

**SEVENTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE MOUNT LAUREL TOWNSHIP COUNCIL**  
**MAY 4, 2009**

The Seventh Regular Meeting of the Mount Laurel Township Council was held on Monday, May 4, 2009, in the Meeting Room of the Mount Laurel Municipal Building. The Meeting was called to order by Mayor James Keenan.

The Pledge of Allegiance and traditional moment of silence were observed.

**ROLL CALL**

The Members of Council present were Mayor James Keenan, Councilwoman Linda Bobo, Councilwoman Tracy Riley, and Councilman Chris Smith. Also present were Patricia Halbe, Township Clerk, Debra Fourre, Township Manager, and Christopher Norman, Esq., Township Solicitor. Deputy Mayor Peter McCaffrey was absent.

**PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Public Announcement, which is required by the "Open Public Meetings Act" of the State of New Jersey and read at every meeting of the Township Council was read by the Municipal Clerk.

**PROCLAMATIONS**

09-R-119      **PROCLAMATION OF COMMENDATION TO THE 2009 LENAPE HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM IN WINNING THE 2009 STATE GROUP IV CHAMPIONSHIP**

The Clerk read the Proclamation as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Councilman Chris Smith, seconded by Deputy Mayor Peter McCaffrey, and enacted on a unanimous roll call vote.

Mayor Keenan presented Proclamation to boys' basketball and thanked them for their hard work. He thought the championship game was just chilling with excitement.

09-R-120      **PROCLAMATION OF COMMENDATION TO LENAPE HIGH SCHOOL DEBORAH HEART CHALLENGE TEAM ON WINNING THE 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DEBORAH HEART CHALLENGE**

The Clerk read the Proclamation as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Councilwoman Tracy Riley, seconded by Councilwoman Linda Bobo, and enacted on a unanimous roll call vote.

MAYOR KEENAN – Stated that for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row, the team has crushed the competition. He congratulated all for a job well done.

MRS. DeSANTIS –Introduced the students and advised that they will be going on to various colleges next year. We are so proud of our students as they have proud so much pride to our students, our school and our community.

MAYOR KEENAN – Stated that what these students do does not go unnoticed.

PRINCIPAL CATANI – The Heart Challenge is a Game show event with team competition and they study for it all year long. As to what Mayor Keenan said about the Basketball team, the electricity was unmatched. It was an unbelievable scene. I am Proud to be Principal of Lenape.

PRINCIPAL WEXLER – Stated that when they put this Recognition Program together, it is not just for athletics, academics come first. It is the essence of what Lenape High School is all about, not only being a good school citizen but also being a good community citizen. As for the Basketball Championship, half of the student body was at the game and it was a proud moment.

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**ORDINANCE FOR FIRST READING**

2009-8        CALENDAR YEAR 2009  
MODEL ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET  
APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK  
(N.J.S.A.40A:4-45.14)

Ordinance 2009-9 was read as entitled by the Municipal Clerk. It was moved by Councilwoman Tracy Riley, with a Publication Date of May 7, 2009, and a Public Hearing Date of May 18, 2009. Councilwoman Linda Bobo seconded the motion. Upon a unanimous roll call vote, Ordinance 2009-8 was so ordered on First Reading.

DEBRA FOURRE – Budget does not exceed our cap but if we do not pass ordinance, will lose cap bank.

**RESOLUTIONS-FINANCIAL**

09-R-121        EMERGENCY TEMPORARY BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS FOR  
2009

The Clerk read the Resolution as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Deputy Mayor Peter McCaffrey, seconded by Councilwoman Linda Bobo, and enacted on a unanimous roll call vote.

09-R-122        RESOLUTION FOR DEFERRED LOCAL AND REGIONAL HIGH  
SCHOOL TAXES

The Clerk read the Resolution as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Deputy Mayor Peter McCaffrey, seconded by Councilwoman Tracy Riley, and enacted on a roll call vote. Councilwoman Linda Bobo, Councilman Chris Smith and Mayor Keenan voted nay. Resolution did not pass.

Mayor Keenan stated that it is his understanding that Resolution 09-R-122 must be passed prior to the introduction of the budget. What does that do to Resolution 09-R-123?

CHRIS NORMAN – Said it would be problematic to introduce budget.

09-R-123        2009 LOCAL MUNICIPAL BUDGET FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF  
MOUNT LAUREL

The Clerk read the Resolution as entitled. A **MOTION TO TABLE** was made by Councilwoman Tracy Riley, seconded by Councilman Chris Smith, and enacted on a unanimous roll call vote.

**RESOLUTIONS**

09-R-124        RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PARTICIPATION IN THE  
SUSTAINABLE JERSEY MUNICIPAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Clerk read the Resolution as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Councilwoman Linda Bobo, seconded by Councilman Chris Smith, and enacted on a unanimous roll call vote.

09-R-125        AUTHORIZING A GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE GARDEN  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION TRUST FUND ADMINISTERED  
BY THE NEW JERSEY HISTORIC TRUST

The Clerk read the Resolution as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Councilwoman Linda Bobo, seconded by Councilman Chris Smith, and enacted on a unanimous roll call vote.

09-R-126        RESOLUTION TO AWARD AN OPEN-END CONTRACT FOR  
LAWNCARE FERTILIZER AND RELATED TREATMENTS FOR  
SPECIFIED TOWNSHIP FIELDS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF  
PARKS AND RECREATION

The Clerk read the Resolution as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Councilman Chris Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Linda Bobo, and enacted on a roll call vote. Councilwoman Tracy Riley voted nay.

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09-R-127      RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE 2008 LOSAP PROGRAM  
CERTIFIED LIST OF ELIGIBLE VOLUNTEER MEMBERS

The Clerk read the Resolution as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Councilwoman Tracy Riley, seconded by Councilwoman Linda Bobo, and enacted on a unanimous roll call vote.

09-R-128      RESOLUTION CANCELING UNCOLLECTIBLE PROPERTY TAXES  
FOR THE YEAR 2008

The Clerk read the Resolution as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Councilwoman Linda Bobo, seconded by Councilwoman Tracy Riley, and enacted on a unanimous roll call vote.

09-R-129      RESOLUTION REJECTING BIDS FOR CONROW FARM MULTI-  
SPORTS COMPLEX WELL INSTALLATION

The Clerk read the Resolution as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Councilman Chris Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Tracy Riley, and enacted on a unanimous roll call vote.

09-R-130      APPOINTMENT OF CONFLICT LABOR COUNSEL

The Clerk read the Resolution as entitled. A motion for adoption was made by Councilwoman Linda Bobo, seconded by Councilman Chris Smith, and enacted on a unanimous roll call vote.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

HERB DIAMOND, 610 Hartford Road – Stated that at the corner of Hartford and Elbo Lane is wetlands. There are survey flags into the wetlands and would like to know what is happening.

DEBRA FOURRE – Not sure what they are for. She is aware that the County purchased property in area and it might be from that. She will check into it.

MAYOR JAMES KEENAN – The Manager will check into it and reach out to him within several days.

HERB DIAMOND – Concerned about swine flu since he saw several students came down with it.

MAYOR JAMES KEENAN – One from Springville and one from Harrington. Everything is being posted on our website as we receive it.

HERB DIAMOND – He is also concerned about geese population since hatchlings are coming in.

MAYOR JAMES KEENAN- The Deputy Manager recently gave an update on the situation. We are looking into doing mitigation by an addling program next year. Addling is shaking of eggs or poking a hole in the eggs which has to be done at an early stage.

HERB DIAMOND – He is part of senior softball group in South Jersey. He has been trying to get defibrators for each senior teams. Questioned if there is any grant money to apply for.

DEBRA FOURRE – Does not know of any but will have Jennifer Blumenthal check into it.

ROBERT GALLOS, Mt. Laurel Fire District – Update Council on Station 362 is still closed due to black mold and they are operating out of Station 363. We do not know the cost of remediation.

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PHYLLIS KRAMER, 405 Aster Place, Holiday Village East – She has a house full of mold. She has been here several times and was abusive to Pat Halbe many times. She has problems with her home from the day she moved in and there is no swale between the homes. She went into the hospital and the person who was cleaning for her robbed her. She had the carpets cleaned and was told there is mold around the perimeter. She had the carpets torn up and got very expensive estimates to have the mold removed. She has had problems since she moved in. She is very sensitive to odors. They want \$2500 to put in a french drain on the side of her house and she does not have the money to repair it so she is trying to raise the flowerbeds herself. Her toilet did not work for 14 years. She called the Health Department and they said Mt. Laurel is responsible because they gave a certificate of occupancy and their inspector passed it. The Township Manager does not give her the time of day. Everyone says they will help her and no one shows up. The toilet cost \$363 to fix from her own plumber. She is having a hard time and no one has done a thing for her. The Township should pay for the plumber. She is sick and she cannot take much more. She would like to sue Hovnanian but does not have the money. She stands face-to-face and nose-to-nose with people. She has a lung condition because of mold. She has been paying taxes on the extra bathroom and never able to use it in 14 years. In all the years she had dealt with Pat Halbe, she has always smiled and was always a lady and always tried to help her and she is a competent woman and she considers her a friend. It is the Manager's job to help her.

#### **COMMENTS BY PROFESSIONALS**

CHRIS NORMAN –Was in court today about the Ramblewood Golf Course decision. Judge Hogan signed the order that the township submitted consistent with the township's understanding of the courts letter opinion and not only upheld the 1961, 2003 and 2006 zoning ordinances but also granted a count of our counter-claim which says they may be prohibited from bringing any affordable housing claims in the future based on equitable fraud. It makes our case stronger going on.

DEBRA FOURRE – She had the pleasure of attending EMS banquet and received a beautiful bouquet.

#### **COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

COUNCILWOMAN TRACY RILEY –The Township has not yet introduced budget. Last year the school deferral was at 47% deferral and the maximum allowed is 50%. The direction given to the Manager was to go back to Department Heads. She feels Council needs to start looking at our contractual professionals. We are asking Department Heads to cut their salaries by 10%. We should cut our salary by 50% and look and assess where we can really save.

COUNCILWOMAN LINDA BOBO – Thanked the Lenape children for coming in. It is her favorite part of the meeting. She congratulated Chris Norman on his court win. She feels the school deferral is 3.5 million dollars, which is a lot of money. She feels it is the wrong approach and would only satisfy this year. We need to look at future years and she is happy to cut her salary if that is what Council chooses to do. The first budget meeting was in November and it is months later and there is no progress. We knew it would be difficult but it seems that the Township Manager does not seem to understand what we are asking for. She specifically asked not to max out the school deferral and that was done. She believes it is the first time a budget was shot down before it was even introduced. She is concerned how we will move forward and is open for suggestions.

COUNCILMAN CHRIS SMITH –Congratulated the students from Lenape. He also attended the banquet. As for the budget, the school tax deferral is a great tool but maximizing it in 2009 we will have nowhere to go in 2010. We are seeing a record number of tax appeals and does not believe it will go down dramatically in future years. If it is some cushion, he would like to have it as an arrow in his quiver. He asked for her best effort and he is disappointed. We need to work harder on this.

MAYOR JAMES KEENAN – Also voted no since he thought Council was very clear that they did not want to go to the 100% deferral of the deferred school taxes. Money put

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into deferral and only \$36,000 left for next year. Millions of dollars are being appealed and we need a reserve that we can rely back on. We are close to buildout. We looked at in-house attorney last year and will look at it again this year. Chris Norman won the golf course issue and saved \$50 million for Township. We are here to protect resident's rights. Council did not ask the manager to go back to department heads. The Manager's job is to present the budget that taxpayers can afford. We asked the Manager to cut salary and wages to a point that we can afford it. What do we next year? There is no capital budget at this time. We need to plan for the future. He feels bad for both the employees and taxpayers. There are 152 pre-foreclosure homes listed in Mount Laurel. We need to plan for future and for the departments to help cut spending. He asked for voluntary furloughs and it should have been done months ago. That is why he voted no for the school tax deferral. The Manager needs to come to Council with the ideas. We can't keep coming up with the ideas and waiting weeks for an answer. The morale is low and we are concerned with that but we are also concerned with taxpayers who can't afford to live in their homes.

A motion was made by Councilman Chris Norman to adjourn the Seventh Regular Meeting of the Mount Laurel Township Council, seconded by Councilwoman Linda Bobo, and upon concurrence, the meeting was adjourned at 9:19 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

PATRICIA HALBE, RMC  
Municipal Clerk

Transcribed by  
Carol Modugno

The minutes of this meeting are summary minutes. A copy of the tape recording will be available in the office of the Municipal Clerk for four years.