COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 10, 2024, 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL

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1. Mayor Rizzuto called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Mayor Rizzuto asked Monmouth County Prosecutor, Raymond Santiago to lead the salute to the flag.

3. Administrator Capristo read the following Sunshine Statement: "The notice requirements of the New Jersey Public Meetings Law have been satisfied by noticing the Asbury Park Press and the Two River Times on January 8, 2024, stating that a regular meeting of the Township Committee would be held on July 10, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., 1 Veterans Way, Colts Neck, NJ 07722, Town Hall. A copy is on file in the office of the Township Clerk."

4. Roll call by Municipal Clerk Lindsey indicated the following:

Present:	Mayor Frank Rizzuto, Deputy Mayor Tara Torchia Buss, Committeeman Michael Viola, Committeeman J.P. Bartolomeo and Committeewoman Sue Fitzpatrick
Also Present:	Kathleen Capristo, Township Administrator, Trina Lindsey, Municipal Clerk, and Meghan Bennett, Township Counsel
Absent:	None

5. **Annual Audit 2023:**

Committeeman Viola stated that the township is statutorily required to conduct an annual audit. Committeeman Viola introduced the Township Auditor, Raymond Sarinelli to review his findings.

Raymond Sarinelli of Nisivoccia, Township Auditor, reviewed the 2023 audit. Mr. Sarinelli explained that the audit is reviewed and broken down into three components, the current fund including grants, the trust fund and the capital fund. Mr. Sarinelli stated that the current fund operations account contains a fund balance of $5,390,684.82, which is an increase of $1,074,073.35 from the balance of 12/31/2022 of $4,316,611.47. Mr. Sarinelli stated that this number includes using $1,950,000.00 in 2023 to balance the budget. Mr. Sarinelli stated that the surplus increased due to an increase in investments and federal grants utilized in the budget. Mr. Sarinelli stated that the capital fund is in compliance and there were five new ordinances in 2023 and all debt was paid in a timely manner. Mr. Sarinelli stated that there were no audit comments, and everything tested was in compliance with AICPA and GASB accounting principles.

Chief Financial Officer, John Antonides, stated that he has a great financial team of employees who are very dedicated, and the audit shows that.

Committeeman Bartolomeo asked Mr. Sarinelli if the audit conducted was a forensic audit. Mr. Sarinelli responded no.

6. **Oath of Office**

   a. Daniel DeVito – Chief of Police

Sherriff Shaun Golden administered the oath of office to Chief of Police, Daniel DeVito. Chief DeVito made a brief statement thanking his wife, children, family, the Colts Neck Police Department staff, the Governing Body, Administrator Capristo and the entire Colts Neck Township staff. Chief DeVito also thanked and acknowledged former Chief Paul Santucci for his leadership and friendship.

7. **Approval of minutes:**

a. June 26, 2024 – Regular meeting

Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick, seconded by Deputy Mayor Buss and a unanimous roll call vote, the minutes were approved as presented.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Rizzuto		X			
Deputy Mayor Buss	S	X			
Viola		X			
Bartolomeo		X			
Fitzpatrick	M	X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

8. **Old Business:**

a. Ordinance 2024-18: An ordinance amending the Emergency Services Volunteer Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) in Colts Neck Township

Mayor Rizzuto read the ordinance by title for second reading/public hearing. Mayor Rizzuto called for comments. Hearing none, Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to open the public hearing. On a motion by Deputy Mayor Buss, seconded by Committeeman Viola and a unanimous voice vote, the public hearing was opened.

Elaine Mann, resident, thanked the Governing Body for passing this ordinance. Ms. Mann commented about the sacrifice the first responders make and stated that they deserve this LOSAP benefit. Hearing no further comments from the public, Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to close the public hearing. On a motion by Committeeman Viola, seconded by Deputy Mayor Buss and a unanimous voice vote, the public hearing was closed. Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Viola, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a unanimous roll call vote, the ordinance was adopted.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Rizzuto				X	
Deputy Mayor Buss		X			
Viola	M	X			
Bartolomeo		X			
Fitzpatrick	S	X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

9. **New business:**

a. Ordinance 2024-19: An ordinance of Colts Neck Township in the County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey, amending Ordinance 2024-13, an ordinance setting the salary and wage ranges for township employees

Mayor Rizzuto read the ordinance by title for first reading/introduction. Mayor Rizzuto called for comment. Administrator Capristo explained that this ordinance is in connection with the Shared Services Agreement with the Borough of West Long Branch for Tax Collector services. Administrator Capristo explained that this ordinance adjusts the minimum and maximum salary range. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Bartolomeo, seconded by Deputy Mayor Buss and a unanimous roll call vote, the ordinance was

approved for introduction/first reading. Mayor Rizzuto stated that the public hearing is scheduled for August 14, 2024.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Rizzuto		X			
Deputy Mayor Buss	S	X			
Viola		X			
Bartolomeo	M	X			
Fitzpatrick		X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

b. Ordinance 2024-20: Ordinance amending Chapter 93 "Certificates of continued occupancy" of the Code of Colts Neck Township, County of Monmouth

Mayor Rizzuto read the ordinance by title for first reading/introduction. Mayor Rizzuto called for comment. Township Attorney, Meghan Bennett stated that the language changes in this ordinance is state preempted language. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Viola, seconded by Deputy Mayor Buss and a unanimous roll call vote, the ordinance was approved for introduction/first reading. Mayor Rizzuto stated that the public hearing is scheduled for August 14, 2024.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Rizzuto		X			
Deputy Mayor Buss	S	X			
Viola	M	X			
Bartolomeo		X			
Fitzpatrick		X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

c. Resolution 2024-116: Governing Body Certification of the Annual Audit

Mayor Rizzuto called for comments. Mayor Rizzuto and the entire Governing Body thanked Chief Financial Officer, John Antonides and his staff for their hard work and dedication to Colts Neck Township. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Viola, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Rizzuto		X			
Deputy Mayor Buss		X			
Viola	M	X			
Bartolomeo		X			
Fitzpatrick	S	X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

d. Resolution 2024-117: Resolution of Colts Neck Township, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey, awarding a 2-year lease agreement for the right to lease ground space for the ownership and management of the existing communications tower (Tower 2) at the Colts Neck DPW Garage

Mayor Rizzuto called for comments. Township Attorney, Meghan Bennett stated that this resolution is awarding the contract to the sole bidder for a two-year lease in connection with cell tower 2 at DPW. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Rizzuto

called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Viola, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Rizzuto		X			
Deputy Mayor Buss		X			
Viola	M	X			
Bartolomeo		X			
Fitzpatrick	S	X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

e. Resolution 2024-118: Establishing 2024 salaries and wages for non-union township positions

Mayor Rizzuto called for comments. Committeeman Viola stated that this resolution is to increase the salaries for the SLEO III officers that work in the Colts Neck Schools and the High School. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Viola, seconded by Deputy Mayor Buss and a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Rizzuto		X			
Deputy Mayor Buss	S	X			
Viola	M	X			
Bartolomeo		X			
Fitzpatrick		X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

f. Consent Agenda

All items listed on the "Consent Agenda" are considered routine by the Township and are adopted or approved collectively by a single motion and roll-call vote of a majority of the Township Committee. If discussion is desired on any item, it is considered separately.

a. Resolution 2024-119: Authorizing permit fee refunds, Big Brook Preserve

b. Resolution 2024-120: Extending the grace period for payment of third quarter property taxes

Mayor Rizzuto announced that Resolution 2024-120 is being removed from the agenda. Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Viola, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Rizzuto		X			
Deputy Mayor Buss		X			
Viola	M	X			
Bartolomeo		X			
Fitzpatrick	S	X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

g. Approval of Vouchers

Committeeman Viola stated that he reviewed all of the vouchers and found all to be in order. Committeeman Viola stated that there is a reimbursement on the bills list for Administrator Capristo due to a scheduling challenge the summer camp program was facing with the schools. Committeeman Viola explained that the school was not available on a particular day for the summer camp attendees. Committeeman Viola complimented Administrator Capristo and the Recreation Director, Colby Marques for solving this issue by planning a trip to the movie theater where the campers enjoyed seeing Despicable Me 4. Committeeman Viola stated that this trip was made possible by Administrator Capristo using her personal credit card to purchase the movie theater tickets because the movie theater would not accept a purchase order. Committeeman Viola stated that the campers had a wonderful day at the movies and the problem was solved. Committeeman Bartolomeo asked if the township could obtain a credit card in the township name. Attorney Meghan Bennett responded no; the township cannot obtain a credit card in the township's name. There was a brief discussion on how other municipalities handle situations such as this with a petty cash fund possibly or by reimbursement to an employee.

Committeeman Viola made a motion to approve the bill list.

Mayor Rizzuto called for a second to Committeeman Viola's motion, seconded by Committeeman Bartolomeo and a unanimous roll call vote, the bills list was approved.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Rizzuto		X			
Deputy Mayor Buss		X			
Viola	M	X			
Bartolomeo	S	X			
Fitzpatrick		X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

Mayor Rizzuto recuses from any bills/vouchers in connection with the Colts Neck Fire Department.

Deputy Mayor Buss recuses from any bills/vouchers in connection with the shared municipal court with Holmdel Township.

Committeeman Viola recuses from any bills/vouchers in connection with Best Horticultural and Joleen Landscaping.

h. Administrator's Report
None

i. Township Committee Reports

Committeeman Bartolomeo

- Committeeman Bartolomeo congratulated Chief DeVito on his promotion and wished him well in his new position.

Committeewoman Fitzpatrick

- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that on June 26, 2024 the Township Committee attended the celebration and final walkout for Chief Paul Santucci. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that it was a wonderful and well-deserved tribute to a humble man who has served Colts Neck so admirably.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that on July 1, 2024, she had the honor of swearing in the Colts Neck Township new Chief of Police, Daniel DeVito. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that Chief DeVito was joined by his wife, Michelle, his children and his mother, Joanne, as well as Committeeman Viola.

Committeewoman Fitzpatrick wished Chief DeVito much success as he begins his leadership of the Colts Neck Police Department.

- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she attended the July 3, 2024, fireworks which was a great night and well-attended. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that there were an estimated 869 cars parked and approximately 2,700 attendees. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick thanked the Colts Neck Business Association for sponsoring the event. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated there was a great presence of the Colts Neck first responders. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick also thanked the Recreation Director, Colby Marques for his assistance prior to and during the event. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that Mayor Rizzuto's daughter, Bella, did a beautiful job singing the National Anthem. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the apple pie contest was a big hit as always, which is sponsored by the Colts Neck Women's Club, Anita Dedalis and former Mayor Jim Schatzle. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the LA Dance School performed several of their dance routines and were fabulous. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the parking company did a great job, and they were commended by our Chief and officers on duty for their professionalism and efficiency. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that on July 4th the decorations were removed from the park and all garbage collected and picked up throughout the park. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that you would never know that the night before there were 2,700 plus people in the park.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that last night the Long-Range Planning Committee met and reviewed the ERI that had been submitted to the Township Planner, Tim Anfuso by the Environmental Commission and the Green Team Advisory Committee. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that there are some areas that need to be edited and then resubmitted to the Long-Range Planning Committee. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the committee also discussed ordinances concerning zoning requirements and design standards for mixed-use.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick reported that the Environmental Commission and the Green Team Advisory Committee will not meet in July or August.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the Farmland and Open Space Committee meeting was cancelled.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the Sounds of Summer Concert series continues tomorrow night at Town Hall, pondside from 7:00pm – 8:30pm where the Central Jersey Wind Ensemble will play featuring "old time concert in the park" music.

Committeeman Viola:

- Committeeman Viola reported that the Colts Neck Sounds of Summer Concert Series will resume tomorrow night and continue for the next five Thursday's.
- Committeeman Viola stated that he is very proud of the Chief Financial Officer, John Antonides and the entire staff for receiving no comments/corrective action plan on the 2023 annual audit.
- Committeeman Viola stated that the Independence Day celebrations were a huge success.
- Committeeman Viola reported that the Senior Citizen's Club met last week and the new Chief of Police, Chief DeVito attended to introduce himself.

Deputy Mayor Buss:

- Deputy Mayor Buss congratulated Chief Daniel DeVito and wished him much success in his new role.
- Deputy Mayor Buss reminded everyone that National Night Out is scheduled for August 6, 2024, at Bucks Mill Park where there will be a dunk tank, balloon art, and much more. Deputy Mayor Buss stated that National Night Out is sponsored by the Prevention Alliance and the Colts Neck PBA.
- Deputy Mayor Buss stated that the Friends of the Library continue preparing for their upcoming book sale, which is scheduled for September 21, 2024, and September 22, 2024, book donations will be accepted until August 31, 2024.

Mayor Rizzuto:

- Mayor Rizzuto reported that the Historic Preservation Committee is reviewing the possibility of joining forces with a non-profit agency for fundraising purposes. Mayor Rizzuto stated that the Committee is working with Township Attorney, Meghan Bennett.
- Mayor Rizzuto stated that Countryside Developers received final site plan approval at last night's Planning Board meeting.
- Mayor Rizzuto stated that he attended the Independence Day celebration on July 3, 2024, at Bucks Mill Park and had a wonderful time.

10. Public Comment:

Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to open public comment. On a motion by Committeeman Viola, seconded by Deputy Mayor Buss and a unanimous voice vote, public comment was opened.

Melinda Martin, resident, stated that the township website indicates that Big Brook Preserve is closed, however, she sees cars parked there. Ms. Martin inquired if Big Brook Preserve is still closed and stated that if it has reopened the township website needs to be updated.

Eliane Mann, resident, thanked Committeeman Viola for explaining the reimbursement to Administrator Capristo for the summer camp trip. Ms. Mann asked if the Shared Services Agreement with the Borough of West Long Branch will affect the Colts Neck residents paying their taxes online or in person. Ms. Mann commented on the purchase of a vehicle for the Department of Public Works and stated that Committeeman Bartolomeo previously made a comment in regard to the Township having 700 employees. Ms. Mann asked why the township did not purchase equipment for snow plowing purposes since the township contracts with an independent company for snow plowing parts of the town. Ms. Mann stated that when Robert Bowden was the Administrator for the township, the township did have a credit card that was kept with the CFO, John Antonides. Ms. Mann asked why Administrator Capristo is reimbursed for the township Zoom account and asked how Zoom meetings from her home serve the citizens of Colts Neck.

Dave Mann, resident, spoke about electric car fires and the difficulties the Fire Department faces in putting these fires out. Mr. Mann spoke about an EV blanket that is produced in Germany. Mr. Mann stated that Middletown Township recently purchased an EV blanket and stated that the township should look into these.

Allan Ryan, resident, stated that tonight was a great night witnessing Chief DeVito take his oath of office. Mr. Ryan stated that Chief DeVito comes from a family of first responder volunteers, and he wishes him much success in his new role.

As there were no further comments and/or questions from the public, Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to close public comment. On a motion by Committeeman Bartolomeo, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a unanimous voice vote, public comment was closed.

11. Discussion of Public Comment:

Committeeman Bartolomeo responded to Ms. Mann stating that he never made a statement saying that the township has 700 employees. Committeeman Bartolomeo stated that the truck purchase for the Department of Public Works was in the budget.

Committeeman Viola responded to Ms. Mann stating that there will be no change in the tax collection services for the residents of Colts Neck due to the Shared Services Agreement with the Borough of West Long Branch.

Committeeman Viola responded to Ms. Martin stating that Big Brook Preserve is still currently closed and unfortunately the park cannot be patrolled all day/night. Committeeman Viola stated that the township cannot control patrons ignoring the closed signage and notices that the park is closed.

Committeeman Viola responded to Mr. Mann stating that he read an article in regard to Middletown Township purchasing EV blankets which he found very interesting and agrees that it is an important topic to explore.

Deputy Mayor Buss responded to Mr. Mann stating she has been conducting research on the topic of EV blankets for electric car vehicle fires and will be discussing this with the Executive Fire Council.

12. <u>Adjournment</u>:

As there was no further business, Mayor Rizzuto called for a motion to adjourn. On a motion by Committeeman Bartolomeo, seconded by Committeeman Viola and a unanimous voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Trina Lindsey, RMC
Municipal Clerk

APPROVED: 08/14/24