

The Shamong Township Committee held a **Committee Meeting** on the above date at the Municipal Building.

Mayor Di Croce called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 PM

The Clerk, Susan Onorato, stated the Sunshine Statement advising that proper notice of this meeting has been given in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call (absentees noted)	Mr. Michael Cooney	P
	Mr. Michael Di Croce	P
	Mr. Timothy Gimbel	P
	Mr. Sean Gray	A
	Mr. Martin Mozitis	P

Also, in attendance: D. Heinold, Solicitor and D. Guzzi, Engineer

COMMUNITY MOMENT: Karma Thegsum Choling (KTC)

Mayor Di Croce welcomed the group from KTC which included Lama Tsultrim, Bill Skinner and Lori Volpe. Mr. Skinner, who spoke on behalf of the Lama, began by stating that KTC is a Tibetan Buddhist Monastery and then gave a brief history on Tibetan Buddhism and the establishment and current usage of the Monastery in Shamong. Mr. Skinner stated that the dwelling in Shamong, donated by the Lin's, became Lama Tsultrim's residence in North America in 2002. Mr. Skinner reported that Lama Tsultrim had been living in Tibet under the thumb of the Chinese government, and with assistance, managed to escape by numerous means of transportation. Mr. Skinner commented on Lama Tsultrim's concern for the local ecosystem. He spoke about KTC's partnership with Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge and Project Terrapin at the Shore, helping to raise funds and awareness for wildlife issues. Mr. Skinner made additional comments on the current usage of the property including some public events. Mayor Di Croce closed by thanking Lama Tsultrim then inquired about the flags sometimes seen in the front yard. He was advised that those flags signal when the Karmapa is coming to KTC. Upon inquiry from the Mayor, Lama Tsultrim gave brief comments on the current training in China and Tibet, as well as some cultural changes. Mr. Skinner stated that Lama Tsultrim has also become a United States citizen and welcomed the Mayor to come visit KTC. The Community Moment was then concluded.

Mayor Di Croce read into the minutes a proclamation recognizing Charles Schmidt, Township Zoning Officer, for over twenty-eight (28) years of service to Shamong.

Mayor Di Croce then opened the meeting to the public for comments, at which time *Steve Savitsky* (Atsion Road) commented on the proposed roundabout questioning its necessity and the property encroachment issues; then suggesting a regular traffic light or four-way stop instead. The Mayor commented that the Township had previously requested better signage or a blinking light, but the County came back with the recommendation of the roundabout based upon their traffic studies.

Elaine Billmeyer (Shamong) stated she agrees with Mr. Savitsky and inquired where she could confirm the traffic study statistics. The Mayor advised her to contact the Burlington County Roads and Engineers Department. The Clerk advised Ms. Billmeyer that she could reach out to her office for contact details. Ms. Billmeyer also inquired if eminent domain would be involved in this project. The Mayor stated there are four (4) properties on the corners of this intersection and it looks like all four may be impacted. Ms. Billmeyer stated she felt a traffic light would be an easier and less expensive option.

Jim Skaggs (Shamong) questioned if the same roundabout solution would be done at the intersection of Stokes Road and Burnt House Road stating the volume of traffic is the same. Mr. Skaggs also stated the more dangerous intersection is Stokes Road and Route 206. Mr. Skaggs does not agree with the roundabout.

Neil Wilkenson (Shamong) commented that he feels no one thinks the roundabout idea is a good idea, but stated the overriding factor as he understands, is the potential liability of accidents to the Township if we do not concur. Mr. Wilkenson feels that although other intersections may be dangerous, that is immaterial as the County wants to put the circle at Willow Grove and Stokes making the Township responsible if not done.

Len Donovan (Shamong) commented if the roundabout was a done deal and asked who to petition at the County level. The Mayor advised him that information can be provided; the Clerk will follow up.

Committeeman Mozitis stated both roads are County and the Township was advised by the County that a letter stating that we were against the roundabout would need to be provided – if that is done, all responsibility would then fall on Township shoulders. Mr. Mozitis commented the County is advising that the proposed roundabout would slow traffic down; if an accident did occur, it would be at a slower speed.

Len Donovan inquired if there was a chance to reverse the decision. The Solicitor reported this was not the first time the Township had approached the County regarding this intersection (Willow Grove/Stokes). The Solicitor commented, not speaking for the County Engineering Department but from a legal perspective, he would think that County legal might also now have the same concerns having gone this far down the road – to reverse course, what would that say about their decision making.

The Mayor made a few brief comments regarding the roundabout, noting it would be attractive; that he understands the situation the Township was put with reference to liabilities and his desire for people that use our roads and live in our community to be safe.

Eileen Carlos (109 Indian Mills Road) inquired regarding the meeting that the roundabout was approved; it was placed on the agenda as a discussion in which action was taken. The Clerk reported that whenever an item is placed on the agenda for discussion, it's Discussion and Possible Official Action. The Solicitor stated it was all done in open session. Ms. Carlos inquired how everybody's position was when the vote was taken – she did not recall anyone opposing. The Mayor stated he voted no, but advised the vote was on the record. Ms. Carlos requested a copy of the letter from the County stating that if the Township was opposed it would have to be put in writing; would that be an OPRA (Open Public Records Act) request? The Mayor commented he was advised of that information at a County meeting, not in a letter. The Clerk confirmed the County was clear about it in a meeting that was attended by the Mayor, Dan Guzzi and herself. Ms. Carlos inquired about how long the conversation has been going on about the intersection or what to do. The Mayor advised a number of years and the Clerk stated it's come up a number of times in her fourteen (14) year tenure, thus a long-standing issue per the Mayor. Ms. Carlos inquired about during the long-standing issue, was there any other recommendations other than a \$20 million-dollar roundabout. The Solicitor interjected for clarification that it was not a \$20 million-dollar roundabout. The Mayor clarified he was initially told it would be up to \$20 million – when he meet with the Burlington County Board of Engineers, they indicated it would be much less. The Mayor stated the dollar amount cannot be disclosed as the project will be subject to public bids. Ms. Carlos asked if the recommendation came from the Burlington County Engineer. The Clerk advised it came from the County Engineering Department, not one particular person. Ms. Carlos inquired what would have happened if the Township said no thank you to this proposal. The Mayor stated the County was looking for a letter from the Township accepting responsibility, which he was willing to do. The Clerk stated the County Engineers are more then willing to meet with the residents and have been asked to do so during the whole process. Ms. Carlos referenced a roundabout in Chesterfield that is now being removed due to certain automobiles that don't fit such as larger trucks. Mr. Guzzi, Township Engineer, advised the roundabout being installed is designed to accommodate any size truck and oversized vehicles. Ms. Carlos advised that she has contacted the Freeholders in writing telling them this is a situation that should be looked at and they should have public meetings for better understanding. The Clerk advised the Freeholders had agreed to come out to public meetings with the Township as well.

Jim Skaggs inquired what the right-of-way on the circle going to be. The Mayor replied it was his understanding that the person/driver in the circle has the right-of-way.

As there were no further questions or comments, the Mayor closed this portion of the meeting to the public.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE OFFICIAL ACTION:

On motion of Committeeman Cooney, seconded by Committeeman Gimbel, approval of the May 7, 2019 Regular and Executive Session minutes were approved as submitted. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.

The Clerk reported on a date change for the New Jersey Widows Sons event to June 23rd (rain date 9/27). The event was originally scheduled for May 12th which was rained out. The raffle license and event have already been approved and the New Jersey Legalized Games of Chance has been notified of the date change.

The Clerk reported the Township pursues this annual grant and received \$255,000 this year to work on Grassy Lake Road. The grant amount is not sufficient to complete Grassy Lake Road; options include the Township funding a portion and/or seeking additional grant. The Mayor advised Carranza Road is on the radar, but not on the list – checking if State aid options are available. **On motion of Committeeman Gimbel, seconded by Committeeman Cooney, it was moved to authorize the Engineer to prepare the application – NJ Department of Transportation 2020 State Aid Program – deadline is July 19, 2019. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

The Solicitor gave an update on the two pending dog cases (both on Oakshade Road) – Donna Roberts and Marissa Corbett.

The Solicitor reported on the Robert's case that in April - Judge Tarantino, on motion of the Prosecutors office, added additional restrictions to the terms of release of Ms. Roberts – she is prohibited from participating in the caretaking and well-being of any and all animals. She is also prohibited from participating in the breeding of any and all animals. The next event in the Donna Roberts case is June 26, 2019 – a pre-indictment proceeding before Judge Morley. The Solicitor was advised by the County Prosecutor's office they were still waiting for medical reports related to the case which may indicate whether they will have additional charges to file.

The Solicitor reported on the second case, Marissa Corbett, which is still in the earlier stages of investigation. There is a July 10, 2019 pre-indictment proceeding before Judge Morley. The Solicitor reported that at least one dog taken from that property has died and it may take some time for the evidentiary process to take place. The Solicitor advised he will continue to follow-up and give updates as things proceed.

The Clerk reported to the Committee that all employees with positions that require licenses or certifications are verified and in good standing. The Clerk reported that all reviews are completed as well.

The Clerk reported meeting with Mr. Cavaliero from Atlantic City Electric (ACE) who does a very good job watching out for and keeping the Township informed. Mr. Cavaliero advised that ACE is investing in infrastructure improvements for “storm hardening” and will be doing tree trimming in our area. The Clerk advised the public that ACE has an energy assistance program available for elderly residents and widows/widowers. The Clerk reported that ACE is also looking into an LED street light conversion sometime over the next year or two potentially saving the Township some money.

The Clerk reported that Rick Ferrara has taken over the roll of Indian Mills Athletic Association (IMAA) President since Kevin Waropay has stepped down from the position. **On motion of Committeeman Gimbel, seconded by Committeeman Mozitis, it was moved to appoint Rick Ferrara, IMAA President to the Shamong Township Recreation Advisory Committee for 2019. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

The Clerk reported past recipients of the Pine Barrens Festival – Shamong Night Volunteer of the Year awards; 2018 Michele Wells/EMS Squad, 2017 Barbara Valenzano/Township Deputy Clerk, 2016 Marni Mitchel and Kim Albertson/Athletic Association, 2015 Paul Miller/Fire Dept, 2014 Gary Vinciguerra/JLUB and 2013 Stanley Rowe/Fire Dept. The Clerk advised the public that neighboring towns are honored at this festival; hosted by Holy Eucharist Church, and each town is asked to submit two candidates for Volunteer of the Year from which the church chooses. This year's Shamong Night is Friday, July 26, 2019 and Volunteer of the Year candidates are needed by July 3rd. The Mayor stated it is a great function to attend and advised he would welcome any candidate suggestions.

RESOLUTIONS:

The Clerk read each resolution into the record and advised that all sales tax certificates have been submitted and the required reviews and fees have been processed. **On motion of Committeeman Cooney, seconded by Committeeman Gimbel, it was moved to approve by blanket motion Resolution 2019R-55,56,57. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

- **2019R-55** Alcoholic Beverage Control Plenary Retail Distribution License 0332-44-002-006 renewal for Scoots Liquors LLC, expires June 30, 2020
- **2019R-56** Alcoholic Beverage Control Plenary Retail Consumption License 0332-33-003-005 renewal for TPM Enterprises, Inc. (dba La Campagnola Restaurant), expires June 30, 2020
- **2019R-57** Alcoholic Beverage Control Plenary Retail Consumption License 0332-33-001-004 renewal for Pic-A-Lilli Inn, Inc., expires June 30, 2020

The Clerk reported all documentation has been submitted and reviewed for this event which has been signed off by the Station Commander/Red Lion State Police. **On motion of Committeeman Mozitis, seconded by Committeeman Gimbel, it was moved to approve Resolution 2019R-58 Authorizing issuance of a Social Affairs Permit to serve beer and wine at the Indian Mills Deer Club Fund Raiser on August 24, 2019. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

The Clerk reported a premium was put on the property when the lien was purchased which has come through and the reimbursement is now due per Katherine Taylor, Township Tax Collector. **On motion of Committeeman Gimbel, seconded by Committeeman Cooney, it was moved to approve Resolution 2019R- 59 Redemption payment of \$52,440.17 for block 33 lot 24 (445 East Stokes Rd.) to lien holder Jeff Whalen. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

The Clerk reported Burlington County has provided their best option for the CART program with an approximate cost of \$59,000 with payments spread over six (6) years – first payment to be made in 2020. Approximately \$10,000 per year to our local budget and just under \$5.00 per household. The Clerk advised the Township will own the carts and be responsible for maintenance. The Mayor commented the switch from the current recycle buckets to the carts was pretty much mandated by the County. **On motion of Committeeman Cooney, seconded by Committeeman Gimbel, it was moved to approve Resolution 2019R-60 Authorizing execution of agreement concerning the acquisition of recycling carts with Burlington County. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

The Solicitor reported this cemetery grading issue had been previously discussed in Executive Session which authorized further action. The Solicitor advised this is the formal resolution to authorize the agreement with the contractor doing the work. The Solicitor reported the Engineer who designed the initial project is paying for half the cost of the contract and the Township will pay the other half. The Solicitor thinks that resolving this issue for less than \$15,000 is a good result. The Clerk stated that the initial project did come in under budget. **On motion of Committeeman Gimbel, seconded by Committeeman Cooney, it was moved to approve Resolution 2019R-61 Authorizing execution of remedial grading contract with R. Moslowski Excavating and Consulting Engineers Services, Inc. for Pinelands Memorial Park (Cemetery). A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

The Clerk advised, as agreed, this 2.5% increase is supported by this year's budget. The Clerk reported two exceptions - a member of Public Works who received a step up for longevity and John Lyons, Director of Office of Emergency Management, for his continued efforts/success in getting grant funding for the Township. The Clerk commended Mr. Lyons for the increased amount of work completed in this department and for his presence in the Community. The Clerk advised that Mr. Lyons' entire salary will be covered by these grants. **On motion of Committeeman Cooney, seconded by Committeeman Mozitis, it was moved to approve Resolution 2019R-62 2019 Salary resolution. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

The Clerk gave some details regarding this resolution mentioning a few items of concern: while the local pension payment portions have been made, the State has not been making the proper pension payments; pension and retiree health benefits now top \$150 billion – four times (4x) the State budget; the State has held municipal aid flat on their funding through energy tax receipts, the property tax relief fund and 2% arbitration cap. Committeeman Gimbel stated for public knowledge that due to the fiscal irresponsibility of the State, our pension contributions are now going to be doubled by year 2023. He encouraged public awareness and the need to pay attention more and more. The Clerk stated that over the last five or so years, the Township has lost over \$5 million in funding. The Mayor commented that the Township has been put on notice that the school's budget is going to be cut from the State and the continued challenge of doing more with less. The Mayor reported that houses in Shamong that are valued around \$250,000, it looks like taxes will go up about \$97.00 per year – but, as a result of the School Board tax increase, not the local tax. The Solicitor commented it was his understanding that Senator Sweeney is a primary advocate of Path to Progress.

On motion of Committeeman Cooney, seconded by Committeeman Mozitis, it was moved to approve Resolution 2019R-63 Support of Path to Progress Recommendations made by New Jersey Economic and Fiscal Policy Workgroup. A roll call vote showed Committeeman Cooney and Committeeman Mozitis voting yes and Committeeman Di Croce and Committeeman Gimbel voting no. A Tie Vote equals a No Vote and Resolution 2019R-63 Failed.

The Clerk summarized several items which impacted this year's budget. **On motion of Committeeman Gimbel, seconded by Committeeman Cooney, it was moved to approve Resolution 2019R-64 Final adoption of 2019 annual budget with State approval. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

The Clerk reported the OEM Director, John Lyons, found this grant which is expected to be a straight \$10,000 allocation. It will assist with the funding and execution of the Office of Emergency Management for Shamong Township. **On motion of Committeeman Mozitis, seconded by Committeeman Gimbel, it was moved to approve Resolution 2019R-65 Approval to submit a grant application and execute a grant contract with the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for the FFY 2019 Emergency Management Agency Assistance Subaward Program. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

The Mayor commented regarding recent discussions with regards to the ability of our farmers to grow legal cannabis and hemp related products. The Mayor advised that due to the issue, he wanted to state it in public at the meeting, so everyone is aware and has an opportunity for comment. The State has indicated the intent to consider passing marijuana/cannabis legislation, but it has not yet passed. The Mayor stated, as he understands, this was due to two issues; how much they would tax it and the social justice issue/parameters of automatic expungement regarding past possession or usage. The Mayor advised that in 2020 there will be a State resolution and the NJ voters will have an opportunity to give their opinion. The Mayor reported the requirements have been lessened on medical marijuana card issuance. The Mayor advised not to use marijuana illegally, but he does believe a town like ours might be the perfect place to allow the growth of cannabis allowing farmers to raise income. The Mayor commented that based on recent articles and publicity, the majority response has been in favor. The Mayor advised that he wants to be sure there is an abundance of transparency on this major issue. The Mayor then read Resolution 2019R-66 into the minutes. Deputy Mayor Gimbel requested clarification, in layman's terms, on the language and intent of the resolution. Mayor Di Croce advised the resolution is basically saying the Township is intending to take some action and would allow the Mayor/Deputy Mayor to work with the Township Solicitor on an ordinance to properly control cannabis, making sure the Township receives revenue. The Mayor made a few closing comments mentioning an opt out period and being proactive with a permit process in place. Deputy Mayor Gimbel thanked the Mayor, mentioning the importance on the potential revenue and creating an opportunity to make something happen for the Township. **On motion of Committeeman Cooney, seconded by Committeeman Gimbel, it was moved to approve Resolution 2019R-66 Expressing intent to adopt an ordinance governing the production, distribution, and sale of cannabis A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

ORDINANCES:

The Solicitor advised on Big Horn Solar's interest in making Murphy's Pit a large solar field. Issues were reviewed and ordinance drafted, then sent to Pinelands who advised a couple tweaks need to be made, on both 2019-7 and 2019-8, prior to approval. **On motion of Committeeman Gimbel, seconded by Committeeman Cooney, it was moved to approve Ordinance 2019-7 Amending Township Code at Chapter 110-122 GOVERNING ZONING OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREA. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

The Solicitor reported 2019-8 covers the actual conditions such as set backs, fencing, etc. Both ordinances need to go to the Joint Land Use Board for consistency review. The Mayor inquired about property revenue. The Solicitor commented that the property had been environmentally compromised in the past – no active environmental issues at this time, but has limited use. There will be revenue based on the method of assessment and the tax is based upon the income stream generated off the solar project. **On motion of Committeeman Cooney, seconded by Committeeman Gimbel, it was moved to approve Ordinance 2019-8 Amending Township Code at Chapter 110-38.1 GOVERNING "SOLAR AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY". A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

BILL LIST:

The Clerk reported the bill list amount of \$1,498,960.80 and requested any questions or comments. The Mayor inquired what amount goes to the school and was advised Lenape Regional gets almost \$426,000 and the local school Board of Education almost \$793,000. As there were no additional questions or comments, **on motion of Committeeman Mozitis, seconded by Committeeman Gimbel, it was moved to approve the attached Bill List. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

REPORTS:

The Engineer Reported:

- Eagle Construction is just about wrapped up on the Pinelands Municipal Park project.
- Oakshade Road paving is complete – punch list of minor issues to Arawak.

The Solicitor Reported: no reports

The Administrator Reported:

- Next Township Committee meeting is July 2nd.
- Emilio Carranza Memorial Service is July 13th @ 1:00 PM.
- Pending briefing on Route 206 Springer's Brook Bridge repair by NJDOT.
- Mayor Di Croce handing out certificates for 8th Grade graduation on June 14th @ Seneca.
- Mayor Di Croce and Committeeman Mozitis represented Shamong at the Annual Memorial Day ceremony/parade hosted by Indian Mills United Methodist Church.

- Mayor Di Croce represented Shamong Township at the Annual Memorial Day Ceremony at the Burlington County Veteran's Memorial on May 30th.
- Reminder the Good Will electronics recycling trailer has been removed and items now left at Township complex may result in a fine. This program is no longer supported by the County. Good Will on Hartford Road in Medford will accept electronic donations.

The Mayor commented on the Indian Mills Memorial parade stating that it is a great way to honor our veterans and encouraged the public to attend a future event. He also gave thanks to the Indian Mills Fire Company, the Shamong EMS and Committeeman Mozitis for their attendance and participation. The Mayor also recognized the Seneca Seniors for the weeding/planting project at the Municipal Building. The Mayor then recognized Jean Stanfield and Ryan Peters for their nomination at the Primary and Committeeman Gimbel for his Primary nomination as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mayor Di Croce opened the meeting to the public for comments, at which time *Jim Skaggs* reported the embankment on Indian Mills Road at five-points is flattening out causing the pavement to separate and there are potholes. The Clerk advised awaiting County response. Mr. Skaggs inquired about new residents and Township notification. The Clerk advised new residents receive a Welcome Packet with that and additional information included.

Eileen Carlos inquired if Resolution 2019R-63 Support of Path to Progress Recommendations made by New Jersey Economic and Fiscal Policy Workgroup was the one that was being touted by Addiego, Sweeney and Singleton. The Solicitor commented it was generated initially by Senator Sweeney. Ms. Carlos asked for confirmation of the vote count. The Solicitor advised two yes and two no, so the resolution failed. Ms. Carlos inquired if anyone knew what the Path to Progress was – a good thing or a bad thing? Committeeman Gimbel stated, as he understands, it is comments of ordinances and documents put together to generate more conversation. Committeeman Gimbel advised it was his interpretation that 2019R-63 is not something that is taking any action. The Clerk advised it was a sample resolution submitted by the Senate Majority Office for review and comments.

As there were no other questions, the Mayor closed the meeting to the public.

On motion of Committeeman Gimbel, seconded by Committeeman Cooney and a roll call vote showing all members present voting yes, by Resolution 2019R-67, the Committee went into Executive Session for matters of Attorney Client-employment matter.

The Committee reconvened their regular meeting and the Clerk reported resumes were reviewed for the Zoning Code Official position being vacated by Chuck Schmidt who is resigning. Mr. Ed Toussaint was recommended due to his quality of work and knowledge of the pinelands. **On motion of Committeeman Mozitis, seconded by Committeeman Gimbel, it was moved to approve hiring Mr. Toussaint for the position of Zoning Code Official. A roll call vote showed all members present voting yes.**

There being no further business, on motion of Committeeman Gimbel, seconded by Committeeman Cooney and a roll call vote showing all members present voting yes, the meeting was adjourned.

Attest:


Susan D. Onorato
Municipal Clerk