

TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

August 1, 2023 — 7:00 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** 7:02 pm **By CP Wyant**
2. **OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT STATEMENT** **Read by CVP Clark**
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** **All**
4. **INVOCATION** **Led by Councilman Piazza**

CP Wyant asked for a moment of silence to honor the passing of New Jersey Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver.

5. **ROLL CALL** – Present - Wyant, Clark, Piazza, Marino, Kennedy
-Also in attendance: Mayor Tersigni, Business Administrator Hall, Attorney Wenner, Deputy Clerk Turner.
6. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – July 18, 2023 Public Session Minutes and Executive Session Minutes, July 27, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes.

ROLL CALL

| | Motion Carries | | | 5-0 | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-----|------------|---------|--------|
| | First | Second | Yea | Nay | Abstain | Absent |
| Councilmembers | | | | | | |
| Councilman Piazza | X | | X | | | |
| Councilman Marino | | | X | | | |
| Councilman Kennedy | | | X | | | |
| Council VP Clark | | X | X | | | |
| Council President Wyant | | | X | | | |

7. BILLS LIST

ROLL CALL

| | Motion Carries | | | 5-0 | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-----|------------|---------|--------|
| | First | Second | Yea | Nay | Abstain | Absent |
| Councilmembers | | | | | | |
| Councilman Piazza | X | | X | | | |
| Councilman Marino | | X | X | | | |
| Councilman Kennedy | | | X | | | |
| Council VP Clark | | | X | | | |
| Council President Wyant | | | X | | | |

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS – No Announcements

9. MAYOR’S REPORT/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

MAYOR'S REPORT

On July 27th the 2023 summer playground program ended. This was a collaboration with the Firth Youth Center and the town of Phillipsburg. The staff, children, and parents were all sad to see the program come to an end, but grateful for the experience. Each week had a theme including STEAM, heroes, awesome animals, sports, and playground pride. Weeks also included numerous activities with special visitors, mystery readers and much more. The daily attendance at the Phillipsburg Park were record setting for the playground program this year. There was an 81% increase on average daily and 103% increase in unique youth services. 100% of respondents strongly agree that the Playground program staff did a great job supervising the activities. 100% of respondents also recommend having the Playground Program in 2023.

The 15 plus dead trees at Walters Park have been cut down and removed. This was a public safety issue and needed to be completed.

The Walter Park Pool has brought in an unprecedented \$66,101 as of this point. Our community is enjoying this state-of-the-art pool and recreation continues to prosper.

Parking fees are at \$69,840 at this point. We should exceed over 6 figures by the end of the year.

The Cal Ripken committee continues to receive private donations. This state-of-the-art facility will be second to none. A very exciting announcement will be coming soon.

Respectfully submitted, Todd M. Tersigni – Mayor Of Phillipsburg.

10. PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS

Joe Meyner, 392 South Main Street, Phillipsburg – Mr. Meyner stated that a 4% tax increase, on average \$160 per residence, would provide \$2 million per year for the sewer repairs being bonded by Ordinance 2023-12 and the town would not incur any debt.

Public Discussion Session closed.

11. ORDINANCES FOR 2ND READING – No Ordinances for 2nd Reading

12. ORDINANCES FOR 1ST READING –

O2023-12 - BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS 2023 SEWER UTILITY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS IN AND BY THE TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG, IN THE COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY; APPROPRIATING \$4,000,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$4,000,000 BONDS OR NOTES TO FINANCE THE COST THEREOF

ROLL CALL

Motion Carries

5-0

| Councilmembers | First | Second | Yea | Nay | Abstain | Absent |
|-------------------------|-------|--------|-----|-----|---------|--------|
| Councilman Piazza | | | X | | | |
| Councilman Marino | X | | X | | | |
| Councilman Kennedy | | X | X | | | |
| Council VP Clark | | | X | | | |
| Council President Wyant | | | X | | | |

13. RESOLUTIONS ** CONSENT AGENDA **

Matters listed on the Consent Agenda Resolutions are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion of the Council and one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member requests an item to be removed for consideration

R 2023-145 DESIGNATING HANDICAP PARKING SPACES WITHIN THE TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG

R2023-147 DISCHARGING MORTGAGE LIEN OF THE TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

R2023-148 AUTHORIZING A REFUND OF ESCROW IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,205.25 TO 125-165 HOWARD STREET LLC

R2023-149 AUTHORIZING AN INCREASE OF BUDGET IN THE AMOUNT OF \$9,795.00 TO THE CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES WITH RT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC FOR MADISON PARK SOIL CAP DELINEATION AND WASTE CHARACTERIZATION

R2023-150 RESCINDING RESOLUTION 2023-138 AUTHORIZING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION

ROLL CALL

Motion Carries

5-0

| Councilmembers | First | Second | Yea | Nay | Abstain | Absent |
|-------------------------|-------|--------|-----|-----|---------|--------|
| Councilman Piazza | X | | X | | | |
| Councilman Marino | | | X | | | |
| Councilman Kennedy | | X | X | | | |
| Council VP Clark | | | X | | | |
| Council President Wyant | | | X | | | |

R2023-146 Pulled from the Consent Agenda by Councilman Marino

Councilman Marino stated that, while he supports R2023-146, the representatives stated no tax dollars/public money would be used, they would raise the funds. A previous council had earmarked the money for playground areas throughout Phillipsburg. He feels the money would be better spent on multiple parks throughout town that need work done. Councilman Marino stated that the private committee did not use the Recreation Committee or Open Space Committee.

Council Vice President Clark stated that the PILOT agreement is providing the funds, not taxpayer dollars. \$50,000 of the money is to be donated to Recreation. This administration has been working to remediate and upkeep many of the parks. The committee invited CVP Clark, Open Space Liaison, Councilman Kennedy, Recreation Liaison, and the Mayor to participate. Over \$1,000,000 has been brought in through private donations.

Councilman Piazza stated that the PILOT (Payment in lieu of taxes) is still the town's money. He agrees the money should be spread out to various playgrounds. There are a lot of other needs such as the bathrooms at Walter's Park, the locker room at the pool, a bathroom at the new field, and Senior Recreation. While a multi-use field is great, only one sport can be played at a time.

R2023-146 AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE PHASE I AMENDED AND RESTATED REDEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG AND I-78 LOGISTICS PARK II PHILLIPSBURG URBAN RENEWAL, LLC

ROLL CALL

Motion Carries

3-2

| Councilmembers | First | Second | Yea | Nay | Abstain | Absent |
|-------------------------|-------|--------|-----|-----|---------|--------|
| Councilman Piazza | | | | X | | |
| Councilman Marino | | | | X | | |
| Councilman Kennedy | | X | X | | | |
| Council VP Clark | X | | X | | | |
| Council President Wyant | | | X | | | |

14. OLD BUSINESS –

McDonald’s Sidewalk waiver – Marshall Street – CP Wyant stated the sidewalk on Route 22/Memorial Parkway is definitely needed, but the Marshall Street sidewalk is not as urgent. Councilman Piazza and CVP Clark agreed. CP Wyant suggested moving forward with the Route 22 sidewalk and putting the Marshall Street sidewalk on hold until a later date. Councilman Kennedy would like to hear the ideas put forth for the Marshall Street sidewalk in the meetings between McDonald’s and the Town Engineer.

15. NEW BUSINESS – Councilman Marino has received complaints from residents regarding rent increases. He would like the Council to go back to rent control. Councilman Marino would like the Phillipsburg Housing Authority to attend a Council meeting to discuss a security plan.

16. MOTIONS – Approval of Fire Department Applications:

Victoria White
Brian O’Neill

ROLL CALL

Motion Carries

5-0

| Councilmembers | First | Second | Yea | Nay | Abstain | Absent |
|-------------------------|-------|--------|-----|-----|---------|--------|
| Councilman Piazza | | | X | | | |
| Councilman Marino | | | X | | | |
| Councilman Kennedy | | X | X | | | |
| Council VP Clark | X | | X | | | |
| Council President Wyant | | | X | | | |

17. PUBLIC PETITIONS

Joe Meyner, 392 South Main Street, Phillipsburg – Mr. Meyner stated that \$40,000 to install a sidewalk along the Marshall St side of McDonald’s is very over-priced. He suggested having a mediator work with McDonald’s and the town to lower the cost. A sidewalk along Marshall St is important because of the children who regularly walk there.

Joan Pierce, Prospect Street, Phillipsburg – Ms. Pierce asked why a shed was put in the parking lot by the Open Air Market, who purchased it and how much it cost. Councilman Kennedy replied that NPP money was used to purchase it for all festivals and functions in the area. The only other areas it could be placed were on Jersey Street or in the park. He will look into the cost. Ms. Pierce stated that the playgrounds on Broad St and North Main are being neglected. She also stated that the appointments to the Recreation Committee were supposed to have been approved at the July 18 meeting. CP Wyant stated the Council has not received any information about the appointments. Business Administrator Hall stated he has not received any appointments from the Recreation Director, and he will check with him.

David Morrisette, Phillipsburg – Mr. Morrisette asked how the Cal Ripken Sr. Field complex will help its “youth partners realize the true potential of their parks with character-building programs, life skills curriculum, and clinics”. Will Firth Youth Center, Steel Hill Youth Sports or a new group handle the programs? He feels there are three barriers to expanding the current youth sports programs 1 – Steel Hill has capacity limits on the number of players they can accept. 2 – the field space in town. Will the Cal Ripken complex add more fields? 3 – Shortage of parents to coach. Will there be a program to attract more coaches? Mr. Morrisette also stated the estimated cost of replacing turf, which should be done in 7-10 years, at \$300,000 to \$600,000 and asked who would pay for it and if the town would impose a yearly or onetime tax to cover the cost.

Christina Henshaw– stated she has a dedicated handicapped parking space, with her name and ID # printed on the sign, in which her neighbor regularly parks. When confronted, the neighbor has made threats. She would like help resolving the situation. CP Wyant suggested using the Police App. Attorney Wenner will follow up regarding the dedicated parking space.

Dan Boyce, 1526 Warren St, Alpha - Mr. Boyce asked for clarification regarding the \$300,000 from the PILOT agreement. Attorney Wenner stated the \$300,00 development agreement was donated before the Cal Ripken Field was discussed. Mr. Boyce feels the money should be spread out to multiple areas.

Public Petitions closed.

18. COUNCIL OPEN TIME

Councilman Marino – Thanked Mr. Morrisette for information. Easton spent close to \$1,000,000 for their field.

Councilman Piazza – National Night Out event was held this evening at Shappell Park. The PBA, First Responders, non-profits, and businesses were there. We should focus on having more events like this to bring everyone together.

Councilman Kennedy – Agreed that it was great to see members of the community connect with the Police Department. The K9 demonstration was pretty cool. The Open Air Market is growing and getting better each week.

Council Vice President Clark – sends his condolences to the family and friends of Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver. He had the opportunity to know her personally. She was a wonderful advocate and trailblazer. Governor Murphy visited Phillipsburg and Warren County and viewed the flood damage. He will apply to FEMA for reimbursement of costs incurred. CVP Clark stated he has been in contact with Recreation Supervisor Matt Noel regarding getting the Open Space Committee up and running. They are trying to find a meeting space. In regard to the Cal Ripken complex, this will be the first Cal Ripken Complex in New Jersey. The \$300,000 that is part of the PILOT is a donation to the town, no taxpayer money is being used. This is a nationally acclaimed foundation that will help develop good character, keep our kids active, and out of trouble. And the complex could be rented to third parties to bring in additional revenue for the town.

19. EXECUTIVE SESSION IF REQUIRED – No Executive Session

20. ADJOURNMENT – 7:45 PM

Council VP Clark moved to adjourn. Seconded by Councilman Kennedy.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

Motion passed.