Parejo, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Burrell voted aye.

Ayes: 5

Nays: None

Motion Approved

RESOLUTION(S)

Resolution 2022-16 Establishing Interest Rates for Delinquent Taxes and Assessments within the Township of Delran

Mr. Jeney made a motion, seconded by Ms. Parejo to adopt the Resolution 2022-16

There being no questions, the roll was called.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Jeney, Ms. Parejo, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Burrell voted aye.

Ayes: 5

Nays: None

Motion Approved

Resolution 2022-17 Resolution to Cancel Debits and Credits of \$10.00 or less for Property Taxes and Sewer Service Fees

Mr. Jeney made a motion, seconded by Mr. Smith to adopt the Resolution 2022-17

There being no questions, the roll was called.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Jeney, Ms. Parejo, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Burrell voted aye.

Ayes: 5

Nays: None

Motion Approved

Resolution 2022-18 Authorizing 2022 Sewer Adjustments for New Property Owners and Authorizing Sewer Collector to Activate New Sewer Accounts

Mr. Lyon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jeney to adopt the Resolution 2022-18

There being no questions, the roll was called.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Jeney, Ms. Parejo, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Burrell voted aye.

Ayes: 5

Nays: None

Motion Approved

Resolution 2022-19 Authorizing Payment of Accumulated Sick Days to Jeffrey S. Hatcher in the Amount of \$32,500

Mr. Jeney made a motion, seconded by Mr. Smith to adopt the Resolution 2022-19

There being no questions, the roll was called.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Jeney, Ms. Parejo, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Burrell voted aye.

Ayes: 5

Nays: None

Motion Approved

Resolution 2022-20 Approving Salaries for Delran Township Fire District No. 1 for the Period of January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021

Mr. Burrell asked Council to table Resolution 2022-20, indefinitely because it is no longer needed.

Mr. Lyon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jeney to table the Resolution 2022-20

There being no questions, the roll was called.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Jeney, Ms. Parejo, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Burrell voted aye.

Ayes: 5

Nays: None

Motion Approved

Resolution 2022-21 Approving Salaries for Delran Township Fire District No. 1 for the Period of January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022

This is at the request of the fire department in order for commissioners to make a salary in their budget it needs to be approved by Council and then goes to the voters who vote for the budget. This is part of the state check list. It was passed this morning which is why it's being walked on.

Mr. Lyon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jeney to adopt the Resolution 2022-21

There being no questions, the roll was called.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Jeney, Ms. Parejo, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Burrell voted aye.

Ayes: 5

Nays: None

Motion Approved

MOTIONS

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jeney authorizing the payment of bills including all purchases made under the Cooperative Purchasing Agreement.

There being no questions, the roll was called.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Jeney, Ms. Parejo, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Burrell voted aye.

Ayes: 5

Nays: None

Motion Approved

Mr. Lyon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jeney accepting the report of the Tax Collector and Township Clerk

There being no questions, the roll was called.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Jeney, Ms. Parejo, Mr. Lyon and Mr. Burrell voted aye.

Ayes: 5

Nays: None

Motion Approved

REPORTS

Brian Baiada, Delran Emergency Squad – Mr. Baiada stated that despite the COVID Omicron strain, the emergency squad is managing very well. In December 2021, they had 289 calls which is up from 202 calls in December 2020. The total calls in 2021 were 3,115 versus 2,512 in 2020 and he gave a breakdown of some of the specific calls.

Mr. Baiada said that the emergency squad is working to get approval from the Department of Health for a drive up COVID testing site at their facility. He mentioned that they are also looking to recruit new staff.

Mr. Burrell stated he had a resident reach out regarding a COVID testing site in Delran. Mr. Burrell stated he realized there is a concern with finding testing equipment but if there is any way to facilitate that, Council would be happy to assist.

Ms. Larkin – Ms. Larkin stated that she is happy to be at the meeting, learning the ropes.

Mr. Catrambone – Mr. Catrambone thanked Assemblywoman Carol Murphy, and Delran residents; Commissioner Dan O’Connell, Assemblyman Herb Conaway and Senator Troy Singleton and congratulated them on their recent reelections. He is grateful for all the help that they have given us in the last year that allow us to better serve our Delran family.

Mr. Catrambone congratulated Councilman Marlowe Smith on winning his election. He will be up for reelection in November. The residents of the third ward will be well represented.

Mr. Catrambone thanked the employees of Delran Township who work hard every day especially during the pandemic. He also thanked public works, police, EMS and the fire department.

Mr. Catrambone acknowledged, after 32 years of service, the retirement of Administrator, Jeff Hatcher and stated that while we work hard to find his replacement, we will do everything in our power to make sure that this period of transition is as seamless as possible.

Mr. Catrambone recognized Jamey Eggers, Township Clerk. Ms. Eggers has picked up many extra duties including an additional role in the tax office. She wears many hats and we are extremely fortunate to have such a hard-working individual employed by the Township. So much of what she does happens behind the scenes so our Delran family doesn’t realize how fundamental she is in making sure everything runs so smoothly.

Mr. Catrambone stated that he and Council redrafted some existing, antiquated, confusing or conflicting ordinances. They removed or redrafted them for better approaches to government. He would like to thank the members of Council and the Solicitor’s office for their hard work in making those corrections.

Mr. Catrambone stated that Delran Township has expanded the diversity of our police department and have broadened our plans for communication and outreach with residents, especially seniors.

Mr. Catrambone reported that Bill Lunemann has been hired as the new Construction Official. Mr. Lunemann has brought the inspection schedule back on track with permits being issued in a week or less. Many residents have said how happy they are with this change. We are proud to have Bill on the team.

Mr. Catrambone stated that the Carli Lloyd event was wonderful and we are very proud of Carli.

Mr. Catrambone stated the winter festival was very well received by residents. He thanked the volunteers as well as the RAC.

Mr. Catrambone reported that, with the rise of COVID cases and new variants, public safety is our main concern. The decision has been made to close the Delran Township Municipal Building to the public for all meetings, events and gatherings as well as any departmental offices not separated by a glass partition. A detailed listing of the new protocols is available on the Township website and Facebook. The proclamations for the Golden Regiment, Delran Soccer Team and Delran Green Team will be postponed. Zoom meetings have resumed and we will monitor and relay recommendations by various health agencies. He advised residents to be vigilant and kind. He stated we will continue to make ourselves available to residents. We will share our progress on the many projects that we look to accomplish in 2022 and continue to work on the issues that face Delran.

Solicitor – No report.

Ms. Parejo – Ms. Parejo asked that residents reduce the spread of the Omicron variant by wearing a mask, washing your hands often and getting a test if you don't feel well.

Mr. Smith – Mr. Smith reminded people to remove snow from their cars before driving and to look out for black ice.

Mr. Jeney – Mr. Jeney congratulated Councilman Smith on his reelection and wished everyone a safe, healthy and prosperous 2022. He asked residents to be respectful and thoughtful to each other.

Mr. Lyon – Mr. Lyon wished everyone a happy new year to everyone and thanked all of the Delran employees for what they do and Melissa Larkin for stepping in tonight. He congratulated Councilman Smith and advised everyone to stay safe and use good discretion.

Mr. Burrell – Mr. Burrell congratulated Councilman Smith again and stated he is looking forward to another year together.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Parejo to open the meeting to the public for any questions. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Gabor, resident, stated that he had trouble finding the Zoom link on the website.

Mr. Burrell walked him through where the link is located on the township website.

Mr. Gabor suggested the calendar have the Zoom link also and asked if it was Mr. Burrell's fault that it wasn't on the calendar as opposed to the Communications Director.

Mr. Burrell stated that he isn't in charge of noticing meetings.

Patrick Duff, Haddon Heights resident, suggested that people making public comments should be able to be seen rather than just have their voices heard. Mr. Duff went over how his investigation of the Carli Lloyd event unfolded. He initially was told that the event cost \$37,000. The cost changed at a later date to over \$90,000 which didn't include public works or police overtime. Mr. Duff also stated that Mayor Catrambone mentioned that he was not employed by Center Stage Entertainment but it's been on his financial disclosure form for over a decade.

Mayor Catrambone stated that he does work for Center Stage Entertainment but he is not an employee or owner. He said he works on a gig basis.

Mr. Duff said that at the last meeting, Mayor Catrambone said he did not work for Center Stage Entertainment. Mr. Duff also stated that Mayor Catrambone took down his page on Center Stage Entertainment.

Mayor Catrambone stated that he has no control regarding the page and he does not have an interest in Center Stage Entertainment other than that they send him gigs once in a while. He stated that he never said that he doesn't work for that company. He is not an employee. He does ad hoc work.

Mr. Duff stated that makes you an employee of the company that is directly related to your brother and also to Go Events which is registered to your nephew. The solicitor mentioned that any financial benefit to a direct relative is not legal. People want to know why your story changed.

Mayor Catrambone stated that his story didn't change. He works for Center Stage Entertainment not for Go Events.

Mr. Duff stated that the Mayor did hire Go Events for the Carli Lloyd event. Mr. Duff stated that he appreciated the ability to ask questions of individual representatives. He thought that ability might be stripped away after the resolution was passed. Mr. Duff stated that 17 days after the Dunphy application was denied, Mr. Jeney was part of a zoning hearing that approved BeeDee Associates which included Lindy Landscaping on an A1 property. Why did the zoning board approve this landscaping company in the same A1 zone where Dunphy's was denied?

Mr. Burrell stated that he thinks it's inappropriate for Mr. Jeney to comment on a decision that was made on behalf of a zoning board.

Mr. Jeney stated he did not feel comfortable commenting.

Mr. Duff stated to Mr. Burrell, that he stated he didn't know that the Mayor had associations with Center Stage Entertainment but he just admitted to working for them.

Mr. Burrell stated that Council knew that the Mayor worked for Center Stage Entertainment but didn't know that there was a relationship between the Mayor and Go Events. Mr. Burrell stated that he isn't happy that Go Events got paid and if Council had known there was a relationship, Council would not have approved.

Mr. Duff argued that the Mayor did know about the relationship so as a body you did have knowledge.

Mr. Burrell stated no one on the Council had knowledge of the relationship. The Mayor addressed that situation at a previous meeting and he can answer for his own actions.

Mark Oberg, resident, asked what Mr. Burrell saw as an issue with Go Events? Is it the Mayor's relationship with them?

Mr. Burrell stated that in his mind there is a difference between what is legal and what is moral or ethical. Mr. Burrell stated he doesn't think it's appropriate for anyone from the family of any member of this body to make money.

Mr. Oberg asked if Council attends ethics training.

Mr. Burrell stated that there are various ethics training classes offered throughout the year by the Township's insurance company and the NJ League of Municipalities.

Mr. Oberg asked if Mr. Burrell feels like the Mayor should have known it was ethically wrong to allow Go Events to bid for the event. He asked what actions should be taken against the Mayor for putting Council in a bad position and breaching his code of ethics.

Mr. Burrell stated that, as the Township Solicitor explained, in his opinion, it is not a violation of the state ethics laws. Mr. Burrell stated each person has to be guided and make decisions by their own moral compass.

Mr. Oberg stated that Colin (RAC Chairman) sent emails stating that he was advised to split bids by the Solicitor. He asked if Council has started to investigate the Mayor and Solicitor for possibly conducting things that are illegal in New Jersey. There are plenty of people asking questions about certain things that have happened over the past couple of months. Law suits have been filed and paid out for \$300,000.00. Maybe someone should look into how they are operating as a Mayor and Solicitor. Mr. Oberg stated that they represent our Township so we become financially responsible if they aren't following the rules.

Mr. Burrell stated that the Township has retained special counsel to investigate; however, his concern is that we will pay them to find out something we already know. We have a strained budget. We are going to be deliberate and meticulous moving forward. We have an ethics counsel and we will amend the anti-nepotism ordinance to expand it.

Mr. Jeney made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Smith. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Lyon made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Jeney. All were in favor; the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamey Eggers, Township Clerk