



**City of Lambertville**  
**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING USING ZOOM**  
**MINUTES**

Please use this link to obtain information for meeting participation:  
<http://lambertvillenj.org/virtualmeetings>

**STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

Mayor Fahl called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked the members of the public to allow five more minutes for people to sign on. At 7:05 p.m. she asked the City Clerk to read the statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act into the record.

The City Clerk read the following statement into the record.

This meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act with the Annual Notice advertised in Trenton Times, provided to the Hunterdon County Democrat and Trenton Times, the posting of the meeting agenda on the Bulletin Board at City Hall, on the City's website at [www.lambertvillenj.org](http://www.lambertvillenj.org), on the exterior door of the Elevator Entrance at City Hall, and to department heads and the listserv. Please note an additional notice was advertised in the April 17 edition of the Trenton Times and the April 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Hunterdon County Democrat.

Instructions on how to participate in the meeting were emailed through the City's listserv, provided on a call-in message at City Hall, posted on the City's website at [www.lambertvillenj.org](http://www.lambertvillenj.org) and will be read into the record at the beginning of the meeting and again during Public Participation.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PUBLIC ON HOW TO PARTICIPATE USING ZOOM AND CALLING IN**

Mayor Fahl asked the Deputy Clerk to read the instructions on how to participate in the meeting into the record.

The public participation portion of the meeting will be taken under Agenda Item Number 17.

**PARTICIPATION BY COMPUTER:** If you are currently utilizing a computer to participate, you would click the "Raise Hand" button on the bottom of the screen. This will place you in a queue that I can see for when it is time to take public comments. People are sorted in the order they raised their hands. When I call on you, a message will pop-up asking if you want to unmute yourself. If you choose to move forward and place a public comment or question, choose to unmute, if you have changed your mind then choose to deny.

**PARTICIPATION BY PHONE:** If you are dialing in on your phone, to "raise your hand" dial \*9 to be placed in the queue. When called on, the system will ask you to confirm being un-muted to proceed.

You will be asked to state your full name and address into the record, then please feel free to make your comment or ask a question. You will remain unmuted while the governing body responds. Please make sure there is no background noise such as the T.V. on, music or loud chatter.

When public comments are finished, participants will be placed back on mute for the duration of the meeting.

Members of the Governing Body will raise their hand to make a comment or ask a question.

**ROLL CALL**

City of Lambertville

**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION  
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM  
PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER  
MINUTES**

**Page 2**

Mayor Fahl asked the City Clerk to call the roll. The City Clerk called the roll as follow:

Present: Councilman Sanders, Councilwoman Taylor, Councilwoman Urbish, Council President Asaro, Mayor Fahl

Also Present: Business Administrator – Alex Torpey, City Attorney – William Opel, City Clerk – Cynthia Ege, Deputy Clerk – Kristina Majeski.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Deputy Clerk displayed the American Flag and Mayor Fahl led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

The City Clerk asked for a moment of silence in honor of those serving in the United States Armed Forces in Country and Abroad.

Mayor Fahl asked for a moment of silence in honor of those on the front lines serving the Country during this pandemic, and in honor of those who have lost their lives.

**CITY ATTORNEY STATEMENT REGARDING COUNCIL SESSIONS**

The City Attorney read the following statement regarding the Open Public Meetings Act into the record

Based on the public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 virus, the State of New Jersey and the City of Lambertville have taken necessary action to ensure the continued regular operation of government.

While the City has already taken a number of steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all residents since the emergency declaration, State law requires a formal meeting by the City's Governing Body for many other necessary actions that would normally be considered routine, such as authorizing payment for payroll and salaries of City employees, bond payments, insurance payments, utility payments, and maintaining contractual obligations, among other actions.

Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, these formal actions must be taken in public, at a meeting that is adequately noticed to invite public participation and maximum transparency. **Such requirements are not set aside during times of emergency, and therefore the City and its Governing Body MUST proceed with conducting the necessary meetings, in accordance with State law, and in a manner that ensures optimum transparency.**

Even before this emergency, OPMA allowed governing bodies to conduct public meetings in person or by means of communication equipment (N.J.S.A. 10:4-8(b)), including by telephone conference, streaming services, and other online meeting platforms. All meetings, including those held using communications equipment, were required to be noticed in accordance with the OPMA.

Despite recent amendments to OPMA providing for electronic notice of any meeting, the City will continue to provide the standard statutory notice for its meetings by posting the notice in City Hall and publishing notice with The Trenton Times and Hunterdon County Democrat. In short, the City will continue to provide standard public notice at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to its public meetings, even though during a declared emergency, such as what we are encountering now,

# City of Lambertville

## REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER MINUTES

### Page 3

electronic notice pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-9.1 (electronic notification via the internet at least 48 hours prior to the meeting giving the time, dates, location, and, to the extent known, agenda) satisfies the notice requirement under the OPMA.

There are various matters that are necessary for the continuing operation of government, and the Mayor and Governing Body are prepared to continue to address these issues, without interruption. Because it remains unclear how long this emergency will last, the administration has made the necessary preparations to ensure your City government remains functional and responsive.

We would like to note the following, as the City has formulated a specific plan as to how to proceed with Governing Body meetings for the foreseeable future:

The OPMA, as amended, authorizes governing bodies to conduct public meetings through use of streaming services and other online meeting platforms. The City will utilize Zoom video conferencing, which also provides a dial-in feature if residents would prefer to participate by phone rather than video, as well as teleconferencing for those who wish to connect by phone only. Zoom can be accessed by personal computer and by cell phone, and a direct link for any noticed meeting will be made available through the virtual meetings page on the City's website.

The City must and will always ensure that the public retains the ability to participate and provide comment at public meetings. Therefore, the City has taken all necessary steps to provide instructions to the public regarding how to access a remote meeting and the procedures for commenting through whatever equipment or medium is utilized. The City will continue to rely on the procedures currently in place for public comments directed to City officials during all meetings. **There will be no change to the City's public comment policy for virtual meetings.**

The City, at all times, will act within the requirements of the OPMA for meetings conducted during this public health emergency so that the City government can continue to provide services to the community, and the public can continue to participate and provide comments, without interruption.

## MAYOR FAHL'S STATEMENT REGARDING CONDUCT DURING MEETINGS

Mayor Fahl read the following statement into the record regarding conduct during Council meetings.

Good evening. Again, we find ourselves in challenging times. Every day, we are reminded of the tragedy that this pandemic has caused, and as I have said before, Lambertville is no exception to that devastation.

So many of us are experiencing incalculable loss. Just last week, Lambertville again lost another pillar. Our hearts go out to Mickie Edward's family. Her strong will and wise ways captured us all, and I know that Buttonwood Street will forever be changed with her passing.

As we grieve those we are forced to let go, let us also remember those on the front lines and the work they are doing each day in the face of this virus. We are forever indebted to them and I will ask for a moment of silence.

**City of Lambertville**  
**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER**  
**MINUTES**  
**Page 4**

[moment of silence]

Before we move into tonight's conversation, our 2020 budget, I want to briefly reflect on our previous council meeting. We started with a discussion on tone and discourse in the City, and the need for civility when engaging between City staff, City volunteers and residents.

I want to again reiterate, and thank, the members of our community who have reached out, emailed, called, and set up appointments to talk about what the work of this City. Your advocacy efforts have had significant impacts on the upcoming policies of this City, and I thank you for your continued engagement.

Unfortunately, there are a few members of the community who, instead, continue to pursue smear campaign tactics - pushing out lies, claiming criminal activity on the part of the council and myself, inferring that my motive for this volunteer work is for personal profit or political favor. This has escalated to the point of an organized communication campaign which claims myself and other members of this body have broad-sweeping conflict of interest issues because of outside employment.

Let me be very clear: Every action that this governing body takes is in complete and direct compliance with the law. We work directly with the city attorney to ensure that each action is appropriately vetted.

Allegations of this nature are specious and harmful. Not only that, but in some cases, they have been escalated to the point of harassment. To those who have called out to my place of employment to call for my termination, stop.

I should not have to highlight how wildly inappropriate that is. I am a volunteer for this City. If this action continues, I will avail myself to every extent of the law.

Aside from the inappropriateness, it is so completely disappointing to know that members of my community would actively harm me and my family's livelihood just to make a point. I want to say this again, these actions and your words have consequences.

This type of malicious misinformation campaign must stop.

Lambertville deserves better and I will fight for Lambertville's right to have reasonable, respectful discourse about our shared future of this City and I will stand up to any person who works to undermine our City's ability to hold such conversations.

Enough is enough.

I want to thank those who continue to engage respectfully with this governing body and ask that we all hold ourselves to a higher level than petty lies and harassment.

Now, let's get to work.

I will kick it over to Beth.

City of Lambertville  
**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER**  
**MINUTES**  
**Page 5**

**BILLS LIST** – no bills list for this session.

**RESOLUTIONS**

*Draft reports, contracts and other documentation in draft form will be provided to the members of the public if they are adopted by the Governing Body.*

RESOLUTION NUMBER 68-2020: *A Resolution to Authorize the Tax Collector to Prepare and issue Estimated Tax Bills for 3<sup>RD</sup> Quarter 2020 Taxes*

ATTACHMENTS: Memorandum from Certified Municipal Tax Collector, Tax Calculation Prepared by the Certified Municipal Finance Officer.

Council President Asaro Read the following resolution by title into the record.

The Business Administrator informed the members of the public that this resolution will allow the City to estimate taxes for the third quarter of 2020. He referenced the memorandum prepared by the Tax Collector that was shared in the meeting folder on the website.

**AUTHORIZE TAX COLLECTOR TO PREPARE AND ISSUE ESTIMATED TAX BILLS FOR 3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER 2020 TAXES**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A 54:4-66.3, pursuant to Section 3 of P.L 1994 c. 72 and 54:4:4-66.2, the Council of the City of Lambertville has determined that the Tax Collector will be unable to complete the mailing and delivery of the tax bills due to the absence of a certified tax rate; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Lambertville’s Tax Collector in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer has computed an estimated tax levy in accordance with N.J.S.A. 54:4-66.3, and has signed a certification showing the tax levies for the previous year, the tax rates and the range of permitted estimated tax levies; and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Chapter 72, P.L. 1994, the Tax Collector requests the Council to approve the estimated tax levy; which is between the mandated estimated range proposed by the Local Government Services. Approval will enable the City to meet its financial obligations, maintain the tax collection rate, provide uniformity for tax payments, and save the unnecessary cost of interest on borrowing,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Council of the City of Lambertville, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, hereby authorizes that:

1. The Tax Collector is hereby authorized and directed to prepare, and issue estimated tax bills for the City for the third installment of 2020 taxes.

**City of Lambertville**  
**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER**  
**MINUTES**  
**Page 6**

2. The entire estimated tax levy for 2020 is hereby set at \$17,338,331.31. The estimated tax rate for 2020 is hereby set at 2.180.
  
3. In accordance with law, the third installment of 2020 taxes shall not be subject to interest until the later of August 10 or the twenty-fifth day after the date the estimated tax bills were mailed. The estimated tax bills shall contain a notice specifying the date on which interest may begin to accrue.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Tax Collector and Chief Financial Officer for their records.

ADOPTED: May 5, 2020

Council President Asaro asked for questions from the Governing Body. Councilwoman Urbish asked if the City would then send out a revised adjustment for the November quarter. Councilman Sanders asked if every municipality was in this situation? The Business Administrator responded that the City would send out adjusted bills and said every municipality is facing this situation.

Council President Asaro asked for a motion to adopt Resolution Number 68-2020. Councilwoman Urbish made the motion and Councilman Sanders seconded the motion. An affirmative roll call vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

ROLL CALL: Councilman Sanders YES, Councilwoman Taylor YES, Councilwoman Urbish YES, Council President Asaro YES, Mayor Fahl YES.

**REVIEW OF THE 2020 BUDGET PROCESS/TIMELINE**

Mayor Fahl and the Business Administrator reviewed the timeline for the preparation of the 2020 budget with the members of the public. The process began in August of 2019 and included goal setting with department heads. There were a series of sessions that focused on the Capital Budget which were aggregated and presented to the Governing Body in October. The Mayor attended sever house parties with 15 to 60 people in attendance. The City engaged the public in “Money Mondays” on Facebook. In November, the Business Administrator reviewed the proposed 2020 budget with the members of the Governing Body and the members of the public. All the information was posted on the City’s website for the public to review.

The Business Administrator highly recommended that the public visit the City's website to review the materials on the 2020 Budget. The easy to read format will be posted on the City's website tomorrow in the meeting folder.

**City of Lambertville**

**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION**

**TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM**

**PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER**

**MINUTES**

**Page 7**

The Business Administrator reviewed the Power Point Presentation on the 2020 Budget with the members of the Governing Body and public. Pre-COVID19 budget would have raised taxes by \$141.59 for the average priced house in the City of Lambertville.

After COVID19, because the City is reliant on nontax revenue, and COVID19 impact on the parking meters and other various revenues, the tax impact is \$354.59 for the average property in the City.

Mayor Fahl has been in contact with Congressman Malinowski regarding State Aid.

At the last meeting, the Governing Body was given three options for resolving the hole in the 2020 Budget: \*Spread out the burden over a couple of years; \*Raise taxes in the current year; \*Find an alternative.

Councilwoman Urbish commented that this was helpful. She asked if there were any cost savings opportunities with borrowing; consultant fees, etc.? The Business Administrator commented that the prior administration professional fees associated with projects to the bond that funded the project. The City is slowly changing that process and moving those fees over to the budget. This will take some time, however, because we cannot raise taxes in one year to cover it. Mayor Fahl commented that we have had a significant cost savings since the hiring of the Business Administrator. For instance, Clinton Street Phase II cost the City \$125,000 in professional fees and the project covered two blocks. George Street will cost the City \$40,000 and covers five blocks.

The Business Administrator informed the members of the public that this budget allows for 2% raises for employees, includes prescription drug coverage and dental. Councilwoman Urbish said she is happy we are taking care of our staff.

Council President Asaro commented that under the former administration, the City accrued \$1.6 million in debt year after year. This is a stark contrast to the DelVecchio Administration and Stegman with no finance team. Understanding the aggregate, not understanding the impact without the financial team. She commented that she was happy to have supported Julia Fahl. Mayor Fahl commented that the only place is up.

Councilman Sanders asked about the healthcare front. He expressed concern with augmenting with dental and prescription coverage in a year with revenue issues; he said he understands the City has a commitment to our employees, but it comes at a cost during difficult times. Mayor Fahl commented that staff members are underpaid, and this is far below market rate. Cutting around the edges to save money for public service workers is not the way to manage. We need to attack the real issues which is the consultants and borrowing too much money. Councilman Sanders commented to be clear, he is supportive of the staff.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 69-2020: A Resolution Authorizing the Self-Examination of the 2020 Budget

**City of Lambertville**  
**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER**  
**MINUTES**  
**Page 8**

Council President Asaro read the resolution into the record by title. The Business Administrator informed the members of the public present that every so many years the City can adopt a resolution to send to the Division of Local Government Services requesting approval for a self-examination of the budget.

**SELF-EXAMINATION OF BUDGET RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-78b has authorized the Local Finance Board to adopt rules that permit municipalities in sound fiscal condition to assume the responsibility, normally granted to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services, of conducting the annual budget examination; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 5:30-7 was adopted by the Local Finance Board on February 11, 1997; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.2 through 7.5, the City of Lambertville has been declared eligible to participate in the program by the Division of Local government Services, and the Chief Financial officer has determined that the local government meets the necessary conditions to participate in the program for the 2020 budget year.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body of the City of Lambertville that in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.6a & 7.6b and based upon the Chief Financial Officer's certification, the governing body has found the budget has met the following requirements:

1. That with reference to the following items, the amounts have been calculated pursuant to law and appropriated as such in the budget:
  - a. Payment of interest and debt redemption charges
  - b. Deferred charges and statutory expenditures
  - c. Cash deficit of preceding year
  - d. Reserve for uncollected taxes
  - e. Other reserves and non-disbursement items
  - f. Any inclusions of amounts required for school purposes.
2. That the provisions relating to limitation on increases of appropriations pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.2 and appropriations for exceptions to limits on appropriations found at N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.3 et seq., are fully met (complies with CAP law).
3. That the budget is in such form, arrangement, and content as required by the Local Budget Law and N.J.A.C. 5:30-4 and 5:30-5.
4. That pursuant to the Local Budget Law:
  - a. All estimates of revenue are reasonable, accurate and correctly stated,
  - b. Items of appropriation are properly set forth
  - c. In itemization, form, arrangement and content, the budget will permit the exercise of the comptroller function within the municipality.

**City of Lambertville**  
**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER**  
**MINUTES**  
**Page 9**

5. The budget and associated amendments have been introduced and publicly advertised in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Local Budget Law, except that failure to meet the deadlines of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-5 shall not prevent such certification.

6. That all other applicable statutory requirements have been fulfilled.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution will be forwarded to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services upon adoption.

Approved: May 5, 2020

Council President Asaro asked for questions or comments from the Governing Body. There being no questions or comments, Council President Asaro asked for public questions or comments.

Matthew Hanson thanked the Governing Body. He said this relates to optimum transparency. Mr. Hanson was asked if he had a question or comment about the resolution. Since his question was not related to Resolution Number 69-2020, he was informed he would be called upon later under public participation.

Judy Gleason asked what the Resolution means. The Business Administrator commented that it is a standard template given by the State of New Jersey Division of Local Government Services. Ms. Gleason asked if any revenues associated with the new development, selling City buildings? The Business Administrator said not in the 2020 Budget.

Sandra Harris asked for clarity on the definition of self-examination. The Business Administrator responded that typically, the Division of Local Government Services revenues all budgets for conformity to state rules and regulations. We have a new firm performing the audit this year. They completed the budget in a slightly more independent way. Previous audits are on the City's website.

Paul Stevens commented that he watched the video posted on Facebook and thanked the Mayor and Governing Body for all the detail. He reviewed the previous audits and it does not mention the bad practice. The City had a good credit statement. Nothing was said about bad practices.

Council President Asaro asked for a motion to adopt Resolution Number 69-2020. Councilwoman Taylor made the motion and Councilwoman Urbish seconded the motion. An affirmative roll call vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present.  
**MOTION CARRIED.**

**City of Lambertville**  
**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER**  
**MINUTES**  
**Page 10**

ROLL CALL: Councilman Sanders YES, Councilwoman Taylor YES, Councilwoman Urbish YES, Council President Asaro YES, Mayor Fahl YES.

**ORDINANCES – FIRST READING**

ORDINANCE NUMBER 07-2020: A CAP Bank Ordinance

Council President Asaro read the Ordinance into the record by title. The Business Administrator explained that this ordinance allows the City to bank the unused portion of the funds it can raise in the 2020 budget year. Discussion ensued.

**CALENDAR YEAR 2020**  
**ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS**  
**AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK**  
**(N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)**

**WHEREAS**, the Local Government Cap Law, N.J.S. 40A: 4-45.1 et seq., provides that in the preparation of its annual budget, a municipality shall limit any increase in said budget up to 2.5% unless authorized by ordinance to increase it to 3.5% over the previous year’s final appropriations, subject to certain exceptions; and,

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.15a provides that a municipality may, when authorized by ordinance, appropriate the difference between the amount of its actual final appropriation and the 3.5% percentage rate as an exception to its final appropriations in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Lambertville in the County of Hunterdon finds it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2020 budget by up to 3.5% over the previous year’s final appropriations, in the interest of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and,

**WHEREAS**, the City Council hereby determines that a 3.5% increase in the budget for said year, amounting to \$127,307.87 in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap Law, is advisable and necessary; and,

**WHEREAS** the City Council hereby determines that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED**, by the City Council of the City of Lambertville, in the County of Hunterdon, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2020 budget year, the final appropriations of the City of Lambertville shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14, be increased by 3.5%, amounting to \$127,307.87, and that the CY 2020 municipal budget for the City of Lambertville be approved and adopted in accordance with this ordinance; and,

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED**, that any that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED**, that a certified copy of this ordinance as introduced be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services within 5 days of introduction; and,

**City of Lambertville**  
**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER**  
**MINUTES**  
**Page 11**

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED**, that a certified copy of this ordinance upon adoption, with the recorded vote included thereon, be filed with said Director within 5 days after such adoption.

Introduced: May 5, 2020

Adoption: June 9, 2020

Council President Asaro asked for questions or comments from the Governing Body. There being no questions from the Governing Body, Council President Asaro asked for questions or comments from the public.

Laura Lindsey asked why the City needed to increase the budget by 3.5%? The Business Administrator commented that it does not increase the budget by 3.5% it allows the City to set any money that is not used, creates a safety net for use in the next two budget cycles.

Judy Gleason asked for the balance in the CAP Bank Ordinance. She asked how much was banked in previous years. Mayor Fahl responded that it is a theoretical bank and is only used if the City takes appropriate action.

Ruthanne Baskin asked if best practice every year, will it always be 3.5%? The Certified Municipal Finance Officer responded that this is based on cost of living and does not correspond to general inflation rate. It is what the state sets. This is an insurance policy, something to move inside verses outside CAP. If it is not needed, it is not used.

Sandra Harris commented that she thinks the CAP Bank is not actual money. If we need to, we can use it. This is not actual money. Mayor Fahl thanked her for clarifying.

Barbara Corey asked if we could watch this later. Mayor Fahl responded that everything is online. The City does not film Council meetings. We made a commitment to keep things as normal as possible. The Business Administrator responded that the budget presentation is recorded, and the link is on the City's website.

Judy Detrano asked if increasing the percentage of the CAPs the ability to add to the budget. If we need to utilize, add to the debt load? The impact on property taxes. The Business Administrator commented that for the next year, the limit on the CAP is a \$100 increase for next year based on a general idea on the tax impact for 2021. Mayor Fahl commented that we are actively looking to reduce the tax impact. This is just a safety net.

Council President Asaro asked for a motion to introduce on first reading Ordinance Number 07-2020. Councilwoman Taylor made the motion to introduce the Ordinance. Councilwoman Urbish seconded the motion. An affirmative roll call vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**ROLL CALL:** Councilman Sanders \_\_YES, Councilwoman Taylor \_YES\_, Councilwoman Urbish \_YES\_, Council President Asaro \_YES\_, Mayor Fahl \_YES\_.

## City of Lambertville

### **REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER MINUTES**

#### **Page 12**

Council President Asaro informed the members of the public that the public hearing is scheduled for June 9, 2020.

#### **RECORDING COUNCIL SESSIONS**

Councilwoman Urbish commented regarding the remark asking if Council sessions were taped, she said she has had members of the public contacting her. She would like for the Governing Body to have a discussion at the next Council meeting regarding this topic.

Mayor Fahl commented that this would be at the top of the May 21<sup>st</sup> meeting agenda.

#### **BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR – Alex Torpey**

Mayor Fahl asked the Business Administrator to give a presentation on the 2020 Budget. The Business Administrator reviewed a power point presentation with the members of the Governing Body and the public. This will be posted to the meeting agenda folder for the public to access. Mr. Torpey thanked the DCCBs (staff) and said they spent a good amount of time on budgets this year. He thanked the Deputy Treasurer and City Clerk for their assistance in helping him get up to speed. Mayor Fahl commented that it was not a one man show. It took months of work externally and internally.

Mayor Fahl asked for questions or comments from the Governing Body. There being no comments or questions from the Governing Body, Mayor Fahl asked for questions or comments from the public.

Paul Stevens asked about the assessed value of the average house in Lambertville. Mayor Fahl said the average assessment in Lambertville is \$389,000. Mr. Stevens said he reviewed the previous budgets and audits. He looked at the reports and did not find irresponsible comments. Mayor Fahl responded that the audit is extremely specific, and they are not looking for best practice. Past practice from the former administration was to do hundreds of transfers at the end of the year. All audits indicated a large number of transfers.

Laura Lindsey asked how much surplus is used and what was it spent on? Where are we now? The Business Administrator commented that from 2012 to present, there were three depletions of the City's surplus. Mayor Fahl commented that every payment was set up and back a structural deficit. The practice was to budget for less than was owed. Over borrowing with a gap in payments from 2019 to 2022. We have not been increasing the budget enough to cover expenses. The Business Administrator commented that we added money in surplus and we used money in surplus in the same year. This is a constant use of surplus, \$465,000, \$435,000, and now \$445,000. The problem is systematic. In 2020, we have \$45,000 less in surplus. Ms. Lindsey asked about the balance left in surplus. The Certified Municipal Finance Officer responded that at the beginning of the year, the City had \$771,426.34 in surplus. This is an

**City of Lambertville**

**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION**

**TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM**

**PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER**

**MINUTES**

**Page 13**

unaudited number. Mayor Fahl commented that we are weaning off the past practice of overborrowing.

Judy Gleason asked if the payment has been accelerated to pay back the bonds and notes. Mayor Fahl commented that the previous administration turned the Bond Anticipation Notes into Bonds and that set the payment schedule. Ms. Gleason asked if it was front loaded. Mayor Fahl commented that once it is locked it cannot change. She said she was not aware of front loading a payment. The Business Administrator commented that this has been a part of the financial presentations. The Certified Municipal Finance Officers commented that there are various forms of borrowing, serial verses temporary (BANS). You are allowed to sell notes with 10 times the interest.

Richard Green asked if they were callable bonds. The Certified Municipal Business Administrator commented that the strategy of the City is to look at avenues to reduce the impact. They are not callable notes. In 2020, we have notes from 2003 through 2010 that are maturing in 2024. This does not represent a savings. The notes from 2014 through 2018 have not enough time, no opportunity yet, maybe if the rates are low enough to refund them.

Judy Gleason commented that the town and businesses are impacted by COVID19 and she wanted to know what retail establishments are going to do. Is there something she missed? Mayor Fahl responded that this is not directly related to revenues and appropriations. It does not mean the City is not working on it. We have daily conference calls which are not bi-weekly. Council President Asaro has been working on business roundtables and we have three scheduled, (May 9, May 14 (2 sessions)). Members of New Hope Chamber of Commerce are joining the call so we can hear how we can help when we re-open. We are limited the sessions to 50 attendees to help manage the call. Councilwoman Taylor, the City Planner and the Business Administrator are all working on how to streamline the process for doing business in the City. Councilwoman Urbish commented about the resources available such as small business loans and suggested small businesses reach out to Congressman Malinowski's office for assistance.

Mayor Fahl gave the City Planner, Emily Goldman, a call out for all her work on insuring that Lambertville is a safe place to do business.

The Business Administrator commented that the City applied for grant funds with the County for shared services and we are waiting on the news.

Alicia Lerman commented that she was concerned for the budget scenarios. She felt they should be separate and aside detail and vetted. Mayor Fahl commented that she appreciated the question. She agreed and said they should be vetted out soundest decision not using myopic but by forecasting the years to come.

Jeanette Jordan expressed her concern for pushing off the budget issues caused by COVID19 to 2021. Mayor Fahl commented that in the previous meeting the Governing Body was presented with three different options. The Business Administrator reviewed

## City of Lambertville

### **REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER MINUTES Page 14**

the Power Point Presentation, the options, the financial impact for 2020, the projected shortfall in construction, and the projected the revenue short fall. Mayor Fahl commented that they reflect a downturn in revenues. There was a change in the process for Landlord Registration and that fee is now collected through Fire Official budget. Air BnBs Ordinance for temporary occupancy. The Professional service contracts were discussed and the decision to do a formal request for proposals which included a rigorous interview process allowed the City to drive down the cost associated with projects.

Sue Bell commented that these are guestimates, and you need less spending. Mayor Fahl commented that there is a reduction in parking tickets, people are not parking in the City, the street sweeper is not running. Ms. Bell commented that the City is busy on the weekends. Mayor Fahl responded that the parking revenue is down 90%.

Keiren Fox commented that the spending has increased significantly over the 2019 budget year. Mayor Fahl commented that she disagreed, the City has cut spending by hundreds of thousands of dollars. Mayor Fahl reviewed the contracts with the prior City Engineer and cited that the City reduced the cost by 97%, almost \$1 million less. Debt payments are going up. The Business Administrator commented that operating and capital are two ways to fund projects. The amount due to debt services has increased.

Stephen Harris asked about the UCC fees. Mayor Fahl said that was for the construction office.

Matt Larkin commented that he appreciated the work and said he echoes Council President Asaro's commented, he is glad to see you are taking things out of Capital and moving it to expense.

Sandra Harris commented that it sounds like the City was properly funding the operating budget. She asked if there is a number, a way of being simplistic. Mayor Fahl commented that she worked with each department, the construction office did not have code books, the elections were always underfunded, and the long-term goals is for the consultant costs to be built into the budget. The Business Administrator commented that we do not have a total individual purchasing because we are at the ground level. For example, Accumulated Absences and professional services were not budgeted. We have a \$600,000 deficit and we are trying to cut that in half.

### **INTRODUCTION OF THE 2020 BUDGET**

<https://lambertvillenj.org/government/documents/council-meeting-agendas/2020/agendas-47/05-05-2020-city-council-meeting>

Mayor Fahl asked for a motion to introduce the 2020 Budget as presented.

Council President Asaro made a motion to introduce the 2020 Budget. Councilwoman Taylor seconded the motion. An affirmative roll call vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

*City of Lambertville*

**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION  
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM  
PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER  
MINUTES  
Page 15**

ROLL CALL: Councilman Sanders YES, Councilwoman Taylor YES, Councilwoman Urbish YES, Council President Asaro YES, Mayor Fahl YES.

Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public that the public hearing on the 2020 budget is scheduled for June 9, 2020.

**COUNCIL MEMBER UPDATES**

ROUND TABLES – Council President Asaro informed the members of the public that the City is hosting three Business Roundtables via Zoom to gather information to assist the businesses through COVID19. She explained that these were planned prior to the pandemic and were canceled. Information can be found on the City’s website at [www.lambertvillenj.org](http://www.lambertvillenj.org).

AFFORDABLE HOUSING TEACH-IN – Councilwoman Urbish and Councilwoman Taylor.

Councilwoman Urbish and Councilwoman Taylor informed the members of the public that they have scheduled a “Teach-in” with a City Planner, a member of Fair Share Housing, and the City Planner to give a background on Affordable Housing and to give the members of the public an opportunity to ask questions about the process. This has been posted to the calendar on the City’s website with the link for the public to participate.

CENSUS – Councilman Sanders mentioned the Facebook Message posted with his family earlier in the week. He encouraged members of the public to complete their 2020 Census.

Stephen Harris commented that Hunterdon County leads the County in responses.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – none.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

JUSTICE CENTER PARKING: Parking Space Number 16 is available for lease at the Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center. The fee is \$55 per month. If interested, call Kristina Majeski at 609-397-0110, ext. 12.

LANDLORD REGISTRATION: The process to file a landlord registration has change. Please use the following link to the City’s website for additional information:

<http://www.lambertvillenj.org/ALRA>

CENSUS: Cut and paste this link in your browser:

<https://2020census.gov/?msclkid=d5669b5e0b1d1fd97e13c5343c771c39>

CONVENIENCE CENTER HOURS: The Public Works Department is open the First Saturday (May 2) and the Third Saturday (May 16) from 9 a.m. to noon for residents to drop off leaves and brush. They will also be open on Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, from 3 to 5

# City of Lambertville

## **REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER MINUTES Page 16**

p.m. For additional information, please visit the city's website at:  
<https://lambertvillenj.org/newsfeed-pages/389-the-city-of-lambertville-convenience-center>

SPARKLE WEEK UPDATE: Sparkle Week will be held the first two weeks of August. Details can be found on the City's website: <https://lambertvillenj.org/sparkle-week>

ZONE ONE, TUESDAY PICK-UP – AUGUST 4: Begins at Church Street and goes south to Route 29, includes Bridge Street, Ferry Street, Swan Street, Mount Hope Street and Canal Street. It also includes Curley Lane, Grants Alley and Washington Street.

ZONE TWO, WEDNESDAY PICK-UP – AUGUST 5: Includes Cottage Hill, Connaught Hill, and Music Mountain.

ZONE THREE, THURSDAY PICK-UP – AUGUST 13: Begins at Church Street, runs north to Delaware Avenue.

ZONE FOUR, FRIDAY PICK-UP – AUGUST 14: Begins the north side of Delaware Avenue, runs north to Cherry Street, and includes Lamberts Hill and Blair Tract.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/PUBLIC CONCERN**

Mayor Fahl asked the Deputy Clerk to read the instructions for public participation into the record.

The Deputy Clerk read the following statement into the record:

If you want to participate or make a public comment, there are two ways to do so.

If you are currently utilizing a computer to participate, you would click the “Raise Hand” button on the bottom of the screen. This will place you in a queue that I can see for when it is time to take public comments. People are sorted in the order they raised their hands. When I call on you, a message will pop-up asking if you want to unmute yourself. If you choose to move forward and place a public comment or question, choose to unmute, if you have changed your mind then choose to deny.

If you are dialing in on your phone, to “raise your hand” dial \*9 to be placed in the queue. When called on, the system will ask you to confirm being un-muted to proceed.

Please try to be concise with your questions or comments, to be mindful of others' time.

You will be asked to state your full name and address into the record, then please feel free to make your comment or ask a question. You will remain unmuted while the governing body responds. Please make sure there is no background noise such as the T.V. on, music or loud chatter.

# City of Lambertville

## REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION

TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM

PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER

## MINUTES

### Page 17

When public comments are finished, participants will be placed back on mute for the duration of the meeting.

Members of the Governing Body will raise their hand to make a comment or ask a question.

Matthew B. Hanson apologized for his previous comment about being silenced. He asked why the City was not recording these sessions. People do not know how to call in. Councilwoman Urbish thanked Mr. Hanson for his comment. She asked that if the members of the public are having connection issues for them to contact one of the Council people or call the City Clerk.

Paul Stevens commented that he was concerned that the City was dismissing the YMAC way too early. This is a missing opportunity in collecting back taxes. He searched for the Planning Board agenda and it is not on the City's website. Mayor Fahl thanked him for his comments. The City Planner responded that the City does not own the YMAC. This is an active application before the Planning Board and will be addressed in the completeness hearing. This is an aspect of right development. Mr. Stevens asked about the affordable housing aspect. The City Planner commented that the City worked with the purchaser for four months. There was public opposition and the developer moved away. Mr. Stevens indicated that because back taxes were due the City could take the property owners. Mayor Fahl commented that this would be addressed at the Planning Board meeting.

Tim Mountford asked about City Hall and if the City was considering buying or renting Lambert square? Mayor Fahl asked if he meant River Horse Brewery site? She further commented that the City is looking at a series of potential sites with various options. The Community Advisory Team will be looking at all options. The City Planner commented that the old site of River Horse Brewery (Old Trenton Cracker) is already part of an overlay zone that was adopted by the City.

Judy Gleason said she wanted to follow up to the Planning Board question. She asked about the variances and completeness. The City Planner responded that they will be talking about the survey, signed and sealed plans, existing improvements, all checklist items, and waivers.

Harry Young asked if the Police Department is for sale. He expressed concern for the budget, asked that the Governing Body be cautious with spending and focus on essential services. Mayor Fahl commented that the City was looking for alternatives to reduce the budget.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:34 p.m. with a motion made by Council President Asaro and seconded by Councilwoman Taylor. An affirmative roll call vote was taken in favor of the motion to adjourn by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

*City of Lambertville*

**REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION  
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020, 7:00 PM  
PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER  
MINUTES**

**Page 18**

Councilman Sanders – Yes, Councilwoman Taylor – Yes, Councilwoman Urbish – Yes,  
Council President Asaro – Yes, Mayor Fahl – Yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia L. Ege, CMR, RMC, City Clerk

The May 5, 2020 Minutes were approved at the May 21, 2020 Regularly Scheduled  
Session held via Zoom.