



City of Lambertville
Regularly Scheduled Council Meeting
January 20, 2022, 7:00 P.M.
Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center, 25 South Union
Street, Lambertville
MINUTES

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Mayor Nowick called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and he 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 meeting notice advertised in the Trenton Times and provided to the Trenton Times, the Hunterdon County Democrat and members on the listserv. This meeting will be recorded using the Zoom Meeting Platform. The meeting agenda provides for action items at the extent known at the time of publication.

ROLL CALL

The City Clerk called the roll as follows:

Present: Councilwoman Lambert, Councilman Sanders, Councilman Stegman, Council President Taylor, Mayor Nowick

Also present: William Opel – City Attorney, Cynthia Ege – City Clerk, Michael Humphrey – Deputy Clerk.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Nowick led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES

Mayor Nowick asked for a motion to approve the following sets of minutes: December 2, 2021 Open Meeting Minutes and the December 16, 2021 Open Meeting Minutes. Council President Taylor made the motion and Councilwoman Lambert seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members, with Mayor Nowick commenting that he was not eligible to vote. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Nowick asked for a motion to approve the January 4, 2022 Reorganization Meeting Minutes. Councilwoman Lambert made the motion and Councilman Stegman seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken by the following members: Councilwoman Lambert, Councilman Sanders, Councilman Stegman, Council President Taylor, Mayor Nowick. MOTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTIONS – CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Nowick asked for a motion to approve the resolutions listed on the consent agenda, Numbers 30-2022 through 36-2022.

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RESOLUTION NUMBER 30-2022: A Resolution to Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to Execute the Hunterdon County Municipal Alliance Program Grant Year 2023.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 30-2022

A Resolution to Authorize the mayor and City Clerk to Execute the Hunterdon County Municipal Alliance Grant Program for Year 2023

WHEREAS, the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse established the Municipal Alliances for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in 1989 to educate and engage residents, local government and law enforcement officials, schools, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, parents, youth and other allies in efforts to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse in communities throughout New Jersey.

WHEREAS, The City Council of the City of Lambertville, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey recognizes that the abuse of alcohol and drugs is a serious problem in our society amongst persons of all ages; and therefore, has an established Municipal Alliance Committee; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council further recognizes that it is incumbent upon not only public officials but upon the entire community to take action to prevent such abuses in our community; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council has applied for funding to the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse through the County of Hunterdon;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City of Lambertville, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey hereby recognizes the following:

1. The City Council does hereby authorize submission of a strategic plan for the South Hunterdon Municipal Alliance grant for fiscal year 2023 in the amount of:

DEDR \$ 3,980.00

Cash Match \$ 995.00

In-Kind \$ 2,985.00

2. The City Council acknowledges the terms and conditions for administering the Municipal Alliance grant, including the administrative compliance and audit requirements.

3. The City Council further acknowledges that the Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission shall act as Fiscal Agent to all Hunterdon

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County Municipal Alliance Consortiums to provide a streamlined process for the reimbursement of expenditures.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 31-2022: A Resolution to Authorize the Refund of Escrow for a Planning Board Application to Stephen Williamson in the Amount of \$1,786.50.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 31-2022

A Resolution to Authorize the Refund of Escrow for a Planning Board Application to Stephen Williamson in the Amount of \$1,786.50

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body of the city of Lambertville, in the county of Hunterdon, that the refund of escrow to Stephen Williamson in the amount of \$1,786.50 for an application to the planning board is hereby authorized.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 32-2022: A Resolution to Authorize the Lien Redemption for Guadalupe O. Perez, for Block 1002, Lot 67, 150 York Street, in the Amount of \$21,747.09 Plus a Premium in the Amount of \$5,300.00

RESOLUTION NUMBER 32-2022

A Resolution Authorizing the Redemption of a Tax Lien for Block 1002, Lot 67 In the Amount of \$21,747.09 Plus a Premium in the Amount of \$5,300.00.

WHEREAS, Tax Lien Certificate 18-00001 issued on Block 1002 Lot 67 was sold to Christiana T C/F CE1/FirstTrust, First Trust Bank PO BOX 5021, Philadelphia, PA 19111 on 6-21-18 and

WHEREAS, payment has been received by the Tax Collector for redemption of the tax lien from a title company representing the property owner

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by Mayor and Council of the City of Lambertville, in the County of Hunterdon, in the State of New Jersey that the check is hereby authorized to Christiana T C/F CE1/FirstTrust, First Trust Bank PO BOX 5021, Philadelphia, PA 19111 for the redemption of tax lien certificate #18-00001 in the amount of: \$21,493.27

In addition, the City is holding a premium in the amount of \$5,300.00 and upon redemption this is due back to the lienholder.

2 checks for the lienholder –

Check 1= \$21,747.09

Check 2= for premium= \$5,300.00

RESOLUTION NUMBER 33-2022: A Resolution to Authorize the Premium Payment for Block 1050, Lot 30, 34 Wilson Street, Tax Sale Certificate #16-

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0009, Foreclosed by the Lienholder, to Be Turned Over to the Treasurer of the City of Lambertville in Accordance with N.J.S.A. 54:5-33.

Resolution Number 33-2022

A Resolution to Authorize the Premium Payment for Block 1050, Lot 30, Tax Sale Certificate Number 16-0009. Foreclosed by the Lienholder, to be Turned Over to the Treasurer of the city of Lambertville in Accordance with N.J.S.A. 54:5-33

WHEREAS, the City of Lambertville sold at tax sale, the unpaid property taxes for the 2016 calendar year and a Tax Sale Certificate Number 16-0009 was issued; and

WHEREAS, the lienholder foreclosed on the property known as block 1050, lot 30; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 54:5-33 states the following:

54:5-33. Payment for the sale shall be made before the conclusion of the sale, or the property shall be resold. Any premium payment shall be held by the collector and returned to the purchaser of the fee if and when redemption is made. If redemption is not made within five years from date of sale the premium payment shall be turned over to the treasurer of the municipality and become a part of the funds of the municipality. In the event that a petition of bankruptcy has been filed by the property owner, the five year limitation shall be extended for each day that the foreclosure action is precluded by that bankruptcy filing.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body of the city of Lambertville, in the county of Hunterdon, in the State of New Jersey, that the premium held from Tax Sale Certificate 16-0009 in the amount of \$22,500.00 is hereby authorized to be turned over to the Treasurer of the City of Lambertville and will become part of the funds of the municipality.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 34-2022: A Resolution to Authorize the Refund of a Parking Permit Fee to Martha Dennis for a Leased Space at the Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center, abandoned in October, in an Amount Not to Exceed \$55.00 for the Month of December.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 34-2022

A Resolution to Authorize the Refund of a Parking Permit Fee to Martha Dennis for a Leased Space at the Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center, Abandoned in October, in An Amount Not to Exceed \$55.00 for the Month of December

WHEREAS Martha Dennis paid for a leased parking space at the Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center for the 2021 calendar year; and

WHEREAS, in October, they moved from their house on Ferry Street; and

WHEREAS, they requested a refund for their December lease.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body of the city of Lambertville, in the county of Hunterdon, that the refund of the December parking lease in the amount of \$55.00 to Martha Dennis is hereby authorized.

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RESOLUTION NUMBER 35-2022: A Resolution to Authorize the Tax Collector to Cancel a City Fee Authorized by Ordinance Number 03-13 for A Returned Check Fee.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 35-2022

A Resolution to Authorize the Tax Collector to Cancel a City Fee Authorized by Ordinance Number 03-13 for a Returned Check Fee

WHEREAS, Krystyna Rykowski mailed her fourth quarter taxes to the City of Lambertville and when she checked with the city, the payment was not received; and

WHEREAS, Krystyna Rykowski called her bank and issued a stop payment and issued a replacement check to the city of Lambertville; and

WHEREAS, both checks were processed causing the bank to return the check with the stop payment; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the city's ordinance, a fee of \$20 must be collected.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body of the city of Lambertville, in the county of Hunterdon, that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to waive the bounced check fee to Krystyna Rykowski.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 36-2022: A Resolution to Authorize the Dedication by Rider for the Summer Camp Organized by Parks & Recreation.

RESOLUTION 36-2021

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING PERMISSION FOR THE DEDICATION BY RIDER FOR PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION'S SUMMER CAMP REQUIRED BY DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

WHEREAS, permission is required of the Director of the Division of Local Government Services for approval as a dedication by rider of revenues received by a municipality when the revenue is not subject to reasonably accurate estimates in advance; and'

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Commission provides for receipt of Summer Camp Fees by the municipality to provide for the operating costs to administer this act; and,

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-39 provides the dedicated revenues anticipated from the Summer Camp Fees are hereby anticipated as revenue and are hereby appropriated for the purpose to which said revenue is dedicated by statute or other legal requirement:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Governing Body of Parks and Recreation Commission of the City of Lambertville, County of Hunterdon, New Jersey as follows: 1. The Governing Body does hereby request permission of the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to pay expenditures of the Parks and Recreation Commission's Summer Camp trust fund and statutory

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authority. 2. The Clerk of the City of Lambertville, County of Hunterdon is hereby directed to forward two certified copies of this Resolution to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

Adopted this 20th day of January, 2022 and certified as a true copy of an original.

Councilman Sanders made the motion and Council President Taylor seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken by the following members: Councilwoman Lambert, Councilman Sanders, Councilman Stegman, Council President Taylor, Mayor Nowick. MOTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTIONS – OTHER

RESOLUTION NUMBER 37-2022: A Resolution Supporting the Recommendations of the New Jersey Department of Transportation's Bureau of Traffic Engineering with Respect to Implementing Certain Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Regulations Along Route 29 in the City

Mayor Nowick read the resolution into the record by title and he asked for a motion to approve Resolution Number 37-2022.

RESOLUTION 37-2022

A Resolution supporting the recommendations of the New Jersey Department of Transportation's Bureau of Traffic Engineering with respect to implementing certain traffic and pedestrian safety regulations along Route 29 in the City,

WHEREAS, the City of Lambertville (the "City") is a municipal corporation of the State of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the City's roadways are critical to the health and safety of the City's residents, as well as the economic health and success of the City; and

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey Department of Transportation Bureau of Traffic Engineering (the "NJDOT"), after consultation with the Lambertville Police Department, has recommended the implementation of various traffic and pedestrian safety regulations on or around certain areas of Route 29 in the City, including, but not limited to, prohibition on stopping or standing, parking restrictions, and turning prohibitions in certain designated areas, as set forth in full in the letter from the NJDOT to the City, dated December 3, 2021, and on file with the City Clerk (the "Regulations"); and

WHEREAS, the goal of the Regulations is to promote pedestrian safety and the expeditious movement of traffic along Route 29 in the City; and

WHEREAS, in order to establish these Regulations in the City so as to ensure the safety of pedestrians and the expeditious movement of traffic within the City, the Governing Body hereby supports the Regulations and requests the NJDOT proceed to promulgate a Traffic Regulation Order to establish the Regulations; and

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NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the City of Lambertville, in the County of Hunterdon, New Jersey, as follows:

Section 1. The foregoing recitals are hereby incorporated by reference as if fully repeated herein.

Section 2. The Governing Body hereby endorses the Regulations set forth in the letter from the NJDOT to the City, dated December 3, 2021, a copy of which is on file with the City Clerk.

Section 3. The City Clerk is hereby instructed to forward a certified copy of this Resolution of support to the NJDOT Bureau of Traffic Engineering.

Section 4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Councilman Stegman made the motion and Councilwoman Lambert seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken by the following members: Councilwoman Lambert, Councilman Sanders, Councilman Stegman, Council President Taylor, Mayor Nowick. MOTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 38-2022: A Resolution to Authorize the City Clerk to Submit the Person-to-Person Transfer of State Assigned License Number 1017-33-003-003 from Taverna 54, 54 North Franklin Street to Bluestone Building LLC, Effective January 25, 2022.

Mayor Nowick read the resolution into the record by title and he asked for public comments or questions. Councilman Sanders asked for the location of the license. The City Clerk responded that it was 54 North Franklin Street. With no other questions or comments from the governing body, Mayor Nowick asked for a motion to adopt Resolution Number 38-2022.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 38-2022

A Resolution to Authorize the City Clerk to Submit the Person-to-Person Transfer of State Assigned License Number 1017-33-003-003 from Taverna 54 to Bluestone Building, LLC Effective January 24, 2022

WHEREAS, Bluestone Building, LLC submitted a completed application for a person-to-person transfer of Alcohol Beverage Control license number 1017-33-003-003 from Taverna 54, 54 North Franklin Street to Bluestone Building, LLC on January 5, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the applicant advertised the transfer of the license in the January 6 and January 13, 2022 edition of the Trenton Times and the City Clerk has not received any complaints or questions from the members of the public; and

WHEREAS, the City is in receipt of the Tax Clearance Certificate, Consent to Sell, Bulk Sale Permit Application, the full 12 page application, fingerprinting results, and copies of the lease agreements; and

WHEREAS, the City Attorney has reviewed the application; and

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WHEREAS, the governing body had this on the January 20, 2022 meeting agenda for approval with no questions or comments from the public.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body of the city of Lambertville, in the county of Hunterdon, in the State of New Jersey, that the City Clerk is hereby authorized to submit the application to the State of New Jersey for the person-to-person transfer of ABC license number 1017-33-003-003 from Taverna 54 to Bluestone Building, LLC with a transfer/closing date of January 25, 2022.

Councilman Sanders made the motion and Councilwoman Lambert seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken by the following members: Councilwoman Lambert, Councilman Sanders, Councilman Stegman, Council President Taylor, Mayor Nowick. MOTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 39-2022: A Resolution to Authorize the Contract with Suburban Consulting Engineering, Inc., in an Amount Not to Exceed \$62,680.00 for Work on Hurricane Ida.

Mayor Nowick read the resolution into the record by title. He asked for council questions or comments. Council President Taylor asked how much of this was for work already completed. The Mayor commented that \$48,721.00 is for work completed for FEMA and \$13,959.00 is for the balance of the temporary repair projects.

Mayor Nowick asked for a motion to approve resolution number 39-2022.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 39-2022

A Resolution to Amend Resolution Number 19-2021, Authorizing A Professional Service Contract for City Engineer, Suburban Consulting Engineering, LLC in an Amount Not to Exceed \$62,680.00

WHEREAS there exists a need for Professional Engineers to serve as City Engineer and to advise on special projects; and

WHEREAS, the contracts are being awarded pursuant to the Fair and Open Process, a process that provides for public solicitation of proposals OR qualifications and the New Jersey Local Unit Pay-to-Play Law as defined in N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq., bids were advertised on November 5, 2021 and received on December 3, 2021, providing sufficient time to give notice, and publicly opened on December 3, 2021 for; and

WHEREAS, the governing body awarded a professional services contract to Suburban Consulting Engineers, Inc. on January 4, 2022 to serve as the City Engineer and this resolution is to amend the contract to include professional services as outlined in Proposal SCE-PA9786.Y21 for work directly related to Hurricane Ida funded through Ordinance Number 31-2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council Members of the City of Lambertville, in the County of Hunterdon, in the State of New Jersey

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hereby authorizes the contract with Suburban Consulting Engineers, Inc., for Proposal SCE-PA9786.Y21, in an amount not to exceed \$62,680.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of these actions shall be printed in the January 26, 2022 issue of The Times, N.J.A.C. 5:34-9.5 (d).

ADOPTED: January 20, 2022

Councilman Sanders made the motion and Councilwoman Lambert seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken by the following members: Councilwoman Lambert, Councilman Sanders, Councilman Stegman, Council President Taylor, Mayor Nowick. MOTION CARRIED.

BILLS LIST

Mayor Nowick informed the members of the governing body that there was one addition to the Bills List for Hunt and Faherty's December bill to serve as Municipal Prosecutor. He asked for a motion to approve the Bills List as amended. Council President Taylor made the motion and Councilwoman Lambert seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken by the following members: Councilwoman Lambert, Councilman Sanders, Councilman Stegman, Council President Taylor, Mayor Nowick. MOTION CARRIED.

ORDINANCES FIRST READING/INTRODUCTION

ORDINANCE NUMBER 01-2022: An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution of a Lease Agreement Between the City of Lambertville and Richard Crane for use of the Lilly Street Apartment, Property Owned by the City and Located at 6 Lilly Street (Block 1074, Lot 2).

Mayor Nowick read the resolution into the record by title. He asked for questions or comments from the governing body. Councilman Sanders for clarification on the changes for this lease. The City Clerk responded that the only difference is the funding source.

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ORDINANCE NUMBER 01-2022

An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution of a Lease Agreement Between the City of Lambertville and Richard Crane for use of the Lilly Street Apartment, Property Owned by the City and Located at 6 Lilly Street (Block 1074, Lot 2).

WHEREAS, the City of Lambertville (the "City"), a municipal corporation of the State of New Jersey, with offices located at 18 York Street, Lambertville New Jersey 08530, owns the property shown on the City Tax Maps as Block 1074, Lot 2, commonly known as 6 Lilly Street (the "Property"); and

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WHEREAS, Richard Crane has requested to continue to lease a portion of the Property for residential purposes, which premises he has leased from the City since December 2014 (the “Leased Premises”); and

WHEREAS, Richard Crane continues to be eligible for the rental of the apartment as certified by the Public Assistance Director, and has been income qualified to lease the apartment under Section 8 Housing; and

WHEREAS, the Leased Premises at the Property are not currently being used by the City; and

WHEREAS, the use of the Leased Premises at the Property will allow the city to continue to provide an essential need in our community for affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, the City may lease the Leased Premises to Richard Crane by ordinance, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1 et. seq. of the Local Lands and Buildings Law; and

WHEREAS, there is a desire to approve a lease agreement with Richard Crane for use of the Leased Premises, for a term of one (1) year or until he moves or no longer qualified to lease the apartment, in the form set forth in the attached hereto as Exhibit A (the “Lease Agreement”).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Governing Body of the City of Lambertville, as follows:

1. The aforementioned recitals are incorporated herein as though fully set forth at length.
2. The Governing Body approves the execution of the Lease Agreement with Richard Crane for use of the Leased Premises, as more fully described in the Lease Agreement.
3. The Mayor is authorized to execute the Lease Agreement in substantially the same form attached hereto as Exhibit A, and subject to such additions, deletions, modifications or amendments deemed necessary by the Mayor in her discretion in consultation with counsel, which additions, deletions, modifications or amendments do not alter the substantive rights and obligations of the parties thereto.
4. If any section, paragraph, subdivision, clause, sentence, phrase or provision of this Ordinance is declared unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance.
5. The City Clerk is hereby directed to publish this Ordinance as required by applicable law and make the same available for public inspection.
6. This Ordinance shall take effect after twenty (20) days of its final passage by the Municipal Council, upon approval by the Mayor and publication as required by law.

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING: January 20, 2022

PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING: February 17, 2022

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Mayor Nowick asked for a motion to introduce on first reading Ordinance Number 01-2022. Councilman Stegman made the motion and Councilwoman Lambert seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken by the following members: Councilwoman Lambert, Councilman Sanders, Councilman Stegman, Council President Taylor, Mayor Nowick. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Nowick announced that the public hearing is scheduled for February 17, 2022.

ORDINANCES SECOND READING/PUBLIC HEARING – None.

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS – Mayor Nowick.

Mayor Nowick gave the following report to the members of the governing body and public.

I've been thinking about this speech for a couple of weeks now. I've always marveled at the audacity of the president to begin his state of the union speech with a single adjective. And maybe in tonight's moment of silence you came up with a single adjective for the state of the city as you see it, but try as I might, I could not find just the right word. Here are four adjectives and two gerunds that will frame my thoughts: battered, recovering, overextended, changing, supported, and hopeful.

The city is battered. Ida came with a ferocity that will be remembered all our lives. In a few short hours, scores of families were rescued, or fled, from their ravaged homes, dozens of businesses were destroyed, and city infrastructure was mangled out of recognition.

Since that awful day of tears and grief and worry, I have spoken to hundreds of residents. I have read the four hundred and twenty-six damage reports filed with the city by our people and businesses. I have walked the creeks end-to-end and visited the twenty-odd municipal sites that need our attention. The city is battered. Of the sixteen houses across from Basil Bandwagon, only one or two have seen the return of occupants. Village apartments is a ghost town. The backyards of houses on Swan street are long gone, swept away. Dancing, pizza, coffee, art, music, all gone from Canal Studios. Damage in the many millions of dollars. And our people, still battered—trying to figure out how, or if, a return is even possible.

Not to mention Covid. Or tax increases, which I'll get to in a moment.

The city is recovering. Triage began before the water receded. Hundreds of neighbors and emergency personnel set upon the remnants and began the recovery. What Ida wrought, this city returned with an immediate counterpunch of human empathy and action. From the first, "how can I help?" the city has been recovering. Residents are rebuilding their homes, their lives, making decisions, finding a way. The city has identified twenty-two sites in need of repair or rebuilding. Business owners got to work applying for permits and are actively rebuilding. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were raised and distributed. Ow Wow Cow has reopened, as has Basil Bandwagon.

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Fisherman's Mark never faltered and continues every day to help this city and its people recover. Little by little the city recovers. Recovering is a word we will hear a lot this year.

But I must caution. There will never be a full recovery – some residents will not return, and many will continue to suffer enormous financial and emotional hardship; the creeks will never look like they did in August; our business community may not fully recalibrate. In ways both great and small, recovery may look more like inertia settling in, an uninvited and unwanted guest. In a fell swoop, Ida demarked this city and its people into a before and after. Something that seemed impossible became possible. What we can't recover we must transform into preparation and resolve.

What is certainly not recovering this year is our municipal budget.

The city is overextended, stretched beyond reason. This is where I begin my mayorship. I say from the start I am not interested in litigating every historical explanation for this, nor is my style to affix blame or judgment. People have told me I'm inheriting a mess. I don't even like the word inherit. I begin each day with what's in front of me, plain and simple, a problem to be solved, if it can be solved. What's in front of me—what's in front of us—is a very lousy year, and that, my friends, is an understatement. Our taxes have increased, our debt remains high, our budget is already barebones, and at best our revenues are likely to be flat. We will have to borrow large sums of money to pay for Ida repairs. The city is not only battered by Ida and Covid, but it's battered by its financial situation, and I'd be surprised if there isn't a single household for whom this doesn't pose a concern.

In ordinary terms, let's look briefly at the state of the DPW as a living metaphor of how the city is stretched. It is important to note that some of why this department is in trouble has to do with our inability to fully staff it. This is hard work for little pay and today's labor market says no thank you to these jobs. Currently, the DPW has six full time employees, five of whom are picking up trash and recycling, leaving Lester to do everything else, including a lot of engine repairs for an ever-aging fleet. In this fleet, we have three trash trucks: two purchased in 2009, listed in poor and fair condition respectively, and the third trash truck – our back-up—dates to 1998. Only four of our fifteen vehicles have been purchased in the last decade. Eleven of the fifteen vehicles are listed in fair, poor, or bad condition. The garage is too small, and I haven't the least idea when we sent a single dollar over there for any kind of improvements.

Looking elsewhere: City Hall, the Library, the Police Department, the Justice Center. The city will soon receive a comprehensive review of these facilities, but it doesn't take an architect or a specialist to see these buildings are woefully under-cared for. Everyone loves our historic buildings; and yet there is no identifiable way to suggest we are good stewards of them. We have no capital improvement plan for our municipal buildings, and we allocate almost no money for their upkeep. Add to this the Closson farm – the purchase of which I wholeheartedly supported—and you will find more than enough proof to know the city is living beyond its means.

Our debt service last year was over 1.4 million dollars. Our debt service will be a stranglehold on every budgetary decision we make in 2022. Remember that.

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The city is changing, and this is something I will address in each State of the City address because change, as we know, is constant. Last night, after a long and tiring day, I went to the bar at Bell's for dinner. I ended up having conversations with a few residents and invariably, change came up. Concerns about development, concerns about losing a way of life that seems simpler, more comforting, more neighborly. In truth, the old days are as elusive as August 30, 2021. Lambertville is changing. Real estate values have risen; new people are coming; others are departing. There will be development. Broad demographic shifts are happening before our very eyes and there isn't much we can do about them. The city is changing, but it is changing through a base of well-established history and culture and for that we can feel comforted. We should be more than responsive—we should be proactive and nimble as we work to accept and encourage the change we want to see. What does that change look like to you?

The city is supported. Supported by municipal employees who show up up early, stay late, mop the floors of the Justice Center after a flood. Our staff is a tremendous asset to the city. In the DPW, Lester, John, and Dave have a combined 73 years' worth of service. The top members of our police force can easily match that. The city is supported by a staff in City Hall that works endlessly to file FEMA Reports, correspond with residents, keep the books in order, and so on. This city is supported by the police department, the fire department, the Rescue Squad, the LMUA, the Library, the churches, and many organizations whose missions benefit us all. This city is supported by over a hundred people serving on our boards and commissions. This city is supported by residents who quietly and big heartedly volunteer where there is need. The city is supported by its history. The city is supported by its taxpayers. The city is supported by a diverse and committed business community that is the lifeblood of our economy. This city is supported by its artists. This city is supported by the laughter of children and the dedication of teachers. This city is supported by a city council that gives most generously of its time and wisdom. This city is supported by your mayor.

The city is hopeful. After the ills of Pandora's box have spread wide and far, hope alights. We are hopeful because history stands guard; because residents rush to help in times of crisis; because government welcomes dissenting views; because we cherish what I think of as a patina of scrappiness that keeps us going with grit and determination toward the next moment. We are hopeful because businesses keep coming; because new residents make a difference, because long-timers keep us honest; We are hopeful because after years of tax increases and a horrendous flood, the residents of this town voted to raise their own taxes to fund new and better schools for the future children of Lambertville. We are hopeful because we know cannabis will soon fund our coffers, while calming us down. We are hopeful because, despite the hardships, the taxes, the worries, we are glad to be here and because, as everyone knows, the state of the city of Lambertville is exceptional.

Lambertville has a new mayor. And while the state of his mind may occasionally be called into question, his dedication will never be. In my first year, I will cement my commitment to public service with the confidence of a 57-year-old man who is not afraid of any problem or any conversation. In the year 2022, I will: engage with residents, manage the recovery from Ida, collaborate with council, shepherd the budget process

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openly and responsibly, improve city services, notably as they pertain to the DPW; oversee the creation of sustained, long-term mitigation and resiliency planning, partner with the library, organize the clean-out of junk from city hall, be present in our business community, work toward creating affordable housing, move the Closson farm forward to its best public use, and oversee a clean-up of the DPW yard. Lastly, I hope to get farm market started in town.

All of this is a massive undertaking, but I'll meet every day with good cheer and gratitude for this community.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

HYBRID CC MEETINGS FOR 2022

Mayor Nowick informed the members of the governing body and public that he has talked with the members of the governing body and they all agree that we would like to use Zoom for all council meetings in 2022. We will keep track of Zoom attendance at each session and (41 people tonight) based on our year end assessment we may or may not approve it for the following year. The goal is to increase access at every turn.

Mayor Nowick asked for a motion to confirm the hybrid Council meetings for 2022. Councilman Sanders made the motion and Councilwoman Lambert seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

STORAGE FOR DPW, GARAGE AT CLOSSON PROPERTY

Mayor Nowick informed the members of the governing body that the Public Works Director has asked for storage space in one of the garage or barns located by the Holcombe house to store small equipment such as mowers.

Mayor Nowick asked for a motion to confirm the request for use of the garage at the Holcombe House for public works to store small equipment. Councilman Sanders made the motion and Councilwoman Lambert seconded the motion. An affirmative roll call/voice vote was taken by the following members: Councilwoman Lambert, Councilman Sanders, Councilman Stegman, Council President Taylor, Mayor Nowick. MOTION CARRIED.

CLOSSON PROPERTY: PUBLIC ACCESS

Mayor Nowick commented that the governing body wants the public to use the Closson property for passive recreation. Councilman Stegman suggested we keep this pedestrian access only. Mayor Nowick commented that the City will put signs up asking people not to enter the barns and a reminder that cow hill is the best hill for sledding. There are a number of other hills that go into the creek, and we want people to enjoy themselves but we want people to make good decisions. Discussion ensued.

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Mayor Nowick asked for a motion to confirm the use of the open space at the Closson property for foot traffic only and for passive recreation from dawn to dusk by the members of the public. Councilman Stegman made the motion and Councilman Sanders seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

CITY FACEBOOK ACCOUNT

Mayor Nowick informed the members of the public present that the City is considering reopening our Facebook account. He said this will be a process, we aren't just going to restart it. The City is currently reviewing a social media policy for consideration of an ordinance and will know more information by March. We will use it for announcements and emergency notices.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC COMMENT AT MEETINGS

Mayor Nowick informed the members of the governing body that he feels it is important to establish rules and to do it formally to allow the public to communicate effectively. In December, there were a lot of emails to the council and the council does an admirable job responding to people. There are moments when the council is receiving 30 emails that need careful response. The process is not meant to inhibit, it's just that there is a tool and an expectation on how we communicate.

Mayor Nowick commented that if a member of the public writes an email about an agenda item, maybe that would get forwarded to Mayor Nowick and he would respond and then add to the record and memorialize it in the minutes. This would be a public comment process for the meetings as well and to clarify that process. In a group setting, with 10 people, maybe, we ask by a raise of hands who wants to speak and maybe we can allow more time.

Council President Taylor commented that she is in favor of establishing a policy on how we respond to the public but she felt the example is potentially not feasible and she felt it was not necessary.

Mayor Nowick commented that the governing body could talk more about this, but ideas around, and he invited the public to send ideas or comments to the mayor. Policy is important. Stay tuned.

HAZARD MITIGATION COMMITTEE

Mayor Nowick commented that he is committed to working with council, residents and experts to assist the city with mitigation, education, resiliency training. Councilman Stegman commented that he thought it was important to get information together in one study about what happened. Council President Taylor commented that if the city is looking for funding opportunities, the data will be important to justify our need. This committee won't take the place of experts but they may be evaluating it and using it.

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Mayor Nowick informed the members of the governing body that Council President Taylor expressed interest in mapping and pulling together data, we have some of it. Council President Taylor commented that we need information about rates of flow and what is happening with the runoff. Councilwoman Lambert commented that we need a serious approach but until we get into the discussion, we don't know what questions will rise up. Council President Taylor commented that it is a city wide concern and if we can slow it down; go through the level of detail and get data behind it. Councilman Sanders commented that it is part of a puzzle and maybe we can find video or photos because there were lots of people with cameras. Judy, had said maybe there is an opportunity for a volunteer effort to collect those stories, crowd sources might be helpful for mitigation efforts.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Nowick read the correspondence into the record by title.

JERSEY CENTRAL POWER & LIGHT: BPU Docket No. EO21101182, Petition of JCP&L for Approval of a Change to Its Zero Emission Certificate Recovery Charge

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Nowick read the announcements into the record.

Convenience Center Hours: The Convenience Center is closed for the winter and will reopen in March/April, weather permitting.

Pet Licenses Expired on 12/31/2021. Registration Fees increase after 02/28/2022.

Cherry Street/North Union Street Park

CAT

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mayor Nowick asked for public participation.

Judy Gleason commented on various things and she said she was seeking clarification on the following things:

Fisherman's mark: do they have heat?

Cost of Zoom: budget issues, include other meetings, like planning board?

Do we have property insurance for access to Closson property?

Care of the buildings and property - how is that assigned or will citizens be asked to do stuff?

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Convenience Center - Is still needed by residents who are cleaning up and if we don't have a convenience center I am just asking, we are asking, patches of ground.

Volunteers to help human information of what happened when the hurricane went through, what happened on York street, what happened in different parts of town. The only people who know are the people who were there.

Mayor Nowick responded to her questions stating, yes we have heat for Fisherman's Mark; zoom fees are manageable; we are open to expanding Zoom to other boards and commissions and will pose the issue with the planning board. Insurance for the Closson site – no problem with that; Care of the buildings – Mayor Nowick has been going in twice a week. We shut off the water in the houses. We are looking after the buildings in the winter. This is not sustainable for the Mayor and we may consider finding a volunteer. Councilman Stegman commented that it would be great to have some kind of monitoring system so if there is an issue we know. Mayor Nowick commented about the Convenience Center that we might revisit it but for now, public works was directed to pick up all of the bags of leaves off the street. If people need it we will arrange it. Volunteers are great and I am not sure how to organize it. Council President Taylor offered to be a point person and she informed Judy Gleason that if she wanted to work with her the offer still stands.

Kevin Coolihan expressed his concern for the state of Upper York Street from Hurricane Ida. Mayor Nowick informed Mr. Coolihan that on December 10th he walked with representatives from the USDA. He anticipates that stretch will be repaired, dredged. The USDA has certain criteria they follow for waterways and they won't work on private property. They will fix everything along the road. We haven't received authorization yet, and we will be following up with them in the next week or so. That whole section will be completely reconstructed. Once we have the authorization, we have 220 days to finish that work. Mayor Nowick will stop on Saturday to take a look.

Michael Harriet, a resident of York Street commented that he moved in in May. He saw firsthand the damage of everyone downhill. The six foot deep creek is now 12 inches. We have hundreds of videos. Calton Homes project was blamed for many of the issues, a common theme. Mayor Nowick commented that the city will contact Elizabethtown Gas to come out. Councilman Stegman commented that the house backs up to the highway, and you are getting water from Washington street, 179, over the years that has been mitigated to some level of update.

Dave Burd asked if Mayor Nowick goes into the buildings located on the Closson property and inspect them regularly. He informed the members of the governing body of a device that cost \$225 will be monitored 24/7, 365, 9 text, emails, on temperature, humidity and power.

Zoom Questions and Comments:

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Suzanne Gitomer welcomed Mayor Nowick and she wished good luck to the council. She said she is thrilled that you are continuing to have zoom at these meetings; sad that the cat has been put on hold. I thought that it was a robust group, with bright people, and an efficient way of getting a wide range of public input into public issues. I hope it's not one of those things that goes adrift.

No other comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Nowick asked for a motion to adjourn at 8:14 p.m. Councilman Sanders made the motion and Councilwoman Lambert seconded the motion. An affirmative voice vote was taken by the following members: Councilwoman Lambert, Councilman Sanders, Councilman Stegman, Council President Taylor, Mayor Nowick. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia L. Ege
CMR, RMC, City Clerk