

MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP
DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
APRIL 1, 2020

Minutes of the Emergency Meeting of Township Council held on April 1, 2020 at 1:00 p.m., online as a virtual meeting during the COVID-19 Restrictions and/or Stay-At-Home Order.

Present: Stephen Byrne, Bibianna Dussling, Mark Kirchgasser, Kathleen O'Connell-Bell, Susan Powell, Walter "Bok" Read, Norman Shropshire, Andrew Haines, Joseph A. Damico, Jr., Esq.

1. OPENING/CONVENE ONLINE MEETING: Review Virtual Meeting Rules.

Chairman Mark Kirchgasser called the meeting of the Council to order at 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Kirchgasser stated there are a number of notable things to be mentioned before the meeting is started. He stated on March 14, 2020, Middletown Township Council made a Declaration of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as it relates to Middletown Township and, in doing so, provided Middletown Township latitude in terms of securing supplies that may be necessary for the Township to battle the pandemic as well as emergency provisions that are specified by Township Ordinance. Mr. Kirchgasser stated this meeting is called to address one issue which is to extend the deadline of the Business Privilege Tax/Mercantile Tax for Middletown Township. He stated the goal is to ensure the businesses have as much financial flexibility as possible by extending the deadline to July 15, 2020.

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Motion to Ratify Original Emergency Declaration of March 14, 2020 and Amend Emergency Declaration of March 31, 2020.

Mr. Shropshire asked if the meetings meet the requirement and criteria for meetings and is it necessary to have the meetings, or as stated in the Home Rule Charter that meetings must be attended twice a month. Mr. Damico stated with the current state of affairs under the declaration by the State, and the Township being under a State of Emergency, meetings are able by way of telecommunication and visual communication which is being used by other municipalities to carry on the business of Middletown Township as best it can by way of Zoom or other digital options. He stated this permits members of the public to join in the meetings and in an effort to make the public aware, it has been posted on the Township website the means of attending any meeting. Mr. Shropshire thanked Mr. Damico and wanted to make sure Council was following the guidelines.

Mr. Kirchgasser asked Mr. Haines if emergency needs become apparent if another meeting could be scheduled and that the recording be made public by the website.

Mr. Haines stated he will keep Council apprised of any emergency needs. He stated Council is aware of the House Bill 1564 which addresses the Planning Code limitations that are facing Land Developments. He stated the Township is processing permits remotely and inspections based upon the permissive nature of the Governor's order. He stated he reviewed with Ms. Merino land development projects before the Township and said there is still time to wait and see what options may be addressed legislatively.

Mr. Shropshire asked if the attendance of the members of Council will be shown in the minutes. Mr. Haines stated that he has captured all members of Council and staff and it will be clarified who is present for the online meeting. Mr. Shropshire made a motion to ratify the Original Emergency Declaration and the Amended Emergency Declaration and Ms. O'Connell-Bell seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0. Mr. Kirchgasser polled each member of Council for his/her vote.

B. Consideration to Authorize Emergency Ordinance: Ordinance 820, Granting an Extension of the Required Filing Deadline, Chapter 215 - Mercantile Tax and Business Privilege Tax.

Mr. Haines stated the Ordinance is granting an extension of the time to align with the State time of July 15, 2020. He stated this will extend the deadline but not permanently change the codification of the tax collection. With no further discussion, Mr. Kirchgasser asked for a motion to approve.

Mr. Shropshire made a motion to Authorize Emergency Ordinance 820 and Mrs. Powell seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 7-0. Mr. Kirchgasser polled each member of Council for his/her vote.

Mr. Kirchgasser stated the business of Council is concluded for the purpose of this meeting. He stated on behalf of Council and staff, he wants to emphasize the importance of social distancing and remaining in the home and out of circulation from the public as the pandemic is in a critical phase. He stated as a Township, we fully support and endorse all efforts both by the State and on a national level to ensure this pandemic spread is controlled and concluded as quickly as possible. Mr. Kirchgasser stated the Township is relying on the State Police to enforce the rules at the direction of the Governor. He stated as a final note on behalf of Council, he would like to vigorously thank the people on the front line that are protecting us such as the hospitals and staff, first responders including police, fire companies and ambulance and the business owners such as Acme and Wawa who are supporting the needs of the community.

Mr. Kirchgasser thanked members for their attendance

Mr. Kirchgasser adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p. m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sharon Browne