

April 28, 2020

A Regular Meeting was held by the Township Council of the Township of Roxbury on April 28, 2020 at the Municipal Building located at 1715 Route 46 in Ledgewood, New Jersey at 7:30PM; however, the Council Room was closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, the meeting was broadcast via Zoom Pro in order to allow the continuation of routine municipal business and provide the opportunity for public participation during public comment periods.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor DeFillippo led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

Adequate notice of this Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Roxbury was originally given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: On December 27, 2019, notice was faxed to the Daily Record, the Newark Star Ledger, the Roxbury Register and published in the Daily Record; notice shall also remain posted throughout the year on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building.

Adequate advance notice of the location of this meeting being changed to remote access was provided within the statutory time frame as follows: On April 24, 2020, notice was emailed and faxed to the Daily Record, the Newark Star Ledger, The Roxbury Register, emailed to TAPinto Roxbury and posted on the Township website.

ROLL CALL (Present): Councilwoman Jaki Albrecht, Councilman Thomas Carey, Councilman Mark Crowley, Deputy Mayor Fred Hall, Councilman Jim Rilee, Councilman Richard Zoschak, Mayor Robert DeFillippo; **Absent:** None

Also Present: John Shepherd, Township Manager; Amy Rhead, Township Clerk; Anthony Bucco, Township Attorney

Staff: Robert Kuncken, IT Director

Public: more than thirty (30) participants were in attendance remotely

Mayor DeFillippo amended the order of the agenda to provide the following community update with regard to COVID-19 (NOTE: full text of "Mayor's Opening Remarks from the April 28, 2020 Council Meeting" also available at www.roxburynj.us)

Township Council Update
4/28

- Thank you again for joining us for our third remote Council meeting. On behalf of myself and the Council, we hope everyone is staying well and safe. We have now been in stay-home quarantine for more than a month and I know everyone is feeling weary and wondering when things will return to some semblance of normal.
- While it is unclear how soon the stay-home order will be lifted, I want to once again thank everyone in Roxbury for standing up to this unprecedented challenge with courage and resilience.
- It is important to remember now is not the time to relax the social distancing precautions that have helped us to slow the spread of the Covid-19 virus and to flatten the curve. We urge you to please continue to adhere to all the social distancing guidelines.
- That said, I can report that we have begun discussions to figure out how Roxbury will emerge from this crisis and what that will look like. We do know that some form of social distancing will be with us for some time. As our plans are developed, we will continue to keep everyone updated.
- Right now, the Council and Township staff remain focused on public safety, which continues to be our top priority. With that, it is my unpleasant duty to give you an update on where we stand in Roxbury.
- As of today, the number of confirmed cases in town has now reached 218. And, tragically, the number of confirmed deaths stands at 5.

- As we did last week, please join me in a moment of silence for those we have lost and for the families in our community that have been touched by this terrible pandemic.
- Thank you. Once again, I ask that you keep the patients and staff at Merry Heart, which is Roxbury's only long-term care facility, in your thoughts and prayers. Like other LTC facilities, Merry Heart is dealing with the devastating impact of the virus. Kathy and I recently drove by Merry Heart and saw a family on the sidewalk waving to someone inside. It broke our hearts.
- Still, it has been gratifying to see the community respond to Merry Hearts' call for help by delivering personal protective equipment. Morris County also stepped in last week to provide them with much needed PPE. Our Township Health Department is monitoring their situation and offering the Township's assistance.
- Township staff continue to respond to residents' questions and to keep our essential services running -- either remotely or by reporting each day to their jobs. They are available to answer resident questions by phone or by email. Please visit the township's website for a complete staff directory.
- I wish to express the Council's gratitude to Township Manager John Shepherd and the staff for their dedication.
- I am very pleased to report that the two township employees who contracted the virus are doing well. One has completely recovered and the other continues to recover. We are grateful they are doing well and thank them for their service.
- Please also join me in once again thanking our essential workers, first responders, and health care heroes for placing themselves in harm's way every day to protect our community.
- John Shepherd and I continue to regularly participate in meetings with federal, state, and county authorities. Our health officials, Office of Emergency Management, police, and first responders are also working closely with their counterparts on the state and county levels. In addition, the township manager and I have also participated in discussions with the mayors of surrounding communities and with other local officials.
- Based on those conversations, Roxbury appears to be fairing as well as -- if not slightly better -- than our neighbors. This is a difficult assessment, I know, given the tragic number of confirmed cases and lives lost. But I think it also shows that our community is doing a good job adhering to the social distancing rules.
- This past week, I met with members of the clergy to discuss Roxbury's needs and how to address them. I'd like to thank the Interfaith Council and the Reverend Carrie Morgan of the First Presbyterian Church of Succasunna for bringing us together. We had a good meeting and plan to meet again.
- John and I have also met with the Chamber of Commerce and our Rotary Club to discuss the needs of the community, including our small business community. Everyone is helping and eager to do more. They are working hard in the community -- helping people get through these very difficult times and we are deeply grateful for their leadership, assistance, and prayers.
- There are so many people, groups and businesses helping in the community it would be difficult to mention them all tonight -- but we will recognize them and we will show them our undying gratitude -- from the restaurants feeding our families and first responders, to the people making masks for health care workers and battered women shelters. These acts of courage and kindness will be acknowledged.
- In fact, School Superintendent Loretta Radulic and I have recently discussed a town-wide event recognizing our heroes when it becomes safe.
- As I said, there are a lot of activities going on around town to help, including this morning at Horse Shoe Lake, where more than 190 families received a wide variety of much needed fresh food. Our deep gratitude to Morristown-based Table of Hope Mobile Food Pantry, for bringing the food bank to Roxbury, along with the assistance of Habitat for Humanity.
- There was no requirement to pre-register and there were no income guidelines to receive food. Standing in that line, you could not help but be moved watching volunteers place food in the cars as they passed by. God bless them.
- Township staff, our police and Office of Emergency Management did a great job making sure the food distribution went smoothly.

- I also need to recognize a pet food give-away the township sponsored – there was one last week and one this morning at Horse Shoe Lake. Thank you to Pet Goods in Roxbury, St. Hubert’s of Madison, and many Roxbury residents for donating the pet food. Also, a special thanks to Township Staff Sue Blanchard who helped organize the pet food giveaway.
- Our Social Services has always been there to help our families in need. They continue to do so and they continue to need our help. If you can, Social Services could use large cans of crushed, puree and whole tomatoes, tomato paste, tissues, diapers – newborn to age 1, baby wipes, ladies’ razors, ladies’ deodorant, body wash, and mouthwash.
- As a reminder, Social Services is now open on Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. We have temporarily closed on Mondays because we hadn’t seen much demand on that day and it gives our staff and volunteers a much-needed break.

Executive Orders

- Recently, there have been some questions about the types of construction projects and other activities that are permitted under the governor’s executive orders.
- You may have noticed work continuing at Ledgewood Commons and other sites around town. The governor’s order does allow projects to continue if they will provide essential services. That includes stores like Walmart and the restaurants being constructed at Ledgewood Commons. In addition, the Habitat for Humanity affordable housing project on Main Street is exempt from the order.
- Roxbury staff are closely monitoring compliance and are reviewing projects on a case-by-case basis to determine what projects may continue.
- We continue to believe that the Ledgewood Commons project has always been viewed as an economic engine for Roxbury that will ultimately benefit our local economy, including our small business community – something that will be important as we emerge from this crisis.
- We have also heard concerns expressed by residents about people not following social distancing in our parks.
- Recreational activities in our parks, such as basketball courts and playgrounds, remain closed for the safety of the public. However, our walking and biking paths, and trails remain open. I’d like to thank the community for largely observing the social distancing rules on the very few days of sunshine we have had.
- Our police are doing an outstanding job enforcing the social distancing rules, but we continue to need everyone’s cooperation. If the rules aren’t being followed, we must revisit our decision to leave the paths open.
- Current guidance requires that you remain at least six feet apart on the paths and trail. While face coverings are not required, remember the point of wearing a mask is not to protect you. You wear it to protect vulnerable members of our community.
- As we promised at our last meeting, we have revisited our decision to close the Community Garden, which we know provides a much-needed outlet for residents, as well as a source of fresh produce. Our plan is to reopen the Garden on May 1, but with some social distancing rules, which will be distributed to gardeners and posted on the Township’s website. I’ll ask Deputy Mayor Fred Hall to give a brief outline of those guidelines.
- Thank you, Mayor.
- As the Mayor has mentioned many times the safety and concern for all residents of Roxbury is our primary concern. The original garden closing was implemented out of an abundance of caution for all who use this facility. Our objective was to revisit this decision to see if there were circumstances and controls, we could put in place to further minimize the spread while allowing gardening activities to continue at this facility this year. Pending any further actions at the State level and assuming gardeners can adhere to certain stipulations we intend to reopen the garden as the Mayor stated commencing, May 1, 2020. We want to make this really clear you’re not required to maintain your assigned plot if you choose not to due to the current situation. If you feel uncomfortable in any way gardening this year, as a result of the current health situation, please use your own judgement and perhaps consider not gardening until the crisis lessens even further. If you choose to use your assigned plot please adhere to the following until further notice. I think you all have heard these stressed many times by Mayor DeFillippo. Wear a mask and gloves when coming in and out of the garden. Maintain social distancing requirements of at least six feet. If somebody is in close distance you and safe distancing is not possible simply

come back later. Bring your own garden tools. Do not share any of the garden tools. No more than five gardeners at the Roxbury Community Garden at a time. If there are more than five, then please just wait until someone exits. Be considerate of each other and please when you're done wash your hands when completed. Please understand that these guidelines could change in the future and please stay healthy and well and enjoy gardening.

- Back to you Mayor.
- Thank you, Fred.
- We are constantly reviewing our response to this unprecedented situation.
- Finally, if you have any concerns or questions, please contact Township Manager John Shepherd, me, or any member of the Council. Our contact information is also listed on our website.
- Please remain safe, be brave and God bless.

PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, ETC.

A. Proclamation: National Day of Prayer – Thursday, May 7, 2020

Mayor DeFillippo read the proclamation declaring May 7, 2020 as A National Day of Prayer in Roxbury Township.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 24, 2020 – Regular Meeting

April 14, 2020 – Regular Meeting

Councilman Zoschak made a motion to approve the above-listed minutes. Councilman Carey seconded the motion.

Roll Call:	Councilwoman Albrecht	- Yes	Councilman Carey	- Yes
	Councilman Crowley	- Yes	Deputy Mayor Hall	- Yes
	Councilman Rilee	- Yes	Councilman Zoschak	- Yes
	Mayor DeFillippo	- Yes		

Motion carried unanimously, 7 to 0.

PUBLIC PORTION (3 Minutes /1 Appearance per Individual)

There were no public comments at this time.

REPORTS OF COUNCIL LIAISON REPRESENTATIVES, COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND NEW BUSINESS / OLD BUSINESS

A. Reports of Council Liaison Representatives and Council Committees

Councilwoman Albrecht thanked DPW staff members who continue working on Main Street in preparation of scheduled paving.

Councilwoman Albrecht reminded everyone that she will provide homemade masks upon request. Email requests for masks to albrechtj@roxburynj.us.

Councilman Crowley spoke about the Table of Hope Mobile Food Pantry which took place in the parking lot at Horseshoe Lake earlier in the day. He complimented the generosity and volunteerism of both residents and staff.

Deputy Mayor Hall spoke about the success of the Table of Hope Mobile Food Pantry. He commended both Mayor Robert DeFillippo and Freeholder Kathryn DeFillippo for their efforts in coordinating the event.

Councilman Rilee expressed appreciation for the efforts of the volunteers who assisted with the Table of Hope Mobile Food Pantry and all those on the front lines of the pandemic.

Councilman Zoschak spoke about the outpouring of generosity from constituents who continue to ask what they can do to help.

Councilman Zoschak stressed the importance of adhering to the state-mandated guidelines.

Councilman Carey thanked Council for reconsidering opening the Community Garden.

Councilman Carey advised members of the Council that he received a request from a constituent for additional monitoring of Black River Park for social distancing compliance. Mr. Shepherd will forward the request to the Police Department.

Mrs. Rhead had nothing to report at this time.

Mr. Shepherd had nothing to report at this time.

Mr. Bucco commented that the Township is operating extraordinarily well during these trying times.

B. New Business/Old Business

None

MATTERS REQUESTED / REFERRED BY COUNCIL MEMBERS, MANAGER, ATTORNEY OR CLERK

None

INTRODUCTION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCES

None

HEARING AND ADOPTION OF ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING

None

INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

2020-109 A RESOLUTION INCORPORATING BY REFERENCE HEREIN AND APPROVING THE FOLLOWING NUMBERED RESOLUTIONS LISTED ON THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA FOR THIS DATE:

2020-110, 2020-111, 2020-112, 2020-113,
2020-114, 2020-115, 2020-116 2020-117

Councilman Rilee made a motion to approve the adoption of Incorporating Resolution No. 2020-109. Councilman Zoschak seconded the motion.

Roll Call:	Councilwoman Albrecht	- Yes	Councilman Carey	- Yes
	Councilman Crowley	- Yes	Deputy Mayor Hall	- Yes
	Councilman Rilee	- Yes	Councilman Zoschak	- Yes
	Mayor DeFillippo	- Yes		

Motion carried unanimously, 7 to 0.

2020-110 A RESOLUTION APPROVING PARTICIPATION WITH THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilman Rilee asked if this is an annual grant. Mr. Shepherd confirmed and advised that it offsets a portion of operating costs for two police officers.

2020-111 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF A 2020 JOHN DEERE 310SL BACKHOE LOADER FOR USE BY THE ROADS DEPARTMENT

2020-112 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP OF ROXBURY TO ENTER INTO THE NEW JERSEY COOPERATIVE PURCHASING ALLIANCE COOPERATIVE PRICING AGREEMENT

2020-113 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT FROM PAUL A. GARRISON AND PATRICIA GARRISON ACROSS LOT 2 IN BLOCK 11102 IN THE TOWNSHIP OF ROXBURY

2020-114 A RESOLUTION AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING RESOLUTION NO. 2020-067 WHICH AUTHORIZED THE REFUND OF TAX OVERPAYMENTS DUE TO TAX COURT OF NEW JERSEY STIPULATION OF SETTLEMENT

2020-115 NORTH JERSEY MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS FUND RESOLUTION TO RENEW

2020-116 THE TOWNSHIP OF ROXBURY APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONER TO THE NORTH JERSEY MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS FUND

2020-117 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PAYMENT OF BILLS

PERSONNEL CHANGES

None

COMMUNICATIONS

April 24, 2020

No comments or discussion.

PUBLIC PORTION (3 Minutes /1 Appearance per Individual)

Shawn Potillo, 54 Laurie Road, Landing – Mr. Potillo extended words of appreciation to the Council, Manager and staff for moving the township forward in a positive manner. He expressed gratitude for the Police, Firefighters and EMTs who are on the front line during the pandemic. Mr. Potillo acknowledged the efforts of all the teachers who have been keeping the students engaged in the learning process. Lastly, he thanked all the residents for exhibiting such a caring spirit within each community during this difficult time.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor DeFillippo closed the Public Portion.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

2020-118 NOT USED – A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ROXBURY, IN THE COUNTY OF MORRIS, NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING CONFERENCE OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:02PM, Councilman Zoschak made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Carey seconded the motion.

Voice Vote: All in Favor – Yes; Motion carried unanimously, 7 to 0.

Submitted by:

Amy E. Rhead, RMC
Township Clerk

MINUTES APPROVED BY COUNCIL:

DATE: May 12, 2020

ROLL CALL: Councilwoman Albrecht - Yes
Councilman Carey - Yes
Councilman Crowley - Yes
Deputy Mayor Hall - Yes
Councilman Rilee - Yes
Councilman Zoschak - Yes
Mayor DeFillippo - Yes