The regular monthly meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Pohatcong was called to order on Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 7:04 p.m. in the Municipal Building. Mayor Slack being in the Chair, Councilman Melvin and Councilwoman Van Lieu were present. Attorney Kevin Benbrook, Township Engineer, Wayne Ingram and the Township Clerk were in attendance. Councilmen Babinsky was absent.

The Chair announced that adequate notice of the meeting was given the Express Times and the Star Gazette satisfying the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Mayor Slack led us in a silent prayer and a salute to the flag.

The Mayor said it was nice to see a good turnout tonight and that we have a long agenda and he'll try to keep things moving so we're not here until the wee hours.

Attorney Benbrook stated the Mayor had given him a letter from Ingrid Gray expressing interest in occupying the vacant seat formerly held by Councilman Bill Oertel. If Council wanted to fill that seat so they'll have a full Council between now and the General Election. He suggested that Council consider having Councilman Melvin move over to Oertel's seat to serve through December 31, 2019 and the vacant seat would go back to Sal's (Vangeli) through to the November election. That way Melvin would serve until the end of the year and take the oath of office in January if he wins the election which would offer more continuity. Statutorily they would need three votes to do this. The mayor said that as much as Babinsky and Van Lieu travel, it was a good idea to fill the seat.

<u>Motion:</u> (To appoint Councilman Kevin Melvin to former Councilman Oertel's vacated seat through December 31, 2019)

Mayor Slack made the motion to appoint Kevin Melvin to Oertel's vacated seat through December 31, 2019. Seconded by Councilwoman Van Lieu, the motion carried 3-0 (ayes: Melvin, Van Lieu and Slack, nays: none, absent: Babinsky). Benbrook advised the clerk to prepare an updated oath of office.

Councilman Melvin announced for the minutes his resignation from his current term through the November election (term of former Councilman Vangeli) because he cannot hold two positions.

**Motion:** (To appoint Ingrid Gray to former Councilman Melvin' vacant seat (term of former Councilman Vangeli) through the November election at which time the winner of the election will be sworn in at the November meeting)

Councilwoman Van Lieu moved to appoint Ingrid Gray to Melvin's vacated seat through The General Election in November, Melvin seconded. The motion carried 3-0 (ayes: Melvin, Van Lieu and Slack, nays: none, absent: Babinsky).

The clerk asked to be excused to go to her office to get an Oath of Office as she was not made aware that a Council vacancy would be filled tonight. She asked for Ms. Gray's letter of interest for her records.

Attorney Benbrook issued the oath of office to Ingrid Gray while Councilwoman Van Lieu held the bible app on Councilman Melvin's notepad. Mayor Slack welcomed her aboard and had her join Council on the dais.

### **Approval of minutes**

Councilman Melvin made the motion to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2019 meeting. Seconded by Slack, the motion carried 2-0 (ayes: Melvin and Slack nays: none, absent: Babinsky, abstain: Gray and Van Lieu).

#### **Approval of bills**

Councilman Melvin moved that the payment of all bills presented in proper form, signed by the Director of each department, approved by the majority of members, and listed on the bill list be approved. Seconded by Slack. Councilwoman Van Lieu asked that the CFO be directed to provide bill lists for the meetings for their review at the meetings so that all of Council is aware of the bills, not just the ones they sign for their department. Melvin explained that the CFO is looking into upgraded software. Mayor Slack noted that they used to get the bill lists for the meetings. The motion carried 3-0 (ayes: Melvin, Van Lieu and Slack nays: none, absent: Babinsky, abstain: Gray).

### **Public Comments:** (pertaining to agenda items)

Kim Bondaruk had questions about Ordinance 19-03. Attorney Benbrook advised that those would be addressed during the public hearing of the ordinance. In response to Councilwoman Van Lieu's objections that Ms. Bondaruk be heard now, he explained that his advice is procedurally correct.

Mayor Slack announced that Council would adjourn to Executive Session for approximately ten minutes to discuss a litigation matter.

### **Executive Session:**

### RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances, and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist. The public shall be excluded from the discussion of any action upon the hereinafter specific subject matter.

The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is:

a) Litigation – Estates of Sember and Gercie

It is anticipated at this time that the above stated subject matter will be made public at the conclusion of the litigation. The motion carried with the following roll call vote.

#### **Motion:**

Councilman Melvin moved to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:19 p.m. Seconded by Van Lieu, the motion carried 4-0 (ayes: Gray, Melvin, Van Lieu and Slack, nays: none, absent: Babinsky).

### **Motion:**

Councilwoman Van Lieu made the motion to adjourn Executive Session and return to the regular meeting 7:33 p.m. Seconded by Melvin, the motion carried – all were in favor.

Upon returning to the regular meeting, Attorney Benbrook advised that Council had met with our Risk Manager, Sharon Cooper about ongoing litigation. Our insurance defense counsel has settled this matter and asked that we take a look at some potential issues and potential repairs. There will be no further public discussion.

### Attorney's Report –Kevin Benbrook

Attorney Benbrook stated that an Executive Session would be held later in the meeting to discuss contract negotiations with Greenwich for shared court services.

He informed Council that there is a motion on tonight's agenda for another FEMA acquisition through the county for a property on River Road. He reminded them that we

had done one last year. However, this property appears to be delinquent on their taxes so he asked that Council hold off on approving this motion until the next meeting so he can check with Carrie (Emery) our Tax Collector. Once these acquisitions are completed, the property will come off the tax rolls and the township will be responsible for it but we can let it go back to nature. Mayor Slack asked Benbrook to do his due diligence and bring it back for Council's consideration at the next meeting.

Benbrook advised that he had circulated an email to Township Council outlining the settlement of the Panera Bread Tax Appeal. There is a resolution authorizing settlement on tonight's agenda. He worked closely with our Tax Assessor, Jennifer Carabelli, to work the numbers but really wanted to give her credit.

He further advised that he had a response from the manufacturer of the Mason Dump regarding the malfunction which should be under warranty. They claim that it is operator error. Benbrook asked Assistance DPW Supervisor, Jeff Loveatz, if he was aware of anything and Jeff said he was not; but had issue with their claim of operator error.

### Engineer's Report - Wayne Ingram

Mr. Ingram provided the following report and reviewed it with Township Council.

### Phase I 2017 Guiderail Grant

The specifications and plans have been completed; however, the bid has not been posted as we have awaited NJDOT review. As of today, the project is now ready to be posted for bid.

# School Sports Fields

The grading and drainage plans have been prepared and are ready to submit to the County Soil Conservation district. A copy of the application is provided tonight for endorsement. An application fee is required and endorsement of the application. Our office reviewed the project with the highlands council who indicated that if the project did not require Planning Board review, that no formal determination from them will be required, though they would provide a review and certification if we requested.

Mr. Ingram advised that Warren County Soil Conservation district bases their application fee on the amount of soil disturbance. The township's fee for the permit would be \$3,125.00. He added that they are the only real review we'll have as they are the only regulating agency involved with this type project. Further discussion ensued.

### Baer Aggregate Quarry

The annual inspection was performed and the site was found to be in accordance with its prior approvals.

### **Aqua Road Permits**

Significant progress was made in cleaning out old permits with Aqua and obtaining up to date permits for the year. Eight inspections were performed on recent work. The area surrounding Shimer School continues to suffer routine water main breaks requiring repair. Mr. Ingram noted that Aqua is having a lot of water main breaks but don't seem to have any plans to do any major infrastructure repairs which is kind of shocking considering what they are paying in emergency fees over and over again.

### Phillipsburg Mall

Our inquiries to NJDEP regarding the basin failure have gone without response.

### **Township Council Reports**

#### **Babinsky**, **Director of Public Works** – absent.

<u>Melvin, Director of Administration</u> – read the Greenwich and Pohatcong Municipal Court reports for the month of August. There has been no response from Greenwich or

any progress on our attempts to renegotiate a new shared service agreement. We're still trending with Greenwich accounting for about 60% of our workload.

Councilman Melvin advised that the PEDAC has not had a meeting the last two months due to lack of quorum. However, the members had participated in National Night Out last month. There are still some uncollected prizes from their raffle in the clerk's office. He will contact the winners again.

He reported that the Open Space Advisory Commission would meet later in the week. The plans for the recreation fields have been discussed and are ready for submission. They'll need a motion to submit that. They will continue to evaluate the properties on the open space inventory to try to convert some of them to rateables and eliminate the township's cost to maintain them.

Councilman Melvin further reported that we had been previously sited by Green Acres noticing us of our responsibility to maintain the tennis courts at Vangeli Park. The township has budgeted for it and will need to take action to come into compliance. Mayor Slack asked the clerk to add a motion to the agenda to authorize her to solicit quotes.

Councilwoman Van Lieu wanted to make sure it is a company that does tennis courts not just paving. She will provide the clerk with a list of companies she knows of. The mayor noted that this is the last thing we need to address in order to have satisfied all the issues listed in their evaluation report.

Melvin advised that the Recreation Association has a 501C3 filing with the IRS awaiting approval. This will enable them to get more donations. They discussed different fundraising strategies to help fund the recreation stuff and they will be playing a key role in the development of the recreation fields behind the school.

Councilman Melvin read the Fire Department's report for August.

From the Land Use Board, Councilman Melvin reported that he was absent for their meeting and asked our engineer to provide a report. Mr. Ingram stated that they had one residential application for completeness and one application from the Bank of America to install a new ATM. It seemed like a straight forward application but a resident raised evidence of his concerns and issues of their not being in compliance with the resolution from 30 years ago. At this point, they are trying to enforce an old resolution and bring them into compliance. They'll be back for the next LUB meeting. Mr. Ingram answered Mayor Slack questions about the drive-throughs. In response to Councilwoman Van Lieu's question, Mr. Ingram said he had not heard anything about Arby's coming in to the former Burger King site at the Pohatcong Plaza. He also informed Mayor Slack and Council that the EAI solar portion of their project is read to go. They plan to start construction in September and connect to the grid by the end of the year. Their housing project has been approved but they have a lot of compliance and a lot of outside permits to obtain, so he expects that it would be six -eight month out before they get shovel in the ground. Further discussion ensued.

### **<u>Van Lieu, Director of Public Safety</u>** – nothing to report.

### **Gray - Director of Public Welfare/Health** – nothing to report.

<u>Mayor Slack</u> – advised that he had another complaint about the camping and overnight parking on River Road. The Mayor said he had talked to Chief Robb about what we can do to better regulate. It's difficult for the township because it is taking place on railroad property and we don't have enforcing authority. Personally, he doesn't think it is right that the area be used as a public campground so we'll have to work through it to come up with a solution.

The Mayor further advised that he had received an email about heavy truck traffic on local roads and reached out to Chief Robb. This situation is because of the road closures for repair in the area, mostly on Route 519, which was closed from March to November

this year and will be again next year. Chief Robb said he has not seen this amount of truck traffic in all his years with the police department.

From the Environmental Commission meeting, he reported that they had talked about the state's plastic bag elimination ordinance. Walmart does not offer an alternative so some members may reach out to them and local business to discuss further.

Mayor Slack read the DPW report of work performed for the period of August 14<sup>th</sup> through September 17<sup>th</sup> in Councilman Babinsky's absence. He further advised that the DPW has addressed all the items of concern from the playground inspection and report from our insurance, PAIC, with the exception of the slide at Alpha Lawn Annex Park which has an 8-inch crack. The report stated it must be removed or replaced.

Assistant DPW Supervisor, Jeff Loveatz replied to the mayor's question advising that they had done 4 of the catch basins and 2 to more to do. Mr. Ingram said that they are on track. They discussed reaching out to Walt Van Lieu to see if he could weld the plastic slide to repair it.

Chief Robb reported that on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, the police department will be implementing the body cameras for all officers. We are the first in the county. If anyone wants to know more about them, the information is on their website in accordance with the attorney general's guidelines. Councilwoman Van Lieu suggested the Chief do a press release.

The Chief followed up on the 1033 program. This program is currently under a federal audit right now so we can't do anything yet.

### Phillipsburg Emergency Squad - Christopher Lee, President

Mayor Slack had asked Mr. Lee to attend tonight's meeting to address some concerns raised in light of the fact that the Lopatcong Emergency Squad would closing on September 21st. Chief Robb has advised that Lopatcong Squad had responded to some of our calls when Phillipsburg was busy. He asked Mr. Lee if the Phillipsburg Emergency Squad would be able to handle the additional calls this will generate. Mr. Lee advised that they have not yet signed a contract to cover Lopatcong but they have covered them in the past. His understanding was that St Luke's doesn't want to provide the service to Lopatcong because it would be a loss for them income wise. He explained that Belvidere and Greenwich Township's Squads are having a hard time getting out to respond, Harmony does not have an Emergency Squad and Bloomsbury Squad closed several years ago. They are covering a large area and are spread quite thin, often getting 2-3 calls in different areas at the same time; but are making adjustments to their scheduling to make this work and will hire some of Lopatcong's EMTs. It would be a very bad decision to have to hire paid staff because there is no way to afford \$1,000,000 in payroll. Mr. Lee said that they are meeting with the other EMS to work together for better coverage. Councilwoman Van Lieu asked if they would be getting Lopatcong's equipment and he said it is not worth buying. Chief Robb said he was concerned because of the high number of calls Lopatcong has. Mr. Lee said he understands the Chief's concerns because you don't schedule 9-1-1 calls and they can't be everywhere at the same time. He went on to explain their plans further. This is going to be a county wide issue for all EMS. In New Jersey, EMS is forgotten, no funding. He said he is very proactive and has reached out to the County Freeholders and offered to meet with anyone to discuss further. This past calendar year, Phillipsburg Emergency Squad responded to 3500 calls and has the best response time in the county. However, this is the first time in eight years that they are working in the red. Further discussion ensued about possible solutions and ways to help: whether purchasing their equipment through shared service agreement would work and ways to get more volunteers. Councilwoman Gray suggested they reach out to WCCC. Mr. Lee said they have done that but there is a very high drop out rate due to the intense amount of training and time. They are required to have two fully trained EMTs on every truck Mr. Lee said that they only had one day's notice about Lopatcong's Squad closing and are doing their best to provide emergency services. He then advised of all their efforts to recruit volunteers and described the required training.

He said not to panic, it will be fine for now. Mayor Slack thanked him for coming to address their concerns.

### Curt Weihz and Michael Margulies - RE: Riegelsville General Store

Michael Margulies introduced himself as a local architect and a member of the Pohatcong Historical Commission and Pohatcong History and Heritage Society. He advised that he had been retained by Stone Soup Preservations, the owners of the Riegelsville General Store, to be their architect and counsel/advisor. The general store was sold to them at an auction 13-14 years ago. He has been involved since July when he was asked to help advise them on how to move forward with the project to get it done. Right now, they are investigating ways to link up with some investors and he's talking with two developers who are potentially interested. They are also looking at some exit strategies, to figure out how to sell the building. As the architect, he went into the building with his structural engineer and masonry conservator to assess the building and come up with an approach to stabilize it. The second floor has partially collapsed so there are some structural issues inside which are not compromising the building as a whole right now but they will in a short time. They plan to reinforce the structure. Regarding the building envelope, the roof was partially repaired. At the time of the auction, there was a requirement that the roof, windows and doors be restored within a certain time frame. Mr. Margulies explained the majority of the roof was fixed in 2009 and provided more detail. They plan to address the rest of the building envelope. They are here tonight to respond to the township's letters of concern. Mr. Margulies wanted to let them know he is now involved and added that he has also been in touch with Ray Stoever, the Construction Official with the state who has also looked at the building.

Attorney Benbrook stated that at Township Council's direction, he had directed the letter to Stone Soup Preservation which is not the first go around on this as Curt (Weihz) knows. At the time of the auction, there was a fairly long list of deed restrictions and time frames that are many years past due. That building was in much better condition at the time it was auctioned than it is now. He told Mr. Margulies it's great that he's involved and that the township knows of the great work he has done on various projects but in this case, we need some definitive time frames of when the building will be stabilized at a minimum. Because frankly if Stone Soup isn't going to do it, then give it back. The township can try to get grants or something to see it restored. It is located at an entrance point to the township and could be a beautiful building. We don't want to see it fall apart. Mr. Margulies said he's hadn't been involved with Stone Soup but had reached out to them about potential developers that were interested. He explained his vision for Riegelsville as a whole and advised that the railroad station will be rebuilt there in the fall. It had burned in 1968. He has also been talking to the new owners of Hoot's and all the owners in that area. There was some discussion about grants and finance/tax credit opportunities and ways to incentivize. The general store would be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Benbrook asked Mr. Margulies if the Riegelsville General Store is already beyond redemption and he said it is not. He asked for 60 days to prepare a plan to show a clear path of the actions and intentions moving forward and would bring that back to Council for the November meeting. Benbrook talked with Margulies about his thoughts about a redevelopment plan and if that would be helpful. He explained that our planner, Jim Kyle, prepared one for the Shimer School and it could be a good idea to get him involved. Mr. Margulies said that one developer actually asked about that. Councilman Melvin asked them to provide a detailed project plan and explained we need to see tangible evidence that things are moving forward because there has been a lot of wait and see with nothing being done prior to Mr. Margulies involvement. Mayor Slack offered the township's assistance. More discussion ensued.

Councilwoman Van Lieu told Mr. Margulies she had faith in him and questioned how the meeting for the grant request for the Shimer Mansion went. Mr. Margulies said that the meeting with the Warren County Municipal & Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee regarding their grant request was favorable but the MCCTFC doesn't have enough money to fund a grant this year for the inside work. They've pretty much completed the work to the roof, windows and doors for the most part. They'll move to the inside work next and utilities: gas lines, water and sewer service and underground

electric. Mr. Margulies said their plan is to partially open the Shimer Mansion as a gallery for local artists in October of 2020.

The following fifteen (15) resolutions were introduced for adoption:

Councilwoman Van Lieu inquired if the salary ordinance amending some salary ranges would need to be adopted prior to their approving the salary resolution. Attorney Benbrook advised that is not necessary because it is the same year.

Benbrook provided more detail of the Panera Bread tax appeal litigation settlement explaining that they withdrew their appeals for the past two years and going forward there will be a reduction in assessment which is the best way to do it so no refund is owed.

He also provided more information about the Resolution regarding the designation of the Shimer School and neighboring gas station property as an area in need of redevelopment.

#### RESOLUTION

## AUTHORIZING THE APPROVAL AND EXECUTION OF STIPULATION OF SETTLEMENT REGARDING PANERA, LLC #601840, AS TENANT, IN A PARCEL OWNED BY ELECTRICAL MOTOR MAINTENANCE, INC.

# V. POHATCONG TOWNSHIP TAX APPEALS

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Pohatcong is presently a Defendant with respect to tax appeals filed by Panera, LLC #601480, as tenant, in a parcel owned by Electrical Motor Maintenance Inc., for years 2018 and 2019;

WHEREAS, after consultation with Jennifer Carabelli, Assessor for the Township of Pohatcong and upon review of the Stipulation of Settlement annexed hereto as **Exhibit** "A", it has been determined that it would be beneficial to the Township to execute said Stipulation of Settlement that would result in the confirmation of the withdrawal of the appeal for Tax Year 2018; a reduction for Tax Year 2019 from an assessment of \$1,775,500.00 to \$1,500,000.00; and an assessment for Tax Year 2020 in the amount of \$890,000.00.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Council of the Township of Pohatcong, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, that Kevin P. Benbrook, Esq. is hereby authorized to execute said Stipulation of Settlement.

### RESOLUTION

### TO CANCEL CAPITAL APPROPRIATION BALANCES

WHEREAS, certain Capital Appropriation Balances remain that are no longer needed or complete; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to formally cancel said balances from Capital Appropriations that will not be spent;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** by the Township Council of the Township of Pohatcong that the following unexpended balances of the Capital Appropriations be cancelled and moved to the General Capital Improvement Fund:

ORDINANCE	AMOUNT
14-18 Improvements to HVAC System	\$16,320.00
15-09 General Road Improvements	\$5,900.77
17-07 Improvements to Garage	\$308.24
17-10 Police Equipment	\$6,494.99
17-12 Various Road Improvements	\$5,240.81
TOTAL TO CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	\$34,264.81

# REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE #2019-012

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector of the Township of Pohatcong advised Mayor and Council that the following property has been redeemed and the money due thereon paid to the Township of Pohatcong Tax Collector;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong this 17<sup>TH</sup> day of September 2019 that refunds are made to the certificate holder as noted:

CERTIFICATE HOLDER	BLK/LOT	CERT#	AMOUNT
US Bankcust for PC7 Firstrust Bank Tax Lien Services 50 South 16 <sup>th</sup> Street, Ste 2050 Philadelphia, PA 19102	52/2	2019-012	\$539.11

### **RESOLUTION**

# PREMIUM RETURN OF TAX CERTIFICATE #2019-012

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector of the Township of Pohatcong has advised Mayor and Council that tax sale certificate #2019-012 for Block 52, Lot 2 has been redeemed;

WHEREAS, a premium of \$100 was paid at the tax sale and has been redeemed within five (5) years;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong this 17<sup>th</sup> day of September 2019 that the premium of \$100 be returned to the following lien holder:

US Bankcust for PC 7 Firstrust Bank Certificate #2019-012 Tax Lien Services 50 South 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Ste 2050 Philadelphia, PA 19102

### RESOLUTION

### AUTHORIZING CANCELLATION OF MUNICIPAL CERTIFICATE OF SALE 2019-025

WHEREAS, Certificate of Sale #2019-025 was issued to the Township of Pohatcong, 50 Municipal Drive, Phillipsburg, NJ, for delinquent 2018 property maintenance charges on Block 115, Lot 2, assessed to Musto, Abbie J. at a tax sale held on June 11, 2019; and

WHEREAS, this certificate has been fully satisfied;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Mayor and Municipal Clerk of the Township of Pohatcong are hereby authorized to endorse Certificate of Sale #2019-025 for cancellation.

# REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE #2019-009

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector of the Township of Pohatcong advised Mayor and Council that the following property has been redeemed and the money due thereon paid to the Township of Pohatcong Tax Collector;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong this 17<sup>TH</sup> day of September 2019 that refunds are made to the certificate holder as noted:

CERTIFICATE HOLDER	BLK/LOT	CERT#	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Atlanta Discount Home Deals, LLC 10 Adam Labar Road East Stroudsburg, PA 18302	46/4	2019-009	\$482.63

### **RESOLUTION**

# REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE #2019-002

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector of the Township of Pohatcong advised Mayor and Council that the following property has been redeemed and the money due thereon paid to the Township of Pohatcong Tax Collector;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong this 17<sup>TH</sup> day of September 2019 that refunds are made to the certificate holder as noted:

CERTIFICATE HOLDER	BLK/LOT	CERT#	AMOUNT
Arthur Frustaci 712 Rugby Road Phillipsburg, NJ 08865	10.02/5.01	2019-002	\$396.21

### **RESOLUTION**

# PREMIUM RETURN OF TAX CERTIFICATE #2019-002

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector of the Township of Pohatcong has advised Mayor and Council that tax sale certificate #2019-002 for Block 10.02, Lot 5.01 has been redeemed;

WHEREAS, a premium of \$100 was paid at the tax sale and has been redeemed within five (5) years;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong this 17<sup>th</sup> day of September 2019 that the premium of \$100 be returned to the following lien holder:

Arthur Frustaci Certificate #2019-002 712 Rugby Road Phillipsburg, NJ 08865

# REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE #2019-014

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector of the Township of Pohatcong advised Mayor and Council that the following property has been redeemed and the money due thereon paid to the Township of Pohatcong Tax Collector;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong this 17<sup>TH</sup> day of September 2019 that refunds are made to the certificate holder as noted:

CERTIFICATE HOLDER	BLK/LOT	CERT#	AMOUNT
Arthur Frustaci 712 Rugby Road Phillipsburg, NJ 08865	62/3	2019-014	\$311.84

### **RESOLUTION**

# REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE #2019-003

**WHEREAS**, the Tax Collector of the Township of Pohatcong advised Mayor and Council that the following property has been redeemed and the money due thereon paid to the Township of Pohatcong Tax Collector;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong this 17<sup>TH</sup> day of September 2019 that refunds are made to the certificate holder as noted:

CERTIFICATE HOLDER	BLK/LOT	CERT#	AMOUNT
Christiana T C/F CE1/Firstrust PO Box 5021 Philadelphia, PA 19111-5021	15.01/4	2019-003	\$3,046.60

### **RESOLUTION**

# PREMIUM RETURN OF TAX CERTIFICATE #2019-003

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector of the Township of Pohatcong has advised Mayor and Council that tax sale certificate #2019-003 for Block 15.01, Lot 4 has been redeemed;

**WHEREAS**, a premium of \$5,100 was paid at the tax sale and has been redeemed within five (5) years;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong this 17<sup>th</sup> day of September 2019 that the premium of \$5,100 be returned to the following lien holder:

Christiana T C/F CE1/Firstrust Certificate #2019-003 PO Box 5021 Philadelphia, PA 19111-5021

### OVERPAYMENT OF TAXES YEAR 2019

**WHEREAS**, the following properties have an overpayment of property taxes for the tax year 2019;

WHEREAS, these overpayments occurred due to a successful tax appeal;

BLOCK 110, LOT 47 \$1,561.53 PROPERTY LOCATION: 130 MOUNTAIN ROAD PAYABLE TO: 1770 REALTY, LLC 5B BENNINGTON LANE WHITING, NJ 08759

BLOCK 113, LOT 28 \$2,964.43 PROPERTY LOCATION: 12 RIVER ROAD PAYABLE TO: CKCW, LLC 2664 BERGSTRESSER DRIVE HELLERTOWN, PA 18055

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong on this 17<sup>th</sup> day of September 2017 that the Chief Financial Officer is hereby authorized to issue refund checks for the above properties and the Tax Collector shall note the records accordingly.

### **RESOLUTION**

### 100% DISABLED VETERAN BLOCK 57, LOT 4 506 PERSHING AVENUE

WHEREAS, the Tax Assessor has granted exempt status on 08/28/2019 to property owner Kelly Susana Miranda for Block 57, Lot 4;

**WHEREAS**, if the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong agree with the above effective date the property taxes will be adjusted appropriately from the effective date of 8/28/2019;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Pohatcong on this 17<sup>th</sup> day of September 2019 that the above referenced property is tax exempt and the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to make the necessary adjustments to reflect this.

# RESOLUTION SETTING THE 2019 SALARIES FOR ALL EMPLOYEES IN THE TOWNSHIP OF POHATCONG

POSITION	EMPLOYEE	SALARY RATE
911 Coordinator	Chief Scott Robb	-
	Bryan Courter	\$15.50 per hour
Administrative Finance Clerk		effective 3/18/19
Assessment Search Officer	Wanda Kutzman	\$1,485.91
	Gini Kinney	\$221.83/day, 1
Building Custodian		day/wk.

David Slack, Kevin Melvin, William Oertel through July 14, 2019 - Vacant, Mary Van Lieu, Stephen Babinsky (Declined) \$2,165.18  Mayor and Councilmembers (Declined) \$2,165.18  Angeline Kasharian \$30,000.00 effective 2/19/19  Deputy 2nd Emerg. Management Christine Knoble \$34,002.50  Deputy Emergency Management Chief Robb - Chief R	Code Enforcement Officer	Joseph Rossi	\$6,368.18
William Oertel through July 14, 2019 - Vacant, Mary Van Lieu, Stephen Babinsky (Declined)   S2,165.18		1	+ -,
Mayor and Councilmembers    Lieu, Stephen Babinsky (Declined)   \$2,165.18     Angeline Kasharian   \$30,000.00     Court Office Assistant   Matthew Kist   \$2,914.51     Deputy 2nd Emerg. Management   Christine Knoble   \$34,002.50     Deputy Emergency Management   Chief Robb   -			
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OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF POHATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, FINDING THAT PROPERTY KNOWN AS BLOCK 44, LOT 11 AND BLOCK 45.02, LOT 13, IS AN AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT UNDER THE CRITERIA SET FORTH IN THE NEW JERSEY LOCAL REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING LAW, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, ET SEQ., AS AMENDED

**WHEREAS** the Township Council, with the adoption of a Resolution on September 5, 2018, directed the Land Use Board, in accordance with the provisions of the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5, to conduct a preliminary investigation relative to certain properties known as Block 44, Lot 1 and

Block 45.02, Lot 13 as shown on the Official Tax Map of the Township of Pohatcong, and

**WHEREAS** Township Planner, James T. Kyle PP/AICP, assisted the Land Use Board in preparing a "Preliminary Investigation for Determination of a "Noncondemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment" dated July 5, 2019, which included a map of the parcels investigated and the basis for such investigation; and

**WHEREAS** the Land Use Board of the Township of Pohatcong, in accordance with the public notice requirements contained in the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, held a public hearing on August 13, 2019; and

WHEREAS at the public hearing, testimony was provided by the Township Planner's office regarding the conditions in the area studied, and whether conditions warranted a finding that the area qualified as a "Non-condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment" under the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, and members of the public were provided the opportunity to submit written and oral testimony supporting, objecting to or providing comments about the potential designation of the area studied as a "Non-condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment"; and

**WHEREAS** once the public hearing was completed, the Land Use Board adopted a resolution recommending that Township Council designate the area studied as a "Noncondemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment" in accordance with the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law; and

WHEREAS the Township Council of the Township of Pohatcong has reviewed the Land Use Board's recommendations and determined it is indeed appropriate to designate the area studied as a "Non-condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment" in accordance with the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Township Council of the Township of Pohatcong, in the County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

- 1. The Township Council hereby find and determines that for the reasons set forth more fully by the Land Use Board within the resolution it issued regarding its preliminary investigation of the study area, and as detailed in the document entitled "Preliminary Investigation for Determination of a "Non-Condemnation" Area in Need of Redevelopment", dated July 5, 2019, prepared with the assistance of the Township Planner, the properties designated as Block 44, Lot 1 and Block 45.02, Lot 13, as shown on the Official Tax Map of the Township of Pohatcong, qualify and are hereby determined to constitute a "non-condemnation" area in need of redevelopment under the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law.
- 2. Township Council hereby authorizes the Land Use Board to prepare a redevelopment plan.
- 3. The Township Clerk is directed to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to all record owners of property within the area in need of redevelopment, all persons or entities whose names are listed on the tax assessor's records as having an interest in the property within the area in need of redevelopment, and upon each person or entity who filed a written objection to the preliminary investigation and stated in such written submission an address to which notice of determination may be sent.
- 4. This resolution shall take effect as provided within N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6b(5)(c).

## **Motion:**

Councilwoman Van Lieu made the motion to adopt the foregoing fifteen (15) resolutions. Seconded by Melvin, the motion carried 4-0 (ayes: Gray, Melvin, Van Lieu and Slack nays: none, absent: Babinsky).

The following two (2) ordinances were introduced by title only.

### 19-04 ORDINANCE

# PROVIDING FUNDING FOR VARIOUS GENERAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

# BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF POHATCONG, IN THE COUNTY OF WARREN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AS FOLLOWS:

- Section 1. The Township of Pohatcong, in the County of Warren, in the State of New Jersey, authorizes the following acquisitions and repairs and improvements in, by and for the Township, including but not limited to the following capital projects: various equipment in the Departments of the Police, Emergency Services, and Public Works; improvements on municipal property, sidewalk improvements, purchase of computer equipment, and road improvements for a total Improvement Authorization of \$37,095.00 to be raised from the General Capital Improvement Fund and Specific Capital Reserves.
- Section 2. The amount of \$37,095.00 hereby appropriated from the General Capital Improvement Fund for the purposes stated in Section 1 of the Ordinance.
- Section 3. The amount of \$26,719.52 hereby appropriated from the Specific Capital Reserve for Fire Equipment for the purposes stated in Section 1 of the Ordinance.
- Section 4. The amount of \$2,105.00 hereby appropriated from the Specific Capital Reserve for Road Equipment for the purposes stated in Section 1 of the Ordinance.
- Section 5. In connection with the purpose and the amount authorized in Sections 1 and 2 hereof, the Township determines the purpose described in Section 1 hereof is not a Current Expense and is an improvement which the Township of Pohatcong may lawfully make as a general improvement.
- Section 6. All ordinances or parts of ordinances which are inconsistent with the terms of this Ordinance be and the same are hereby repealed to the extent of their inconsistency.
- Section 7. This ordinance shall take effect twenty (20) days after final passage and publication as required by law.

## 19-05 ORDINANCE

### TO AMEND THE 2017 SALARY RANGE ORDINANCE FOR CERTAIN POSITIONS IN THE TOWNSHIP OF POHATCONG

POSITION	SALARY RATE
Court Office Assistant	\$22,000 - \$36,000
Deputy Court Administrator	\$18,000 - \$42,000
Dog Licensor	\$1,000 - \$2,500
Municipal Court Administrator	\$40,000 - \$75,000
Municipal Court Call Out	\$40 - \$65 per use
Land Use Board Secretary	\$12,000 - \$30,000

In response to Councilwoman Van Lieu's questions, the clerk explained that to save on advertising costs, the Township and many municipalities adopt a salary range ordinance

setting the minimum and maximum salaries and then set the actual annual salaries by resolution. This year, we need to amend the ranges of some positions. Van Lieu questioned the maximum salary for the LUB secretary. Council discussed and agreed to let it stand.

### **Motion:**

Councilman Melvin made the motion to introduce the foregoing two (2) ordinances and schedule the second reading and public hearing for the meeting to be held on October 15, 2019. Seconded by Slack, the motion carried 4-0 (ayes: Gray, Melvin, Van Lieu and Slack, nays: none, absent: Babinsky).

The 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the following ordinance for public hearing and adoption:

### 19-03 ORDINANCE

# TO RELEASE, VACATE AND EXTINGUISH ANY AND ALL PUBLIC RIGHTS IN AND TO UNNAMED ALLEY

Attorney Benbrook said that this ordinance was introduced at our last meeting after the Huntington Volunteer Fire Department Association had filed a place-to-place liquor license transfer to extend their licenses premise to an adjacent property. The problem is there is a public right of way between the two properties and therefore would not meet ABC regulations. Our engineer, Wayne Ingram to a look at the alley and wrote up a description for the ordinance to vacate the alley.

### **Motion:**

Councilwoman Van Lieu made the motion to open the foregoing ordinance to public comment, seconded by Melvin. The motion carried; all were in favor.

Kim Bondaruk of Center Street asked what the plans are for the property on Center Street. She asked if they are able to extend their liquor license to that property would that enable them to have open containers of alcohol freely anywhere on that property. She lives there and has children so she's concerned about that with the number of kids around. Benbrook replied that they could in the licensed area and gave the example of restaurants or bars that have a patio/outdoor areas. He noted that would be addressed with the liquor license. Ms. Bondaruk went on to explain she has no problem with and has attended events the fire house holds because they are contained at the corner on Maple Avenue. She expressed her concerns that this would affect the residents.

Kyle Purdy, President of the Huntington Volunteer Fire Department Association approached Council with a drawing of the proposed extension to the licensed area. Ms. Bondaruk approached Council to show where her home is located. Mr. Purdy said that they had recently purchased the property on Center Street and wanted to extend their licensed permit to enable them to hold their events (corn hole tournament, wet downs in that yard). Councilman Melvin asked how many social affairs permits they get a year and Mr. Purdy replied no more than two. Mr. Bob Sickles advised that they do not have any definite plans for that property yet; but that area is not large enough to put up a building to hold wedding receptions. That can't happen. He said that they are kicking around some ideas. They are aware that whatever plans they would come up with will need drawings, plans and Land Use Board approval. Mr. Sickels reiterated that they have no definite plans; it all depends on capital. Benbrook said that if the liquor license area was extended to that property, the members could have alcohol there. There was further discussion about social affair permits and the proposed licensed area. Ms. Bondaruk asked that they hold off on adopting this ordinance until there is a more definitive plan of what the association is going to do because this is a residential area. Chief Robb

explained that he reviews applications for social affairs permits and he and the clerk sign off on them. The clerk agreed but clarified that if the licensed area was extended, the members could have alcohol in the licensed area. They would only need a Social Affair permit when they would hold an event that would be open to the public. A lengthy discussion ensued about social affairs permits and where alcohol can be served within the licensed premises and the process of a liquor license place-to-place transfer to extend premises and the advertising requirements. The clerk noted that vacating the alley does not appear to be the issue. The township has done that many times with different alleys in the township and the property owners on both sides each get half of it added to their deeds. Mr. Ingram agreed adding they are discussing two separate issues. He explained that the reasons for vacating the alley go beyond the liquor license. This alley is not open because there are multiple properties on the street that are using this alley for their private uses and the fire dept use a section as a driveway/parking area without full rights because it's still municipal land. It creates a divide between the properties regardless of what they want to do. He'd suggest putting the liquor license aside and vacate an alley that divides two properties and common ownership for all the other residents that utilize that land without full rights of land the township will never utilize. Ms. Bondaruk said she understands that but thinks it will ultimately affect the residents in the neighborhood.

Patti Smith, 292 Maple Avenue, said her home is right next to the fire house parking lot. She has the same concerns that vacating the alley would enable the HVFDA to expand their license premises. Mr. Ingram advised that any change of use, even if a permissible change of use, would require them to go before the LUB to get their plan approved. A liquor license issue or use of that building is a separate issue from vacating the alley. She disagreed because vacating the alley came up because of the plan to expand the licensed premises. He advised Council they should evaluate the vacation of the alley as a completely separate issue because anything else, the liquor license or use of the house are not actual applications before them. Councilman Melvin further explained that Municipal Land Use Law requires that any change of use application requires the applicant to notice the property owners within 200 feet. Mr. Ingram added that had this alley come to his attention, he would be recommending that Council vacate it because the township is owning land that residents are privately utilizing and accessing and not paying taxes on. Benbrook agreed with Mr. Ingram's assessment that the ordinance to vacate they alley has merit. He further advised that the state's regulations dictate that liquor licensees can only have 12 Social Affair permits annually. Ms. Bondaruk asked that the Fire Department consider using that property for additional parking because that is sometimes a problem for some events. Mr. Sickles said they could do that weather permitting, not when it's raining or wet. More discussion ensued.

### **Motion:**

Hearing no further comment, Councilwoman Van Lieu moved to close public comment, Gray seconded and the motion carried 4-0 (ayes Gray, Melvin, Van Lieu and Slack, nays: none, absent Babinsky).

Councilwoman Van Lieu would like to table this ordinance indefinitely and asked the HVFDA to provide a definitive plan for that property including a time table before they consider adopting this ordinance. She also said that there are many things that need to be considered like the costs involved with expanding to this additional property, how it effects the Fire Department and the township because we provide funding. Mr. Sickels expressed concerns about being held to a time line like the Riegelsville General Store because it all depends on capital. Mayor Slack said that it's different because that was deed restrictions. Van Lieu offered additional comments. Benbrook advised that the Council procedurally cannot table the ordinance indefinitely. They can advise they are adjourning the public hearing and adoption to the next meeting. There was further discussion and debate, Mayor Slack asked Mr. Purdy if they could provide a plan for the next meeting. Jeff Loveatz addressed Council and said he is a trustee of the HVDFDA and there is no way they will be able to provide a definitive plan. They have no plans for this property at this time. Mayor Slack said he understood that it all depends on capital but to do their best.

### **Motion:**

Councilwoman Van Lieu moved to table and continue Ordinance 19-03 to the October 15, 2019 meeting. Seconded by Slack, the motion carried 3-1 (ayes: Gray, Van Lieu and Slack, nays: Melvin, absent: Babinsky). Benbrook noted that there will be no further notice.

### Motion(s):

<u>Motion:</u> (To approve James C. Wyant's application for membership with the Pohatcong Fire Department)

**Motion:** (To approve Natalie L. Pursell's application for membership with the Pohatcong Fire Department)

**Motion:** (To approve Zachary K. Snyder's application for membership with the Junior Firemen's Auxiliary of the Pohatcong Fire Department)

**Motion:** (To approve Thomas Robjohns application for a Blue Light Permit)

Motion: (To authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute an Agreement of Donation with the County of Warren to participate in the FEMA grant opportunity for acquisition and demolition of severe and repetitive loss properties, Theresa Ann Maher, the property know as Block 97 Lot 39, 475 River Road of the official Tax Map of the Township of Pohatcong and maintain it as open space in perpetuity as required by FEMA Deed Restrictions) - Tabled

**Motion:** (To approve a quote from Municipal Software, MSI for a new desktop computer for the Tax/Sewer Utility Collector in the amount of \$2355)

<u>Motion:</u> (To authorize Chief Robb to donate a 2010 Ford Crown Victoria to the Warren County Vo-Tech for training purposes)

**Motion:** (Establish October 31st as Trick or Treat Night 6:00 p.m. -8:00 p.m.)

Motion: (To amend Bryan Courter's, Administrative Assistant to Finance Officer, work hours effective September 20<sup>th</sup> through November 22, 2019 for Fridays: 11:00 -3:00 p.m. Mon., Tues., Weds., and Thurs. remain 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

**Motion:** (to authorize the clerk to solicit quotes to resurface the tennis courts)

**Motion:** (to authorize Township Engineer, Wayne Ingram to sign and submit the plans for the sports field project to for the Warren County Soil Conservation permit in the amount of \$3,125 if fee cannot be waived)

Councilwoman Gray made the motion to approve the foregoing ten (10) motions and table one regarding the FEMA property. Seconded by Melvin, the motion carried 4-0 (ayes: Gray, Melvin, Van Lieu and Slack nays: none, absent: Babinsky).

### **Public Comments:**

Mayor Slack called upon Susan Schier of River Road and thanked her for her emails providing photos of the problems with over-night parking, camping and littering on River Road. He said we realize this has been an ongoing issue; it needs to be better addressed going forward. We're at the end of summer so hopefully this issue will soon resolve for this calendar year but we need to address it better. Attorney Benbrook stated that the Council had authorized him and the chief to work together to strengthen our parking ordinance for River Road considering addressing resident versus non-residents and some other ideas.

Ms. Schier stated that she had spoken to Mayor Slack and Chief Robb about the issues in August. She specifically waited to report these issues in order to gather information and photos of what had happened over the summer. There were campers there every weekend from July 4th through Labor Day. Council had adopted an ordinance in 2015 to address the overnight parking but that needs to be revisited. There are a lot more cars and vehicles than previous years, some even parking on her personal property which they never had before. She continued to explain her concerns that there had been two campsites and now there are four. Parking large SUVs and trailers carrying boats and jetskis making it difficult to drive River Road. She invited Council to come down, walk the area and look at all the trash that has been building up and sitting there since 4th of July. Labor Day weekend there were 25 cars with 60- 100 people camping on railroad property with no consequence. There are no restroom facilities at all and that is completely unsanitary. Ms. Schier would love to see the railroad get involved and work together with the township Council and residents to resolve this problem. It's getting worse not better.

Shari Bethman of River Road has lived there 12 years and has seen this get worse every year. There are campfires, trash and unsanitary conditions. Mayor Slack asked Bob Sickels if campfires are permitted. Mr. Sickels said open burns are not permitted in the state of New Jersey without a permit. Ms. Schier said her understanding was they wouldn't have jurisdiction there. She explained the winery train bus barely missed her car. There was further discussion of the situation of the traffic, trash, children wandering along the railroad tracks, etc. with Chief Robb. The Chief said that they need to have these incidents reported when they are occurring; but even with that, because it happens on the weekend, we can't get anyone from the NJDEP out to inspect. He further explained that they can't enforce trespassing because they don't have permission from the railroad. Also, the campers have the advantage because they are down the bank off the road and get rid of their alcohol and are on their best behavior when they see the police coming. Chief Robb said that they have issued permits for each vehicle that has applied and shown a fishing license in compliance with our ordinance. Mayor Slack will talk to the Board of Health about the unsanitary situation. Councilman Melvin said we'll need to reach out to the railroad and work some different avenues to address this situation. Benbrook said he'd reach out to Kean Burenga, owner of the railroad, and work with him and the Chief to strengthen out ordinance to enable enforcement of trespass. More discussion ensued.

### **Old Business:**

Mayor Slack said we were hoping to hear something from Greenwich by tonight regarding our attempts to negotiate a new shared service which has been going on for about 10 months with no settlement. He advised that we had sent a letter giving tonight as our deadline but have heard nothing from them. Benbrook reviewed the dates of letters sent and his discussion with their attorney, Mike Lavery, in June who told him their committee would address it at their next meeting; but we still have heard nothing. The last letter he directed dated September 5<sup>th</sup>, advised that the Township Council no longer want to continue on a month-to-month basis because the contract expired in June 2018 and to consider this letter as termination of that agreement effective immediately. He further informed them that if we heard nothing by our September 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, Council will discuss implementing a monthly cost share based upon the percentage of tickets. Council discussed further with Chief Robb and agreed to our proposed 75-25% split of tickets. Councilman Melvin asked that it be made effective September 1<sup>st</sup> or immediately if that is not feasible. He will check with Cyndi Lehr, our Municipal Court Administrator.

**Motion:** (to implement a 75/25% cost share of tickets with Greenwich Township and hold their 25% until a new contract is negotiated effective September 1<sup>st</sup> or today)

Councilwoman Van Lieu moved to approve the foregoing motion as stated. Seconded by Slack, the motion carried 4-0 (ayes: Gray, Melvin, Van Lieu and Slack, nays: none, absent: Babinsky).

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None.

# **Correspondence**

Copies of all correspondence were distributed, action taken where necessary and filed for further perusal.

# <u>Adjourn</u>

There being no further business to come before Council at this time, on motion by Van Lieu, seconded by Gray, this meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Wanda L. Kutzman, RMC Township Clerk

/wlk