

**THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2020, MOUNT EPHRAIM COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
VIRTUAL MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM**

**MEETING CALL TO ORDER/OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT**

Mayor Wolk called the meeting to order at 7:00pm with the "Pledge of Allegiance" and the "Open Public Meetings Act" statement as it pertains to the current Covid-19 State of Emergency.

**ROLL CALL**

The Clerk called the roll with Commissioner Gies, Commissioner Tovinsky and Mayor Wolk present. Also participating in the Zoom meeting for the Borough were Solicitor Eric Riso, Engineer Greg Fusco, and Clerk Terry Shannon.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PRIOR MEETING**

Mayor Wolk announced that the minutes from the April 14, 2020, Zoom commission meeting were distributed and asked for any corrections. Seeing none, on a motion by Commissioner Tovinsky, second by Commissioner Gies, the minutes were approved with all in favor.

**APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS**

Mayor Wolk announced that vouchers in the amount of \$811,995.85 were submitted for approval. On a motion by Commissioner Tovinsky second by Commissioner Gies, the vouchers as submitted were approved with the following poll vote: Gies-yes; Tovinsky-yes; Wolk-yes.

**ORDINANCE FOR PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION**

Mayor Wolk announced that the following ordinance is being considered for adoption this evening:

Ord. 2020-05 Calendar Year 2020 Ordinance to Exceed Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a CAP Bank (NJSA 40A:4-45.14).

Mayor Wolk opened the public hearing on this ordinance. Seeing no public comment, on a motion by Commissioner Tovinsky, second by Commissioner Gies, the public hearing was closed.

On a motion by Commissioner Tovinsky, second by Commissioner Gies, Ord. 2020-05 was finally adopted with the following poll vote: Tovinsky-yes; Gies-yes; Wolk-yes.

**RESOLUTION CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Wolk asked the Clerk to read the resolutions that are to be approved by Consent Agenda. She read them as follows:

- 33-20 Resolution Designating Professional Appointments
- 34-20 Appointing a New Member to the Mt. Ephraim Fire Department
- 35-20 Resolution Approving a Temporary Emergency Appropriation for 2020 Budget
- 36-20 Resolution to Extend the May 1 Tax Payment Grace Period to June 1
- 37-20 Introduction of the 2020 Municipal Budget

On a motion by Commissioner Tovinsky, second by Commissioner Gies, the resolution consent agenda was approved with the following poll vote: Gies-yes; Tovinsky-yes; Wolk-yes. Resolution consent agenda was approved.

**MAYOR'S PLANNING BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

Mayor Wolk read the following appointments:

- |                                   |               |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Kenneth Herman, Class 2           | one year term |
| Michael "Traz" Tovinsky, Class 3  | one year term |
| Michael Popelak, Alternate, Class | two year term |
| Gary Prinski, Alternate, Class 4  | two year term |

**REPORTS AND COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Gies read highlights from the monthly reports submitted by the Police Department, Municipal Court (March) and the Fire Department for the month of April. He also reported that the Fire Department had 15 calls on April 21 and six calls on April 26 due to the windstorms. The Fire Department, Police Department and Public Works did a great job responding to those storms. The Fire Department has been doing online training during the Covid crisis and have been working to make a lot of improvements at the firehouse. They have done several birthday drive-bys and also conducted a food drive in conjunction with the West Foundation.

Commissioner Tovinsky added a great job done by everybody, Police, Fire and Public Works, responding to the storms. We had a lot of trees down. Trash tonnage is up substantially because of everyone being home. A pole went down at the Veterans Memorial and PSE&G said they will be out to fix it. It was termite damaged. He asked when we will make a decision about Memorial Day and the Mayor said we will discuss during this meeting.

Borough Engineer Greg Fusco reported that Pioneer is working to complete the concrete work on James Street this week. We will then get in touch with Barrett so they can get started. We sent the contract out today to Pioneer for Bell Road and will be scheduling a pre-construction meeting. We submitted an application on May 1 for Open Space funds for Shining Star Park.

Mayor Wolk read the details from the Tax Collector's report for April 2020, reporting total receipts of \$939,350.25 and lien redemptions of \$44,242.99. We introduced the 2020 Budget tonight. He read the budget statement and spoke about the tax increase and the reason for the increase. He said it will cost the average homeowner \$128 per year or \$32 per quarter. The borough's portion of the total tax rate remains around 28%. The details of the budget will be posted on the website and the public hearing will be at the June 4 meeting. He spoke about the death of Jim Connelly, former borough commissioner. He was also a member of American Legion Post 150 and did a tremendous job. We extend condolences to his family.

Mayor Wolk then talked about the Covid situation and the fact that Camden County received 88 million dollars in aid. We don't yet know how it will be distributed. There is a lot of concern in the county about the nursing homes and the number of deaths they have been experiencing due to Covid. The county is optimistic that the growth rate is slowing. Events have been cancelled including the county July 4 celebrations. If anyone knows of anyone having a problem getting unemployment, we will give them contact information for the 5<sup>th</sup> District. We have over 40,000 who have applied in this county. We currently have 13 Covid cases but no deaths.

There was then discussion about our Memorial Day service. Fire Company President Rich Holmes said they are prepared to do a virtual memorial by way of a video. Captain Lafferty is more than capable of preparing a video at the various memorials that can be posted on Facebook on Memorial Day. He needs to know by May 12 what the governing body decides. The Solicitor Riso confirmed that the governor extended the no gatherings restriction to June 1 on Executive Order 138. After more discussion, it was decided we will do a virtual memorial.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mayor Wolk opened the meeting to the public and asked that residents state their name and address for the record. Seeing no public comment, on a motion by Commissioner Tovinsky, second by Commissioner Gies, the public portion was closed.

Seeing no further business to be transacted, on a motion by Commissioner Tovinsky, second by Commissioner Gies, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48pm.

Approved: Terry Shannon  
Terry Shannon, Municipal Clerk