

**MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
November 13, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Manchester Township Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Roxy Conniff, Council President. The following statement was read by Teri Giercyk, Municipal Clerk:

**STATEMENT**

“Adequate notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, pursuant to P.L. 1975, Chapter 231. Said notice was advertised in the Asbury Park Press, Star Ledger and was posted in the lobby of the Municipal Building.”

**FLAG SALUTE**

**ROLL CALL**

The following roll call was taken by the Municipal Clerk.

Councilman Joseph Hankins	- present (via Teams)
Councilman James Vaccaro	- present
Councilman Craig Wallis	- absent
Councilwoman Michele Zolezi	- present
Councilwoman Roxy Conniff	- present

The Municipal Clerk also noted for the record that also present were, Mayor Arace, Township Attorney Lauren Staiger, Business Administrator Carl Block, CMFO Diane Lapp, DPW Director Al Yodakis, and Chief Dolan.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Regular Meeting Minutes from October 23, 2023, were approved upon a motion made by Councilman Vaccaro, seconded by Councilman Hankins and approved by the following roll call: Councilmembers Hankins, Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Wallis absent.

**PRESENTATION**

Best Practices Presentation– 2023. Carl Block and Diane Lapp gave an overview of Best Practices. The questions change from year to year. NJ State Department of Community Affairs Department makes sure the government is doing the best they can financially. It is a point system for each yes answer. There were a lot of recycling questions. We did lose a point for not having a charging station. We have started water and sewer infrastructure, so next year if we are asked, we can say yes. OCJIF has mandatory training for personnel on the website. Scoring has a minimum of 29 to continue getting state aid, and we scored 38-1/2, so we are 100% eligible. Mr. Vaccaro asked if there were any cyber security questions. Diane responded that the state has formed a cyber security group and Manchester is part of that.

**SUBMISSION OF BILLS**

**#23-424** – Authorizing payment of bills from the Current Fund in the amount of \$11,214,829.31. Councilman Vaccaro stated he examined the bills with Councilman Hankins. Motion to approve was made by Councilman Vaccaro, seconded by Councilman Hankins, and were approved upon the following roll call: Councilmembers Hankins, Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis, absent. Ms. Zolezi abstained from check #176 in the amount of \$6,917.64.

**#23-425** – Authorizing payment of bills from the Utility Fund – ESA in the amount of \$171,619.03 was approved upon a motion made by Councilman Vaccaro, seconded by Councilman Hankins, and approved upon the following roll call: Councilmembers Hankins, Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis, absent.

**#23-426** – Authorizing payment of bills from the Utility Fund – WSA in the amount of \$123,795.33 was approved upon a motion made by Councilman Vaccaro, seconded by Councilman Hankins, and approved upon the following roll call: Councilmembers Hankins, Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

**ORDINANCES – Second Reading, Public Hearing, and Final Action**

**#23-35 -AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, APPROVING THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR BLOCK 62, LOTS 30 AND 31.01**

Councilwoman Conniff asked for a motion to carry to November 27, 2023 Council Meeting, Councilman Vaccaro made a motion to carry, seconded by Councilman Hankins. Roll Call: Councilmembers Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

Ordinance #23-35 will be second read on November 27, 2023.

**#23-37 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF LAND COMMONLY KNOWN AS WHITINGS TERRACE BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER AND REALTY OWNERSHIP VENTURES, INC. PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:12-3 (\$41,628.00)**

Councilwoman Conniff asked if any member of Council had any comments on this ordinance. Seeing no comments from Council, Councilwoman Conniff asked if there were any comments from the public. Seeing no comments from public, Councilman Vaccaro made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Hankins. Roll Call: Councilmembers Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

**#23-38 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING CHAPTER 326 OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE ENTITLED "RENT LEVELING"**

Councilwoman Conniff asked to a motion to carry to November 27, 2023 Council Meeting, Councilman Vaccaro made a motion to carry, seconded by Councilman Hankins. Roll Call: Councilmembers Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

**#23-39 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, IN THE COUNTY OF OCEAN, NEW JERSEY, PROVIDING FOR A SPECIAL EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION OF \$850,000 FOR THE PREPARATION AND EXECUTION OF A COMPLETE PROGRAM OF REASSESSMENT OF REAL PROPERTY FOR THE USE OF THE LOCAL ASSESSOR OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, IN THE COUNTY OF OCEAN, NEW JERSEY**

Councilwoman Conniff asked if any member of Council had any comments on this ordinance. Seeing no comments from Council, Councilwoman Conniff asked if there were any comments from the public. Seeing no comments from public, Councilman Vaccaro made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Hankins. Roll Call: Councilmembers Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

**#23-40 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF AN EASEMENT ON A PORTION OF BLOCK 44, LOT 15.05, FROM MANCHESTER APARTMENTS LLC, IN ACCORDANCE WITH N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1 ET SEQ.**

Councilwoman Conniff asked if any member of Council had any comments on this ordinance. Seeing no comments from Council, Councilwoman Conniff asked if there were any comments from the public. Seeing no comments from public, Councilman Vaccaro made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Hankins. Roll Call: Councilmembers Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

**#23-41 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 245 OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE ENTITLED "LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT"**

Lauren Staiger has wording changes in ordinance.

**Multi-Family definition moved from section 1 to section 2.**

**Subsection E – move A to C.**

**Subsection F – should read public water and sewer.**

**G – Landscaping, recreation area – no buffer**

**I – Item #4 – should read Planning Board.**

Councilwoman Conniff asked if any member of Council had any comments on this ordinance. Seeing no comments from Council, Councilwoman Conniff asked if there were any comments from the public. Seeing no comments from public, Councilman Vaccaro made a motion to approve with changes, seconded by Councilman Hankins. Roll Call: Councilmembers Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

**ORDINANCES – First Reading and Introduction**

**#23-42 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF BLOCK 50, LOT 1, FROM THE BOROUGH OF LAKEHURST IN ACCORDANCE WITH N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1 ET SEQ.**

Councilwoman Conniff asked if any member of Council had any comments on this ordinance. Seeing no comments from Council, Councilman Vaccaro made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Hankins. Roll Call: Councilmembers Hankins, Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

**#23-43 -AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF CHAPTER 430 OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE, ENTITLED "WATER AND SEWER"**

Councilwoman Conniff asked if any member of Council had any comments on this ordinance. Seeing no comments from Council, Councilman Vaccaro made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Hankins. Roll Call: Councilmembers Hankins, Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**The items listed below are considered to be routine by the Township of Manchester and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no formal discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, this item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.**

Councilwoman Conniff for a motion to remove and carry resolution #23-437 to the November 27, 2023 Council Meeting, motion made by Councilman Hankins, seconded by Councilman Vaccaro. Roll call: Councilmembers Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

Councilwoman Conniff asked if any member of Council had any comments on any item on the consent agenda. Seeing no comments from Council, Councilwoman Conniff asked if there were any comments from the public on any items on the consent agenda.

Seeing no comments from the public, Councilwoman Conniff closed this portion of the meeting.

**Resolutions #23-427 - #23-438 (removing #23-437) were offered by one motion by Councilman Vaccaro, seconded by Councilman Hankins and approved by the following roll call: Councilmembers Hankins, Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff, yea. Mr. Wallis absent.**

#### **A. FINANCE**

**#23-427 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE TAX COLLECTOR TO CANCEL TAXES AS TO BLOCK 83.06, LOT 16 FOR A TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN**

**#23-428 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING THE REFUNDS REQUESTED BY THE TAX COLLECTOR**

**#23-429 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER TO MAKE TRANSFERS BETWEEN APPROPRIATIONS IN THE 2023 CALENDAR YEAR BUDGET**

**#23-430 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION FOR THE WATER EAST UTILITY FUND**

#### **B. GRANTS**

**#23-431 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING APPLICATION OF GRANT FOR GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE – YOUTH LEADERSHIP GRANT SEPTEMBER 2023 – SEPTEMBER 2025**

**#23-432 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR PROPOSAL OF FUNDING THROUGH THE OCEAN COUNTY OFFICE OF SENIOR SERVICES**

**#23-433 - RESOLUTION OF MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR PROPOSAL OF FUNDING THROUGH THE OCEAN COUNTY OFFICE OF SENIOR SERVICES**

#### **C. BONDS/ESCROWS**

**#23-434 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, RELEASING ESCROW POSTED BY HORVATH HOME SERVICES D/B/A BEN FRANKLIN PLUMBING**

**#23-435 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, RELEASING AN ESCROW POSTED BY WRAZEN HOMES LLC., BLOCK 1.347 LOT 14.01 (618 GRINNELL AVENUE)**

**#23-436 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, RELEASING UTILITY ESCROWS THAT WERE POSTED BY ARNULFO EDQUIBAN IN CONNECTION WITH A PROJECT LOCATED AT 3320 RIDGEWAY ROAD, BLOCK 58 LOT 681.03**

## D. CONTRACTS/AGREEMENTS

**#23-437 - RESOLUTION OF THE MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING A SETTLEMENT OF LITIGATIONS**

**#23-438 - RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANCHESTER, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE BOROUGH OF LAKEHURST**

### **REPORTS:**

**Councilman Hankins** – On Saturday at the Veterans Memorial, he received a certificate of recognition for Veterans Services. Manchester Township was one of four towns that received this recognition out of all of the municipalities in the state.

**Councilman Vaccaro** – On 10/26 he attended the zoning board meeting. On 10/31 he attended a special water and sewer infrastructure needs meeting. On 11/3 he attended with the Mayor a Renaissance meeting on redevelopment area on Fremont Street. On 11/6 – he attended the bi-weekly meeting, which goes over the meeting agenda for tonight's meeting. On November 11<sup>th</sup>, myself, Mayor Arace, Councilwomen Conniff and Zolezi along with Congressman Smith attend the Veterans Memorial Day Service. It was the best one yet. Tracey Lynch and her staff along with IT, DPW workers did an excellent job. Geri Oliverie of Oliverie Funeral Home, read a beautiful poem. He thanked the following: Manchester PD, Manchester EMS, Manchester Career Fire, Fire Company #32, Volunteer Company #34, Whiting #33, PW, Bldg. & Grounds, ROTC, Larry Butts, Roger Garone, Mayor Advisory Committee. On November 11<sup>th</sup> myself along with Councilman Hankins went over the bills. Mr. Vaccaro would like to congratulate Councilman Wallis on his election to fill an unexpired term. In conclusion, he suggested we market Manchester Township to attract small businesses, medical buildings and provide services to our residents. Mr. Vaccaro thanked Diane and Carl for 2023 Best Practices. Thank you, Council President, for my time allotted to speak.

**Councilwoman Zolezi** – The Governors Excellent Award Veteran's advisory committee mentioned is a very prestigious award, and Manchester should be very proud and proud of our Veterans. Thank you, Councilman Hankins, for accepting the award. Tracey was a instrumental. Thank you, Veterans and PD, excellent job! Manchester should be very proud.

**Council President Conniff** –The Veteran's ceremony was very nice, come out next year if you missed it. Congratulations to Councilman Wallis on his election win. Reminder, Christmas in the Pines is on December 9<sup>th</sup> from 2-7 p.m.

**Mayor Arace** – Thank you to all Veterans for your service. Thank you to Tracey Lynch and staff for all their hard work.

**Chief Dolan** – As you can see, it is No Shave November. We have raised \$7500.00 for Sloan Kettering Memorial. We have had two officers go there who are now in rumination and one officer on his way. With Thanksgiving we have DWI patrol, please use Uber. Don't drink and drive. On Halloween patrols, the police department gave out \$500.00 worth of candy.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Edward Lynch – Bridle Way – "Bravo Zulu". Which means job well done.

Donna McGlashan – Medford Rd.– Ms. McGlashan commented on several issues she has brought up in the past regarding landlord registration, outstanding bills for water/sewer/taxes, and EMS billing.

Carl Block clarified that the town does not sell your home, past due accounts get notices and could have a lien put on it. Also, the \$100.00 fee for landlords is to register rental properties. We are working on catching up on all rental payments.

Mayor updated on the new ordinance. Every landlord will register their rentals properties and pay the fee.

Lauren Staiger – There are a lot of miles in Manchester. If we are aware of rentals, we follow up.

Al Yodakis addressed the meter issue that Ms. McGlashan mentioned. We tested the water meter, and the resident didn't send in his car with the meter reading for quite some time. He agreed and paid the bill. He had used the water.

Gail Abgar – Columbus Blvd. – She thanked the Clerk, Teri. She asked her a question about what was being done across from Crestwood Village 5, and she researched and found out and got back to me.

John Mercer – Pine Ridge at Crestwood – Questioned Resolution 23-437 and Ordinance 23-38. He stated he is confused if the 2% is in place and why is it being discussed to change it to 3.5%? The Mayor updated on the confusion and why the change in the ordinance.

Lauren Staiger – We are in the middle of litigation. We can only say so much. We are working on a palatable agreement for all. The ordinance is not approved yet. It will be heard on November 27<sup>th</sup>. The ordinance is being challenged in Superior Court. The original ordinance is being appealed and we will have a second reading of this ordinance on November 27<sup>th</sup>. If adopted, we can sign off on settlement.

Mayor explained procedures with ordinance and court proceedings.

Mr. Mercer explained that 3.5% averages out to approximately \$25.00 per month. My lease is up at the end of the month. Come January – whatever cap is put on, 3.5% is maximum. So why do I have to pay the 6.2% increase I was given?

Frank Everly – Pine Ridge- If my rent increase is over 6%, am I still legally responsible? Carl responded that we cannot give legal advice. Mr. Everly – We are all senior on a fixed SS. These rent increases are not fair.

Ursula, a Pine Ridge resident – She stated that they feel sold out. We feel 3.5% is high.

Lauren Staiger – You have the opportunity to speak but you can't vote.

Mayor stated that he started this because he felt the concern from the residents. With legal fees and the outcome of the judge's decision, we are trying to come to an agreement. We don't want a worse outcome. We are trying to settle this.

Lauren – We can't discuss because we are in litigation. But we hear your concerns.

Owen, Boy Scout from 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Thank you to Public Works for paving the road. We ask if you could pave 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Mayor asked Al – Where is 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the paving list? Al stated he did not know but will personally drive it tomorrow.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no other public comments, a motion to close public portion and adjourn the meeting at 7:21 pm was made by Councilman Vaccaro, seconded by Councilman Hankins, and approved by the following roll call: Councilmembers Hankins, Vaccaro, Zolezi and Conniff; yea. Mr. Wallis absent.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Roxy Conniff  
Council President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teri Giercyk, RMC/CMC  
Municipal Clerk

11/27/2023  
Date Approved