

**TOWNSHIP OF CEDAR GROVE  
ESSEX COUNTY NEW JERSEY**

**SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**MAY 18, 2020**

**1. ROLL CALL AND FLAG SALUTE**

Mayor Vargo called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Councilmembers Cicala, Maceri, Tanella, Deputy Mayor Peterson, Mayor Vargo  
Also Present: Township Manager Tucci, Township Attorney Semeraro, Township Clerk Stutz

The flag salute was led by Mayor Vargo.

Mayor Vargo made the required announcement concerning the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Adequate notice of this meeting was duly provided to the Verona-Cedar Grove Times and the Star Ledger by fax and on May 5, 2019, filed with the Township Clerk, and posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building Lobby in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act.

**2. PUBLIC HEARING**

- a) To consider adoption of Pending Ord. #20-859 – Ordinance Amending Chapter 208 of the Township Code Entitled “Rent Control”

The ordinance was read by title only:

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CEDAR GROVE, COUNTY OF  
ESSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING CHAPTER 208 OF THE  
TOWNSHIP CODE, ENTITLED “RENT CONTROL”**

Mayor Vargo opened the meeting to anyone wishing to be heard on this item only. There being no one present wishing to be heard, Mayor Vargo closed this portion of the meeting.

Councilman Cicala moved that the ordinance be adopted at second reading, published in the Star Ledger as a passed ordinance to take effect as prescribed by law, seconded by Councilman Tanella, and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilman Cicala, Maceri, Tanella, Deputy Mayor Peterson, Mayor Vargo

NO: None

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

- a) To consider introduction of Pending Ordinance #20-860 to exceed the Municipal Budget appropriation Limits and Establish a Cap Bank

The clerk read the Ordinance by title only:

**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 Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove in the County of Essex finds it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2019 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 Township Council hereby determines that a 3.5% increase in the budget for said year, amounting to \$123,192.94 in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap Law, is advisable and necessary; and,

**WHEREAS** the Township 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 Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, in the County of Essex, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2019 budget year, the final appropriations of the Township of Cedar Grove shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14, be increased by 3.5%, amounting to \$12,750,469.46, and that the CY 2019 municipal budget for the Township of Cedar Grove 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,

**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.

Councilman Cicala moved that Pending Ordinance #20-860 be passed at first reading, published in the Star Ledger as a pending ordinance with a public hearing of June 1, 2020, seconded by Deputy Mayor Peterson, and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Cicala, Maceri, Tanella, Deputy Mayor Peterson, Mayor Vargo  
 NO: None

b) To consider introduction of 2020 Municipal Budget

The following resolution had been posted on the bulletin board, and a brief synopsis was given by the Township Clerk:

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the following statements of revenues and appropriations shall constitute the Municipal Budget for the year 2020; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a summary of said budget be published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times in the issue of June 4, 2020.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a Hearing on the Budget and Tax Resolution will be held at the Municipal Building on June 15, 2020 at which time and place objections to said Budget and Tax Resolution for the year 2020 may be presented by taxpayers or other interested persons.

General Appropriations for:

1.	Appropriations within "CAPS"	
	(a) Municipal Purposes	\$12,493,053.00
2.	Appropriations excluded from "CAPS"	
	(a) Municipal Purposes	\$ 3,131,196.16
3.	Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	\$ 560,000.00
4.	Total General Appropriations	\$16,184,249.16
5.	Less Anticipated Revenues Other Than Current Property Tax	\$ 4,749,358.40
6.	Difference: Amount to be raised by taxes	
	(a) Local Tax for Municipal Purposes Including Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	\$ 10,646,071.99
	(b) Addition to Local District School Tax	
	(c) Minimum Library Tax	\$ 788,818.77

The Township Manager provided an overview of the 2020 municipal budget. Mr. Tucci advised that the 2020 municipal budget total general appropriation is \$16,184,249 vs. \$15,992,016 for 2019, an increase of approximately \$192,233 more than the 2019 budget. Mr. Tucci further advised that the amount to be raised by taxation for municipal purposes is \$10,646,071, which is \$417,490 less than the maximum amount increase allowed under the 2% CAP law. Mr. Tucci cited factors that continue to impact the budget, and noted several line item increases that impacted the budget such as group medical, P & F pension contributions, and debt service payments. The

Manager further noted that the proposed local tax rate is \$0.516, compared to \$0.507 in 2019. Mr. Tucci advised that the average assessed value of a home increased to \$469,600, compared to \$468,200 in 2019 and anticipated a \$49.37 increase in the local portion of the average assessed home’s tax levy. Mr. Tucci explained the apportioning of a tax bill; 20% municipal, approximately 50-55% Board of Education, and approximately 30% for the County.

Councilman Maceri moved adoption of the resolution, seconded by Councilman Cicala, and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Cicala, Maceri, Tanella, Deputy Mayor Peterson, Mayor Vargo

NO: None

c) To consider introduction of 2020 Solid Waste Collection District Budget

The following resolution had been posted on the bulletin board, and a brief synopsis was given by the Township Clerk:

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the following statements of revenues and appropriations shall constitute the Solid Waste Collection District Budget for the year 2020 and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a summary of said budget be published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times in the issue of June 4, 2020; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a Hearing on the Budget and Tax Resolution will be held at the Municipal Building on June 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at which time and place objections to said Budget and Tax Resolution for the year 2020 may be presented by taxpayers or other interested persons;

General Appropriations for:

Total Solid Waste Collection District Appropriations	\$ 1,876,269.00
Amount to be raised by Taxation for Support of Solid Waste Collection District	\$ 1,619,090.00

Councilman Tanella moved adoption of the resolution, seconded by Deputy Mayor Peterson, and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Cicala, Maceri, Tanella, Deputy Mayor Peterson, Mayor Vargo

NO: None

d) To consider resolution concerning deferral of school tax levy

The following resolution had been posted on the bulletin board, and a brief synopsis was given by the Township Clerk:

**WHEREAS**, the Local School District Tax for the year July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 was raised in the 2019 Tax Levy in the sum of \$29,971,603.00 ; and

**WHEREAS**, the statutes permit the deferral of the cash liability of such School Tax up to fifty (50%) of the School Tax Levy or \$14,985,801.50.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, that the Deferred School Tax for the Local School District be increased from the sum of \$14,535,741.00 which was deferred as of December 31, 2018 to the sum of \$14,985,801.50.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the certified copies of this resolution be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

Deputy Mayor Peterson moved adoption of the resolution, seconded by Councilman Maceri, and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Cicala, Maceri, Tanella, Deputy Mayor Peterson, Mayor Vargo

NO: None

**4. MEETING OPEN TO RESIDENTS OF THE TOWNSHIP WISHING TO BE HEARD ON ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA**

Mayor Vargo opened this portion of the meeting to anyone wishing to be heard on any item on the agenda.

Steve Young; 18 Young Ave. – Mr. Young commended the Township Manage and Council on the fiscally responsible budget.

There being no one else present wishing to be heard, Mayor Vargo closed this portion of the meeting.

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

Councilman Cicala moved adjournment of the meeting, seconded by Deputy Mayor Peterson, and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Cicala, Maceri, Tanella, Deputy Mayor Peterson, Mayor Vargo

NO: None

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

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ROBBIE VARGO

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

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KATHLEEN R. STUTZ      MUNICIPAL CLERK