

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

**COUNCIL STAFF MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**DECEMBER 18, 2023**

**1. ROLL CALL – OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT BY MAYOR**

Mayor Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and 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, filed with the Township Clerk, and posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building’s lobby in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Present: Councilmember Maceri (via telephone), Mega, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Skabich (via telephone), Mayor Peterson

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

**2. EXTRAORDINARY BUSINESS**

a) Cedar Grove Recreation Advisory Board Awards.

Township Council presented awards to four worthy residents; Michael Pronesti, Wally Slattery, Steve Cristello and Tom Mega for their volunteerism with various recreation teams.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a) Staff Meeting – November 20, 2023

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

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

b) Executive Session – November 20, 2023

Councilman Zazzali moved approval of the minutes without release, seconded by Councilwoman Mega, and passed by the following vote:

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

## c) Executive Session – December 4, 2023

Councilwoman Mega moved approval of the minutes without release, seconded by Councilman Zazzali, and passed by the following vote:

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

- 4. TOWNSHIP MANAGER** – The Township Manager reported Rt. 23 was closed for a while due to flooding. The Township Manager requested an Executive Session to discuss personnel and contract negotiations. The Township Manager allowed the Municipal Engineer to address Members of Council regarding a public hearing scheduled for the January 8, 2024 Meeting.

The Municipal Engineer reported that she prepared a presentation proposing an upgrade to the facilities at the Lower Playground within Community Park. The Municipal Engineer reported the Township applied for Green Acres Funding, under Jake’s Law, for a 75% match in funding to make the Park completely inclusive and ADA friendly. She provided an exhibit detailing the existing conditions and concept plan for the upgraded play system. The Municipal Engineer reported the public hearing at the January 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting would allow for public input.

Mayor Peterson said there were pavers that were purchased by residents and asked what would be done with them during the upgrade. The Municipal Engineer responded the pavers could be salvaged and reused.

Councilwoman Mega asked how long would it take to get a response from Green Acres. The Municipal Engineer responded June, 2024.

- 5. TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY** – No Report.

- 6. TOWNSHIP CLERK** – No Report

**7. COUNCIL REPORTS**

Councilman Zazzali – No Report.

Councilwoman Mega – No Report.

Councilman Maceri – No Report. Councilman Maceri wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Deputy Mayor Skabich – No report.

Mayor Peterson – Mayor Peterson reported that she reappointed Kathleen Stutz to the Board of Trustees of the Public Library for a five-year term.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

- a) To consider resolution concerning renewal of Amusement Business Licenses.

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:

<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>TRADE NAME</b>	<b>LICENSE FOR</b>
Edward Fitzpatrick	The Grasshopper	Night Club
Pompton Restaurant Associates, Inc.	Il Tulipano	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 establishments.

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

- b) To consider resolution concerning approval of raffle application – Montclair Kimberly Academy.

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:

<b><u>APPLICANTS</u></b>	<b><u>EVENTS, DATES TIMES &amp; PLACE</u></b>
Parents Association of Montclair Kimberly Academy 201 Valley Road Montclair NJ 07009	Off Premise 50/50 Raffle to be held April 19, 2024 at 10:00 PM at The Grove 691 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009
Parents Association of	Basket/Merchandise Raffle to be held

Montclair Kimberly Academy  
201 Valley Road  
Montclair NJ 07009

April 19, 2024 at 6:30 PM – 11:30 PM at The  
Grove  
691 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009

**WHEREAS**, the fees have been paid, and the applications has 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 Councilwoman Mega and passed by the following vote:

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

- c) To consider resolution concerning the adoption of the personnel policies and procedures manual.

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

**WHEREAS**, the use of an employee personnel manual was a topic addressed in the CY2023/SFY2024 Best Practices Inventory set forth by the State of New Jersey Division of Local Government Services; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Intergovernmental Insurance Fund (NJIF) has prepared and recommended adoption of a personnel manual; and

**WHEREAS**, Counsel for the NJIF has prepared a Personnel Policies and Procedure Manual (hereinafter referred to as “the Manual”) for the Township of Cedar Grove; and

**WHEREAS**, the Manual contains guidelines to be followed by the Township of Cedar Grove and its employees; and

**WHEREAS**, the Manual sets forth and addresses policies relating to employee rights and obligations, workplace policies, paid and unpaid time-off policies, and compensation and employee benefits policies; and

**WHEREAS**, it is in the best interest of the Township of Cedar Grove and its employees to adopt the revised personnel manual which serves as a valuable tool to convey the Township’s policies, procedures, and benefits.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove does hereby approve and adopt the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual as reviewed and submitted by the Township Manager.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of the Manual be sent to each employee within fifteen (15) days of January 1, 2024 for their review and acknowledgement of terms.

The Township Manager reported the employee handbook was prepared by NJIIF.

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

- d) To consider resolution concerning budget transfers.

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

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS**

**WHEREAS**, NJSA 40A:4-58 & NJSA 40A:4-59 provide that appropriation transfers may take place during the last two months of the fiscal year and the first three months of the succeeding year; and

**WHEREAS**, Cedar Grove Township has unexpended balances in appropriations which can be transferred.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Council of the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, State of New Jersey that the Chief Financial Officer is hereby authorized to make the following transfers in accordance with NJSA 40A: 4-58 & NJSA 40A: 4-59:

**CURRENT**

ACCOUNT	TO	FROM
Elections O/E 01-2023-0001-0110-2	\$49,000.00	
Parks & Playgrounds O/E 01-2023-0001-0605-2	\$15,000.00	
Snow Removal O/E 01-2023-0001-0315-2		\$15,000.00
Salary & Wage Adj. Program S&W 01-2023-0001-0620-1		\$49,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$64,000.00</b>	<b>\$64,000.00</b>

**REFUSE COLLECTION**

ACCOUNT	TO	FROM
Refuse Collection S&W	\$62,000.00	

17-2023-0002-9950-1		
Refuse Collection O/E		\$62,000.00
17-2023-0002-9950-2		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$62,000.00</b>	<b>\$62,000.00</b>

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

**9. APPROVAL OF BILLS**

a) 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 \$758,597.89.

Councilwoman Mega 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

**10. CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS**

a) To consider resolution concerning award of contract for professional services – 2024 Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustment 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 with the Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustment 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**, the sole qualification/proposal for said appointment was received and publicly opened by the Township Clerk on October 24, 2023; as follows

James Bryce of Murphy McKeon      Riverdale, NJ

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Council that James Bryce of the firm The Law Offices of Murphy McKeon Riverdale, New Jersey is hereby re-appointed for the calendar year 2024 as the Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustment Attorney in accordance with the proposal dated October 24, 2023.

**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

- b) To consider resolution concerning award of contract for professional services – 2024 Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustment Engineer.

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 consulting engineering services in connection with the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment 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/proposals for said services were received and publicly opened by the Township Clerk on October 24, 2023 as follows:

Neglia Engineering Associates  
Van Cleef Engineering  
Suburban Consulting Engineers

Lyndhurst, NJ  
Hillsborough, NJ  
Flanders, NJ

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Council that Suburban Consulting Engineers, of Flanders, New Jersey is hereby re-appointed for the calendar year 2024 to provide the consulting engineer services necessary in connection with the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment in accordance with the proposal dated October 24, 2023.

**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.

Councilwoman Mega 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

## **11. PUBLIC COMMENT**

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 18, 2023.
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is personnel and contract negotiations.
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 Zazzali, and passed by the following vote:

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

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

There being nothing further to discuss, the staff council meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m. by acclaim.