

**BOROUGH OF SOUTH TOMS RIVER
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 25, 2019, 7:00 PM**

Mayor Handshy opened the Regular Council Meeting with a Moment of Silence, followed by the flag salute.

The Borough Clerk read the following STATE OF PUBLIC NOTICE:

This meeting of the Mayor and Borough Council was called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law. Notice of this meeting was sent to the Asbury Park Press and published on November 29, 2018; in addition a copy of notice is posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building, and filed in the office of the Borough Clerk.

ROLL CALL:

	Applegate	Fennell	Mosley	Murray	Ross	Taylor	Handshy
Present	x	x	x		x		x
Absent				x		x	

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Borough Administrator mentioned the upcoming Christmas Decoration Contest will be closing on Friday, December 6th, and the contest winners will be announced at the Monday Council Meeting, following the Christmas Tree Lighting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Anna Polozzo addressed those in attendance and thanked all those for coming to discuss the funding formula. Toms River School is in the middle of a funding crisis. S2 Bill is passed and signed, losing over \$90million in aid cumulatively through 2025, and this number keeps going up. As the local fair share gets recalculated each year and take into account the property value in the for-sending town, and the income of the people who own the properties- they take the numbers and do magic based on an unknown formula called Fair Share. We are supposedly overfunded because we don't pay the fair share, the State saying that we don't tax enough. The NJDOE won't tell us how they make the calculation. In speaking with Senator Sweeney, he agrees that it is inappropriate for the NJDOE to withhold the formula, and stated they will help us obtain it. The Assembly did a Q&A, and several districts that this formula is not accurate - it does not accurately reflect the communities they live in. The terms of the proposed Path to Progress, towns are mandated to share services. We already share services, and can look to expand. We've expressed an interest in the past on this. Our 158 million. It is lower than our fair share which is 214. The impression is that we don't tax enough. I wouldn't say that anyone in the room says we don't tax enough. We don't receive any credit for being one of the lowest spending districts in the state. We spend \$4,000 less per pupil than we should for a thorough and efficient education - the adequacy budget. For our current enrollment, the NJDOE certified that the school is \$37 million under adequacy - that is how much we are supposed to be spending on our children. Last year, we had a \$3.1 million tax levy increase, we cut \$6.9 from our budget. We anticipate a 2 percent increase in the coming year, and there is noise to cancel the 2% cap. We don't believe that we should exceed the cap, and the State should pay their fair share of education. We are at a crossroads and don't know what to do. The NJDOE stated they are assessing based on the wants and not needs. For the coming year, we are looking at cutting non-mandated programs and

not T&E. This is all co and extracurricular activities. If you child participates in this , its gone. Some are looking at Pay to Play sports, and this will only amount if \$100 per sport, per child, it would be \$1million. We spend \$2.8 on sports, and this is with a ton of volunteer coaches, and we can not ask the community to pick up anymore. We are also looking at cutting all non mandated busing; some courtesy busing and hazardous route buses. Anyone living on less than 2 miles will walk to elementary school, and 2.4 miles to high school will walk. The route to get to intermediate and high school south is dangerous, and the cost of shifting the insurance for kids commuting may shift to the municipality. The lack of afterschool and co-curriculum activities will put our children out of school at 1:30pm, and will shift the cost of managing the kids to our police department; this is an unmitigated disaster. What can we do? We can ask the Governor to approve the emergency aid, and continue to ask for the funding formula so that we can determine how our fair share is being determined.

Councilman Ross confirmed with Ms. Polozzo that the State NJDOE calculates that we are \$4,000 per student underfunded, and it's the same agency that won't tell us the formula.

Ms. Polozzo stated that we are over-aided and under-funded. Senator Sweeney stated he is removing the Tax Cap and shifting the voluntarily able to shift the cost to the local taxpayers because his plan wouldn't have the ability to have a referendum and we would be able to expand the tax cap. Our community can not afford this. We are talking about the survival of South Toms River

Councilwoman Mosley spoke to partnerships with Toms River, and how smaller municipalities can team up with the Toms River Board of Education so see what we can do to alleviate what is going on; and in doing that - try to rally the rest of the municipalities. Because from a State level, they don't see us as organized and are therefore not taking us seriously. With this partnership, our voice may be heard.

Councilman Ross thanked Ms. Polozzo on her ongoing fight for appropriate school funding. I know that you have sent multiple communications to the majority and minority leaders throughout the State and Sweeney. So from where I stand, it's not that we aren't trying to be heard; they are just not listening.

Mayor Handshy supports the Mayors of the surrounding towns to have a meeting and get all of our voices together. I've spoken with Sweeney. He's kind've a bully and don't like him that much. He said he's not budging on the formula, but we will continue to fight for fair funding.

Ms. Polozzo: I've circulated the Republican plan for dealing with S2. This does not help Toms River Regional Schools; not one bit. It funds extraordinary special education costs at a higher rate than what they are currently funded - it gives us \$1million at the end of the day. This is not a Democrat or Republican issue; education is a human rights issue. Right now, every plan on the agenda destroys South Toms River. We are planning another trip to Trenton. We truly need to show community support. The date will be provided as soon as its confirmed.

Oscar Cradle: 4 Center St, Thanked Anna Polozzo for taking the time to update the community on the funding formula. He stated he is very much concerned about the current school funding situation. I'm not willing to accept there is nothing we can do. I believe we can do something. I've had four generations going through the school system. We need to get out to our residents, and let them know how its not only going to affect our kids, but our town as a whole. We need to go out and canvass them now; not just during politicking. Some people aren't involved as much as we are. Let's let Trenton know how much we care about our kids. I will be working with Anna to see what can be done. We can be a leader in letting Trenton know.

Janice Palumbo, 474 Dover: Requested speedstrips on Dover Road, coming from the Berkeley Township section. She also requested Code Enforcement address five cars in the driveway along Dove Road.

Seeing no other questions or comments, Councilman Ross motioned to close Public Comment, Seconded by Mosley, and Council consent.

RESOLUTIONS

CONSENT AGENDA

The below listed items are considered routine by nature, and will be enacted by one vote. If anyone desires to vote on any resolution separately, please advise at this time.

Resolution 2019-192 Approving the Council Minutes of October 28, 2019 and November 12, 2019

Resolution 2019-193 Authorizing the Mayor and Borough Administrator to Execute the Renewal of a Recycling Center Use and Revenue Sharing Agreement with the Ocean County Department of Solid Waste Management

Resolution 2019-194 New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign 2020 Application

MOTION	SECOND	NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSTAIN/NV	ABSENT
		Applegate	x			
		Fennell	x			
x		Mosley	x			
		Murray				
	x	Ross	x			
		Taylor				x

BILL LIST

Resolution 2019-195 Approving the 2019 Bill List

MOTION	SECOND	NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSTAIN/NV	ABSENT
		Applegate	x			
	x	Fennell	x			
x		Mosley	x			
		Murray				x
		Ross	x			
		Taylor				x

OLD BUSINESS

The Borough Administrator provided a prospective timeline of Community Development Block Grants for Mathis Plaza.

The Borough Administrator provided a reminder of the Leaf pickup schedule Section 1 is the First Monday in December. Section 2 will be picked up the second Monday, and Section 3 will be the third Monday.

Councilman Ross reminded residents to place leaves at the curb, in untied plastic bags. And to provide an extra back to place them all back into once the Public Works empties the leaves and need to dispose of the plastic bags.

GOVERNING BODY REPORTS

APPLEGATE: Happy Thanksgiving

MOSLEY: Happy Thanksgiving. She updated the public on her recent tour of the 911 facility off at Chestnut Street, and commended Chief Kosh and the Police Department for their work.

ROSS: Informed the public of their tour of the Recycling facility, which is the only county with County-wide recycling. Regarding the Recreation Commission, they are starting their 2020 Summer plans, and will be providing background checks with volunteers and staff. The Councilman attended a Veterans Day service; a Redevelopment meeting, and the New Jersey League of Municipalities Convention, which is the largest municipal convention in the nation.

FENNELL: Attended the New Jersey League of Municipalities Convention which had some good educational information. The Councilman further informed the public of upcoming Health Department Flu Shots, and wished all a Happy Thanksgiving.

MAYOR HANDSHY: The Mayor informed the public of the County Health Department, upcoming flu shots, and wellness screening. He attended the Submarine Veterans Ceremony, the recent Land Use Board Meeting, and the New Jersey League of Municipalities Convention. At the convention, he also recorded a Comcast Newsmakers Interview. Additionally, the Homework Club has started again, with 30 kids who volunteered from Donovan Catholic, and 25 students participating in Homework Club. He thanked Applegate and Taylor for assisting in the Homework Club. Lastly, he reminded residents that there are Census jobs available on the federal Census website, which pays \$20/hr.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution 2019-196 Authorizing Executive Session for the Purposes of Attorney-Client Privilege

MOTION	SECOND	NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSTAIN/NV	ABSENT
		Applegate	x			
	x	Fennell	x			
x		Mosley	x			
		Murray				x
		Ross	x			
		Taylor				x

Councilman Applegate motioned to enter back into public session, Seconded by Mosley, and Council consent.

Seeing no further questions or comments, Councilman Ross motioned to adjourn, seconded by Applegate and Council consent.

Adjournment at 8:30pm

Submitted Respectfully,

Borough Clerk

Mayor Gregory Handshy