

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

PUBLIC COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

DECEMBER 4, 2023

1. ROLL CALL, INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Present: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson

Also Present: Township Manager Zichelli, Township Attorney Nabbie and Township Clerk Forde

The flag salute was led by Mayor Peterson.

Mayor Peterson 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 on December 22, 2022, filed with the Township Clerk, and posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building Lobby in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) To consider approval of minutes of regular public meeting – November 6, 2023.

Councilwoman Mega moved approval of the minutes as presented, seconded by Councilman Zazzali, and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson

NO: None

3. PUBLIC HEARING

- a) To consider introduction of Pending Ordinance #23-920 – An Ordinance Setting the 2024 Maximum Allowable Rent Increase Pursuant to Chapter 208 of the Code of the Township of Cedar Grove.

The ordinance was read by title only as follows:

PASSED ORDINANCE NO. 23-920

**AN ORDINANCE SETTING THE 2024 MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE RENT INCREASE
PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 208 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CEDAR
GROVE**

Mayor Peterson opened the public hearing on this item. There being no one present wishing to be heard, Mayor Peterson closed the public hearing.

Councilman Maceri moved that the ordinance be adopted at second reading, published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times as a passed ordinance to take effect as prescribed by law, seconded by Deputy Mayor Skabich and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- b) To consider introduction of Pending Ordinance #23-921 – An Ordinance of the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, Adding Chapter 210 to the Code of the Township Concerning Privately-Owned Salt Storage.

The ordinance was read by title only as follows:

PASSED ORDINANCE NO. 23-921

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CEDAR GROVE, COUNTY OF ESSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, ADDING CHAPTER 210 TO THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP CONCERNING PRIVATELY-OWNED SALT STORAGE

Mayor Peterson opened the public hearing on this item. There being no one present wishing to be heard, Mayor Peterson closed the public hearing.

Deputy Mayor Skabich moved that the ordinance be adopted at second reading, published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times as a passed ordinance to take effect as prescribed by law, seconded by Councilwoman Mega and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- c) To consider introduction of Pending Ordinance #23-922 – An Ordinance Amending Chapter 228 of the Code of the Township of Cedar Grove Regarding Stormwater Management.

The ordinance was read by title only as follows:

PASSED ORDINANCE NO. 23-922

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 228 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CEDAR GROVE REGARDING STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Mayor Peterson opened the public hearing on this item. There being no one present wishing to be heard, Mayor Peterson closed the public hearing.

Councilwoman Mega moved that the ordinance be adopted at second reading, published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times as a passed ordinance to take effect as prescribed by law, seconded by Councilman Maceri and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- d) To consider introduction of Pending Ordinance #23-923 – An Ordinance Amending Chapter 230 Article V of the Code of the Township of Cedar Grove Regarding the Right-of-Way Construction and/or Maintenance.

The Clerk read the ordinance by title only:

PASSED ORDINANCE NO. 23-923

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 230 ARTICLE V OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CEDAR GROVE REGARDING THE RIGHT-OF-WAY CONSTRUCTION AND/OR MAINTENANCE

Mayor Peterson opened the public hearing on this item. There being no one present wishing to be heard, Mayor Peterson closed the public hearing.

Councilwoman Mega moved that the ordinance be adopted at second reading, published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times as a passed ordinance to take effect as prescribed by law, seconded by Deputy Mayor Skabich and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson

NO: None

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

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

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

5. REPORTS OF TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

- a) Township Manager – The Township Manager reported the Tree lighting was scheduled for December 6, 2023 at 6PM at Community Park. The Township Manager reported Luminary kits were available in the Town Hall Lobby with a maximum of seven bags per resident. He requested that participants line their curb with the bags and light them up on December 23rd at 5:00 PM. The Township Manager informed the Council that the computer network was 95% complete. He reported this long overdue upgrade brought all users on a server with a shared drive, enhanced security and the ability to eventually host the new budget software and utility software that will provide a much better interface for residents. The Township Manager requested an Executive Session to discuss personnel and potential litigation.
- b) Township Clerk – No Report.
- c) Township Attorney – No Report.
- d) Other Reports

Councilman Zazzali – Councilman Zazzali reported the Breast Cancer Walk at Panther Park was well-attended. He also shared that he looked forward to the Tree Lighting on Wednesday.

Councilman Maceri – Councilman Maceri reported that UNICO’s sponsored Turkey Drive fed over 400 families. He also shared that he was excited about the Tree Lighting on Wednesday.

Councilwoman Mega – Councilwoman Mega thanked the Historical Society for participating in the Essex County Historical House Tour. She reported over 100 people went through the house. Councilwoman Mega also thanked the Cedar Grove High School Choir for caroling during the event.

Deputy Mayor Skabich – No Report

Mayor Peterson – No Report. Mayor Peterson wished everyone a Happy Holiday. She also shared she looked forward to attending the Tree Lighting on Wednesday.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- a) To consider resolution concerning 2024 Official Holidays.

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, Essex County, New Jersey, that the following official holidays shall be observed by the Township of Cedar Grove for the year 2024.

2024 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

January 1	Monday	New Year’s Day
January 15	Monday	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 19	Monday	President's Day
March 29	Friday	Good Friday
May 27	Monday	Memorial Day
June 19	Wednesday	Juneteenth
July 4	Thursday	Independence Day
September 2	Monday	Labor Day
October 14	Monday	Columbus Day
November 11	Monday	Veteran’s Day
November 28	Thursday	Thanksgiving Day
November 29	Friday	Thanksgiving
December 25	Wednesday	Christmas Day

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- b) To consider resolution designating official newspapers of the Township for 2024.

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, Essex County, New Jersey, that the Verona/Cedar Grove Times, Star Ledger, and The Herald News are hereby designated as the official newspapers of the Township of Cedar Grove for 2024.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
 NO: None

- c) To consider resolution concerning reappointment of the Public Agency Compliance Officer.

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

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 17:27-3.5 requires that each public agency annually designate an officer or employee to serve as its Public Agency Compliance Officer (P.A.C.O.).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove that Dale A. Forde is hereby reappointed as the Public Agency Compliance Officer for the Township of Cedar Grove.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
 NO: None

- d) To consider resolution concerning approval of raffle applications – St. Catherine of Siena HSA.

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

WHEREAS, applications for raffle licenses have been received from:

APPLICANTS

EVENTS, DATES TIMES & PLACE

St. Catherine of Siena Church
 339 Pompton Avenue
 Cedar Grove NJ 07009

Off Premise 50/50 Raffle to be held
 March 23, 2024 at 6:00 – 11:00 p.m. at
 39 E. Bradford Avenue, Cedar Grove NJ 07009

St. Catherine of Siena Church
 339 Pompton Avenue

On Premise Merchandise Raffle to be held
 March 23, 2024 at 6:00 – 11:00 p.m. at

Cedar Grove NJ 07009

39 E. Bradford Avenue, Cedar Grove NJ 07009

WHEREAS, the fees have been paid, and the applications have been reviewed by the Township Clerk and found acceptable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove that it does hereby approve said applications.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- e) To consider resolution concerning renewal of Amusement Business License.

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

WHEREAS, the following businesses have applied for renewal of their Amusement Business License for 2024:

APPLICANT	TRADE NAME	LICENSE FOR
Second Gen Catering Co., Inc.	The Grove	Night Club

WHEREAS, the application has been reviewed, the fee has been paid, and the Fire Prevention Bureau, Code Enforcement Official, the Police Department have all made inspections and certify that the above locations comply with local ordinances;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove that the Township Clerk be directed to renew the licenses of the above-named establishment.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- f) To consider appointment of representatives to New Jersey Intergovernmental Insurance Fund.

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, Essex County, that the following Township Manager designee and municipal official are hereby re-appointed as the Commissioner and Alternate to the New Jersey Intergovernmental Insurance Fund for the calendar year 2024:

Commissioner – Thomas Tucci
Alternate – Sukaina Barlas

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a) To consider resolution concerning 2024 Council Meeting Schedule.

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

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Section 4 of Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975, also known as the Open Public Meetings Act, requires that the governing body compile and disseminate a schedule of meetings to be held by it during the coming year 2024;

WHEREAS, meetings of the governing body are held in the Municipal Building, 525 Pompton Avenue at 7:00 p.m. and are open to the public with the exception of executive sessions;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following schedule of the meetings of the Township Council is hereby approved for publication:

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETINGS shall be held in the Council Chambers the first Monday of each month, excluding holidays, according to the following schedule:

January 8	June 3
February 5	September 9
March 4	October 7
April 1	November 4
May 6	December 2

STAFF COUNCIL MEETINGS shall be held in the Council Chambers the third Monday of each month, excluding holidays, according to the following schedule:

January 22	June 17
February 12	September 23
March 18	October 21
April 15	November 18

May 20

December 16

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governing body shall conduct meetings according to a summer meeting schedule for the months of July and August as follows:

TYPE OF MEETING	DATE
Regular	July 15
Regular	August 5

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that official action will be taken at Regular Meetings and may be taken at any Staff Meeting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that closed/executive sessions may take place at Regular Meetings or Staff Meetings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the annual Re-organization Meeting shall be held on Monday, July 1st at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the schedule of meetings shall be posted on the Bulletin Board on the first floor of the Municipal Building Lobby.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- b) To consider resolution concerning appointment/re-appointment of Township Officials.

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, New Jersey, that it does hereby re-appoint the following Township officials, commencing January 1, 2024:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | Nylema Nabbie | Township Attorney |
| 2. | Robert J. Candido | Township Prosecutor |
| 3. | Peter D. Russo | Public Defender |
| 4. | Theresa Platvoet | Court Administrator |
| 5. | Courtney Demarest | Deputy Court Administrator |

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

i. Township Attorney

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

WHEREAS, there exists a need for the appointment of a Township Attorney for the Township of Cedar Grove, and funds are available for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5 states "no local unit shall be required to advertise for bids for professional services", and

WHEREAS, **NYLEMA NABBIE** of the firm Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC submitted proposal for Township Attorney pursuant to advertising duly made for a fair and open contract in accordance with N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.1 et. seq., that were publicly opened by the Township Clerk on October 24, 2023; and

WHEREAS, **NYLEMA NABBIE** is an attorney-at-law in the State of New Jersey and comes under the "professional services" provision of the Local Public Contracts Law:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, New Jersey, that it does hereby appoint **NYLEMA NABBIE** of the firm Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, LLC to serve as the Township Attorney commencing January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the appropriate Township officials be authorized to execute agreements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of the appointments shall be published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson

NO: None

ii. Municipal Prosecutor

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

WHEREAS, there exists a need for the appointment of a Township Prosecutor for the Township of Cedar Grove, and funds are available for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5 states "no local unit shall be required to advertise for bids for professional services", and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, New Jersey, that it does hereby re-appoint **ROBERT J. CANDIDO** to serve as the Township Prosecutor commencing January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the appropriate Township officials be authorized to execute an agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this appointment shall be published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

iii. Public Defender

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

WHEREAS, there exists a need for the appointment of a Public Defender for the Township of Cedar Grove, and funds are available for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5 states "no local unit shall be required to advertise for bids for professional services", and

WHEREAS, PETER D. RUSSO is an attorney-at-law in the State of New Jersey and comes under the "professional services" provision of the Local Public Contracts Law:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, New Jersey, that it does hereby re-appoint **PETER D. RUSSO** to serve as the / commencing January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the appropriate Township officials be authorized to execute an agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this appointment shall be published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

iv. Court Administrator

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, Essex County, New Jersey, that Theresa Platvoet be re-appointed to serve as the Court Administrator for a one-year term commencing January 1, 2024 and terminating December 31, 2024.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson

NO: None

v. Deputy Court Administrator

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, Essex County, New Jersey, that Courtney Demarest be re-appointed to serve as the Deputy Court Administrator for a one-year term commencing January 1, 2024 and terminating December 31, 2024.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson

NO: None

c) To consider resolution concerning reappointment of Auditor.

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

WHEREAS, there exists a need for the appointment of a Township Auditor for the Township of Cedar Grove, and funds are available for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5 states "no local unit shall be required to advertise for bids for professional services" pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4, for the annual audit; and

WHEREAS, the firm of Nisivoccia & Company is a registered municipal accounting firm in the State of New Jersey and comes under the "professional services" provision of the Local Public Contracts Law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, New Jersey, that it does hereby appoint Nisivoccia & Company to serve as Township Auditor for the calendar year 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this appointment shall be published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times.

Councilwoman Mega moved adoption of the resolution, seconded by Deputy Mayor Skabich and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- d) To consider resolution concerning reappointment of Bond Counsel.

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

WHEREAS, there exists a need for specialized legal services in connection with the authorization and the issuance of bonds or notes of the Township of Cedar Grove, and funds are available for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, such services were solicited pursuant to N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.1 et seq. under a fair and open process; and

WHEREAS, qualifications/proposal for said appointment were received and publicly opened by the Township Clerk on October 24, 2023; as follows

Gibbons, P.C.	Newark, NJ
Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer, P.A.	Woodbridge, NJ
Parker McCay	Mt. Laurel Township, NJ
Malamut & Associates	Cherry Hill, NJ

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council that the law firm of Gibbons, P.C. of Newark, New Jersey is hereby re-appointed for the calendar year 2024 to provide the specialized legal services necessary in connection with the authorization and the issuance of bonds or notes by the Township.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the resolution and agreement can be reviewed in the Township Clerk’s Office.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a notice in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law of New Jersey shall be published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- e) To consider resolution concerning reappointment of Tax Appeal Attorney.

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

WHEREAS, there exists a need for specialized legal services in connection tax appeals of the Township of Cedar Grove, and funds are available for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, such services were solicited pursuant to N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.1 et seq. under a fair and open process; and

WHEREAS, qualifications/proposal for said appointment were received and publicly opened by the Township Clerk on October 24, 2023; as follows

Inglesino, Webster, Wyciskala, Taylor, LLC	Parsippany, NJ
Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs LLC	Oakland, NJ
Chasan, Lamparello, Mallon & Cappuzzo	Secaucus, NJ

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council that the law firm of Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs LLC of Oakland, New Jersey is hereby appointed for the calendar year 2024 to provide the specialized legal services as Tax Appeal Attorney for the Township.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the resolution and agreement can be reviewed in the Township Clerk's Office.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a notice in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law of New Jersey shall be published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times.

Councilman Zazzali moved adoption of the resolution, seconded by Councilwoman Mega and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson

NO: None

- f) To consider resolution concerning reappointment of Class II Member of the Planning Board.

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Richard Hamilton be re-appointed as the Class II member of the Planning Board for a one-year term, effective January 1, 2024 and terminating December 31, 2024.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson

NO: None

- g) To consider resolution concerning cancellation of small balances on tax, water and sewer utility.

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

A RESOLUTION CANCELLING SMALL BALANCES ON TAX, WATER, AND SEWER UTILITY ACCOUNTS UNDER TEN DOLLARS (\$10) FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A: 5-17.1 provides that a municipality may authorize the cancellation of a tax refund or delinquency of less than ten (\$10.00) dollars; and

WHEREAS, in consultation with the Township’s auditors, it is recommended to cancel amounts less than (\$10.00) dollars in the interests of best practices.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, State of New Jersey that authorization is hereby given to the Tax Collector to process the cancellation of balances less than (\$10.00) dollars for 2023.

The Township Manager reported N.J.S.A. 40A:5-17.1 allows for the Township to authorize the cancellation of a tax refund or delinquency of less than ten (\$10.00) and that this is a best practice recommended by the Township’s auditors to clear out the balances at year’s end.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
 NO: None

- h) To consider resolution concerning 2024 Fire Department Volunteer stipends.

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

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ISSUANCE OF STIPENDS TO MEMBERS OF THE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CEDAR GROVE

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, that:

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove shall establish the following 2023 fee schedule for stipends and milage allowance for members of the Volunteer Fire Department of the Township of Cedar Grove;

	2022 Stipend	1% Increase	2023 Stipend
Fire Chief	\$1,714.98	17.15	\$1,732.13
Deputy Fire Chief	\$1,071.61	10.71	\$1,082.32
Fire Captain	\$535.30	5.35	\$540.65
Fire Lieutenant	\$402.99	4.02	\$407.01
Fire Chief’s Secretary	\$963.54	9.63	\$973.17
Fire Prevention Bureau Director	\$749.42	7.49	\$756.91
Fire Inspector	\$321.18	3.21	\$324.39

Fire Prevention Bureau Secretary	\$321.18	3.21	\$324.39
Fire Department Secretary	\$188.87	1.88	\$190.75
Fire Relief Secretary	\$402.99	4.02	\$407.01
NFIR Secretary	\$428.24	4.28	\$432.52
Public Relations Information Officer	\$321.18	3.21	\$324.39
Clothing Allowance	\$934.25	9.34	\$943.59
Fire Prevention Bureau Milage	\$102.01	1.02	\$103.03
IT Support	\$234.32	2.34	\$236.66
Respirator Protection Officer	\$321.18	3.21	\$324.39
Drivers/SCBA	\$163.62	1.63	\$165.25

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, that 2023 fee schedule for stipends and mileage allowance for Volunteer Firemen be hereby established.

The Township Manager reported this resolution authorizes the issuance of stipends to members of the Cedar Grove Volunteer Fire Department as part of their clothing allowance, milage reimbursement, and for other miscellaneous reasons.

Councilwoman Mega moved adoption of the resolution, seconded by Councilwoman Maceri and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
 NO: None

- i) To consider resolution concerning appointment of representatives to Community Development Block Grant Committee.

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, Essex County, New Jersey, that Alexandra Handel, Municipal Engineer and Rebecca Roth, Finance Director are hereby appointed to serve as Cedar Grove’s representatives to the Community Development Block Grant Committee for 2024.

Councilman Zazzali moved adoption of the resolution, seconded by Councilwoman Mega and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
 NO: None

- j) To consider resolution concerning refund of sewer overpayment.

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

WHEREAS, it has been determined by the Tax Collector that the following sewer overpayment should be refunded due to a payment made in error by the property owner:

<u>Block</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Owner & Location</u>	<u>Refund Amount</u>	<u>Reason</u>
65	1	DiPrenda Sharon 30 Ozone Avenue Cedar Grove, NJ 07009	\$1,750.00	Sewer Overpayment
			<u>\$1,750.00</u>	

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to issue a refund in the total amount of \$1,750.00.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
 NO: None

8. APPROVAL OF BILLS

The Bill Resolution was read by title and amount as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, New Jersey, that the summary of bills, having been duly audited and found to be correct, are hereby ordered paid and that warrants be drawn by the Treasurer in the aggregated amount of \$3,075,696.42.

Councilwoman Mega moved adoption of the resolution, seconded by Deputy Mayor Skabich and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
 NO: None

9. CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

- a) To consider resolution concerning award of contract for professional services – 2024 COAH Legal Services.

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

WHEREAS, The Township has a need for appointment of special legal counsel for affordable housing (COAH) legal services; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to advertising duly made for a fair and open contract in accordance with N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.1 et. seq., proposals were received and publicly opened by the Township Clerk on October 24, 2023 as follows; and

<u>PROPOSER</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Carluccio, Leone, Dimon, Doyle & Sacks, LLC	\$ 185.00/hr.

WHEREAS, the Township Manager has recommended that a contract for the above referenced professional services be awarded to Carluccio, Leone, Dimon, Doyle & Sacks, LLC.; and

WHEREAS, funds are now available for this purpose in 2024 Municipal Budget – Line Item 0140 – Legal Services.

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, Essex County, New Jersey, that it does hereby appoint Michael Jedziniak, Esq. of the firm Carluccio, Leone, Dimon, Doyle & Sacks, LLC to serve as special legal counsel for affordable housing (COAH) commencing January 1, 2024 and terminating December 31, 2024; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the appropriate Township officials be authorized to execute an agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this agreement shall be published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times as required by law.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- b) To consider resolution concerning award of contract for professional services – 2024 Arborist.

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

WHEREAS, there exists a need for professional services in connection with the appointment of a Township Arborist, and funds are available for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, the above referenced professional services were advertised under a fair and open process pursuant to N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.1 et seq.; and

WHEREAS, there were no proposals submitted by October 24, 2023; and

WHEREAS, John Linson of Shade Tree Department LLC, a certified arborist in the State of New Jersey, has agreed to continue serving as Township Arborist at the same rate as his 2022 proposal memorialized in writing on November 15, 2023 with fees of \$99/hour plus IRS mileage reimbursement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council that John Linson of Shade Tree Department LLC of Kinnelon, New Jersey is hereby re-appointed to serve as Township Arborist commencing January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

- c) To consider resolution concerning award of contract for professional services – 2024 Affordable Housing Administrative Agent.

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

WHEREAS, The Township has a need for Administrative Agent of Affordable Housing Units; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to advertising duly made for a fair and open contract in accordance with N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.1 et. seq., proposals were received and publicly opened by the Township Clerk on October 24, 2023; and

WHEREAS, a sole proposal was received from Community Grants, Planning & Housing LLC of Cranbury, NJ; and

WHEREAS, the Township Manager has recommended that a contract for the above referenced professional services be awarded to Community Grants, Planning & Housing; and

WHEREAS, funds are now available for this purpose in General Trust COAH Account 970090250.

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, Essex County, New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Township Manager is hereby authorized and directed to execute an agreement with Community Grants, Planning & Housing, LLC of Cranbury, NJ, for an amount not to exceed \$16,100.00 in accordance with the proposal dated October 24, 2023.
2. This agreement is awarded as a “Professional Service” in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1)(a) of the Local Public Contracts Law because of the technical of the professional services required for this project; and
3. A notice of this agreement shall be published in the Verona-Cedar Grove Times as required by law.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

10. MEETING OPEN TO RESIDENTS OF THE TOWNSHIP WISHING TO BE HEARD ON ANY ITEM ON OR OFF THE AGENDA CONCERNING TOWNSHIP BUSINESS

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

1. Kate Hartwyk – Ms. Hartwyk reported Holiday Lights would continue at Turtle Back Zoo every day from December 8, 2023 until the end of the month from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM. She announced the County was accepting donations of new unwrapped toys.
2. Steve Young - Mr. Young thanked the Council, Board of Education, CGHS Counselors and volunteers for their involvement in the Community Garden. He asked for the status of the North End Fire House demolition and construction project.

The Township Manager responded the project would start relatively soon and that the Township was doing its due diligence before demolishing the structure.

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

AUTHORIZATION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings' Act (N.J.S.A.10:4-12 (b) (1-9) permits the exclusion of the public from a Meeting of the Mayor and Council in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Township of Cedar Grove are of the opinion that such circumstances exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, State of New Jersey that:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of any action in the Executive Session of the Meeting of the Mayor and Council of December 4, 2023.
2. The general nature of the subject matters to be discussed are personnel and potential litigation.
3. It is anticipated at this time that the above stated subject matter will be made public as soon thereafter as it is deemed in the public interest to do so.
4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich, Mayor Peterson
NO: None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Mega moved adjournment of the public council meeting, seconded by Councilman Maceri and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich Mayor Peterson
NO: None

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 PM.

KERRY PETERSON MAYOR

ATTEST:

DALE A. FORDE MUNICIPAL CLERK