

January 24, 2022

The regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Newton was held in person and via Zoom on the above date at 7:00 pm. Present were Mr. Couce, Mr. Dickson, Mrs. Diglio, Deputy Mayor Teets, Mayor Schlaffer, Teresa A. Oswin, Municipal Clerk, and Thomas S. Russo, Jr., Town Manager. Eric Bernstein, Esq., Town Attorney and Monica B. Miebach, CFO, were also present.

Mayor Schlaffer then made the following declaration "in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this Regular meeting was given to the two newspapers of record and posted on the official bulletin board on January 3, 2022".

Mayor Schlaffer led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and the Clerk called the roll.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Mrs. Diglio, seconded by Deputy Mayor Teets and unanimously carried, the minutes for the January 6, 2022 Reorganization and the January 10, 2022 Regular meetings were approved. Mr. Dickson abstained from the January 10th meeting vote.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

At this time, Mayor Schlaffer read the following statement:

"At this point in the meeting, the Town Council welcomes comments from any member of the public on any topic. To help facilitate an orderly meeting and to permit the opportunity for anyone who wishes to be heard, speakers are asked to take one turn at the microphone and please limit their comments to 3 minutes. The Municipal Clerk will keep time. If reading from a prepared statement, please provide a copy and email a copy to the Clerk's Office after making your comments so it may be properly reflected in the minutes. Council may choose to comment after the entire public portion has concluded. Please state your name and address for the record."

Mayor Schlaffer opened the meeting to the public in attendance.

Susan Kelly, 225 Spring Street stated she is very disappointed nothing has been done regarding her complaints about the conditions in her building. RPM does not care if there is toxicity, garbage build up, or crazy people causing problems. She is lost and doesn't understand what to do next.

Nancy Rella, 225 Spring Street, stated she wants to inform the Town of the health situations in her building. There is a problem with no heat in the hallways which RPM was notified about on November 18th and 19th and they still have no heat. There is a situation with mold which RPM refuses to acknowledge. She brought it up at a residents' meeting three weeks ago and asked RPM what they are going to do about the problem. Their representative said it was only one apartment, she stated it wasn't, the Health

Department informed RPM it was more than one apartment. RPM then stated they couldn't talk about it because it is legal matter. There are also bed bugs in an apartment in which the resident will not let anyone in to treat for them. The bed bugs migrated to a neighbor's apartment, and everything has to be discarded. RPM is not doing anything that is important. There was a woman that was evicted last week and she had garbage accumulating in her apartment for 2 years, and it is still there. Now they have new bugs in the building that feed on mice, garbage and food. The woman that was evicted has broken 4 windows in her apartment and that is where the bugs are probably coming in looking for heat.

There was no one else on Zoom wishing to be heard.

Mayor Schlaffer opened the meeting to those on Zoom, advising them to use the "raise hand" feature.

Ludmilla Mecaj, 9 Madison Street, stated she has difficulty hearing while on Zoom and during the last meeting she couldn't hear what the Clerk said about the new Animal Control Officer. Ms. Mecaj questioned the hiring process and asked for clarification.

Susan Turner, 225 Spring Street, Apt. 407 came forward in-person to speak. She questioned the extra parking spaces at her building along the wall. They were told they were being given back to them from the Town. They received a notice stating they cannot have visitors park on the property. Can Mr. Russo clarify if they were given back to RPM?

There being no one from the public to be heard, Mayor Schlaffer closed the meeting to the public.

COUNCIL & MANAGER REPORTS

Mayor Schlaffer – the Town attorney, Mr. Bernstein has been in contact with RPM management about the concerns stated at the previous meetings. We will continue to do what we can within our power, this is not a Town building and our scope is limited. Ms. Rella asked if he had any suggestions on what the residents should do. Mayor Schlaffer advised to continue to send emails, so they have a record of their complaints.

Mayor Schlaffer referred Dr. Mecaj to the minutes from the last meeting on the hiring process. He reminded her the hiring of a dedicated ACO is costing the same as if we used a shared service for something we have to have by State law.

Mayor Schlaffer attended the WIIF (Water Infrastructure Investment Program) which is upcoming funding opportunities motivated by the bi-partisan infrastructure bill.

Qualifying projects can see 50%-75% being fully forgivable and the remainder at triple A interest rates. He also attended a session on the upcoming Water Quality Grant Program. Tom and his team are assessing our ability to capitalize on these opportunities.

Deputy Mayor Teets – no comments.

Councilman Couce – nothing to report.

Councilman Dickson – read the following statement, "I attended the January 11th EDC meeting. Given updates on new businesses coming soon like The Sizzle, which is an Argentinian BBQ, and will be opening at the old Tuscany Bistro location. Hopefully late summer early fall. We discussed ways to get more people informed of upcoming events, and overall increasing social media reach and engagement. One of the ideas to explore was Tik Tok, which is not just silly dancing and challenges. It can reach a younger demographic and businesses have been able to successfully use it to expand their reach. I look forward to serving as the liaison to the EDC this year.

On January 14th I attended the ribbon cutting for Diamond Girl Photography on Spring St. Happy to welcome them to Newton and wish them nothing but success.

Today I attended the EDC NPP focus group via Zoom to hear some of the feedback of the survey and brainstorm on possible solutions."

Councilwoman Diglio – stated on January 14th she also attended the ribbon-cutting for Diamond Girl and wishes them the best of luck. This Friday she attended a meeting with Jessica Caldwell on how to spend the first year of a five-year grant we are set to receive. This year we are looking to upgrade the signs on the businesses. They also discussed different things like putting benches back on Spring Street. They are looking at different things that could be added to the Town of Newton.

Town Manager Russo – stated he appreciates the comments from the residents of the RPM building and he is sorry they are still dealing with these challenges. When RPM approached us years ago to propose a building on the site, these are not the issues we envisioned for that facility. Our attorney, Eric Bernstein has sent correspondence to RPM. He believes some of the issues have been addressed, some still haven't. Mr. Russo stated he will confer with Mr. Bernstein and send additional correspondence to RPM to keep pressure on them.

As for the parking, it has gone back and forth over the years, but the Town owns the lot a few doors down from the building. They are allocated for merchants, and he as the Parking Authority Secretary along with our Community Development Director allocate them each year. We also control the spaces near the building near the fence. There is signage there advising parking is by Town permit only. The rest of the spaces are controlled by the building and the Town has no control over them. A question from the audience asked if they could park in the spots along the fence. Mr. Russo advise, no they are allocated for merchants. He went on to say any issues with parking with Healthcare visitors should be directed to RPM. Someone from the audience asked if they could allocate one or two spots for healthcare works. Mr. Russo stated the spots have already been allocated for 2022, but he will consider it for next year.

Mr. Russo addressed Dr, Mecaj about Animal Control. He stated he was sorry she couldn't hear. The shared service we had was concluding. Terri's office oversees Animal Control. She did the research on it and spent a lot of time looking at shared service opportunities. Since none were available, we pivoted to hiring somebody. It was not his first choice to hire additional staff but understanding we must provide this service by State Statute drove the decision to hire this person. We did reach out to several individuals. It is not as easy as hiring someone off the street, the person must be licensed and qualified to be an Animal Control Officer in the State of New Jersey. The person we hired does meet the qualifications and we look forward to her becoming a member of the municipal organization.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None.

ORDINANCES

Mayor Schlaffer read aloud the following Ordinance relative to final adoption.

ORDINANCE 2022-1

**AN ORDINANCE TO INCLUDE ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER
IN THE TOWN SALARY ORDINANCE**

WHEREAS, the Town of Newton previously approved Ordinance 2021-20 to establish minimum and maximum salaries and wages for Officers and Employees for 2022 in accordance with Section 25-12 of the Code of the Town of Newton; and

WHEREAS, Schedule B of said Ordinance contains the wage levels of all officers and employees of the Town of Newton; and

WHEREAS, the position of Animal Control Officer needs to be included under Level 19;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Town Council of the Town of Newton, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION 1: Schedule B, of Ordinance 2021-20, is amended to include the addition of the position of Animal Control Officer at Level 19.

SECTION 2: SEVERABILITY AND REPEALER

Should any part or provision of this Ordinance be declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, the same shall not affect the validity of the Ordinance as a whole or any part thereof other than the part held invalid.

SECTION 3: EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon adoption and publication in accordance with law.

Mayor Schlaffer opened the meeting to the public.

There being no one from the public to be heard, the Mayor closed the meeting to the public.

The aforementioned **ORDINANCE** was offered by Mrs. Diglio who moved its adoption, seconded by Mr. Dickson and roll call resulted as follows:

Mr. Couce	Yes	Mr. Dickson	Yes
Mrs. Diglio	Yes	Deputy Mayor Teets	Yes
	Mayor Schlaffer	Yes	

This Ordinance will take effect after publication and adoption according to law.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Schlaffer read the following statement:

“All items listed with an asterisk () are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Town Council and will be approved by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member so requests, in which case the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the Agenda.”*

Mr. Russo reviewed the consent agenda items.

RESOLUTION# 59-2022*

“Authorize Submission of a Strategic Plan for the Municipal Alliance for Grant Cycle July 2022-June 2023”

WHEREAS, the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse established the Municipal Alliances for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in 1989 to educate and engage residents, local government, law enforcement officials, schools, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, parents, youth, and other allies in efforts to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse in communities throughout New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Newton, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, recognizes the abuse of alcohol and drugs is a serious problem in our society amongst persons of all ages; and therefore, has an established Municipal Alliance Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council further recognizes it is incumbent upon not only public officials but upon the entire community to take action to prevent such abuses in our community; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has applied for funding to the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse through the County of Sussex;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town of Newton, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey hereby recognizes the following:

1. The Town Council does hereby authorize submission of a strategic plan for the **Action Municipal Alliance** grant for fiscal year 2022 in the amount of:

DEDR	\$6,037.00
Cash Match	\$1,509.25
In-Kind	<u>\$4,527.75</u>
Total Alliance Budget	\$12,074.00

2. The Town Council acknowledges the terms and conditions for administering the Municipal Alliance Grant, including the administrative compliance and audit requirements.

APPROVED: _____
Jason J. Schlaffer, Mayor

RESOLUTION #60-2022*

“Authorizing the Town of Newton to Enter into an Agreement with Phoenix Advisors, LLC in Connection with the Continuing Disclosure Requirements as our Independent Registered Municipal Advisor”

WHEREAS, the Town of Newton (“Town”) needs to engage the professional services of a financial advisory firm to advise the Town in connection with the Continuing Disclosure Requirements and issuance of Bonds and/or Notes and other matters relating to fiscal management; and

WHEREAS, Phoenix Advisors, LLC (“Phoenix”), 625 Farnsworth Avenue, Bordentown, NJ, 08505, provides such professional advisory services, and is a Registered Municipal Advisor with the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board, and has heretofore been appointed by the Town to provide the same for the Calendar year 2022; and

WHEREAS, Phoenix will perform, as Financial Advisor, tasks more fully described in the proposal dated December 2021, and attached is the Agreement as Exhibit “A”; and

WHEREAS, the Town will compensate Phoenix for Financial Advisory Services, in accordance with the Agreement dated December 2021, as set forth in Section 2 of said Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the parties desire hereby to set forth the full terms and conditions under which Phoenix will provide professional advisory services to the Town, as set forth in the Agreement attached hereto;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Council of the Town of Newton, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey that the Town Manager is hereby authorized to execute an agreement with Phoenix Advisors, LLC in connection with the issuance of Bonds and/or Anticipation Notes, also all Continuing Disclosure Requirements.

RESOLUTION #61-2022*

“Resolution Approving Reimbursement of Health Benefit Contributions for Retired Officer Shawn Burke”

WHEREAS, Shawn Burke was previously employed as a Police Officer with the Town of Newton and has been approved for an accidental disability retirement in the PFRS system effective August 1, 2018 based on a work-incurred injury; and

WHEREAS, upon being approved for an accidental disability retirement with PFRS, Burke is entitled to receive retiree medical health insurance coverage through the Town; and

WHEREAS, Burke had Aetna Open Access 15 Family medical coverage at the time of his retirement date, August 1, 2018, and under the 2018-2021 PBA contract he is entitled to retain the same level of coverage as he had at the time of his retirement; and

WHEREAS, Burke was making Chapter 78 contributions to the Town for his retiree medical health insurance coverage for the period from August 1, 2018 until the approval of his accidental disability retirement in late 2021; and

WHEREAS, under a 2016 court decision, accidental disability retirees are exempt from the obligation to make Chapter 78 contributions, and therefore Burke has paid the Town Chapter 78 contributions beyond what he was obligated to pay under law and contract; and

WHEREAS, the Town will rectify the overpayment through reimbursement of previously paid contributions for the period starting August 1, 2018;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Council of the Town of Newton, that:

1. The Town of Newton will reimburse retired Officer Shawn Burke a lump sum of \$22,884.85 representing contributions made by Officer Burke for the period from his date of retirement, August 1, 2018, through the end of 2021.
2. The Town will not require Chapter 78 contributions from Officer Burke for his family retiree health coverage during the period of his approved accidental disability retirement unless a change in the law or contract authorizes or requires such contributions to be made by Burke.
3. The Town of Newton reserves the right to change medical health insurance providers consistent with the CNA between the Town and PBA Local 138.

RESOLUTION #62-2022*

"Award of Bid #9R-2021 Equipment Pump Maintenance Services to Rapid Pump & Meter Service Co., Inc."

WHEREAS, the Town of Newton duly advertised and received bids in a public fair and open manner consistent with N.J.S.A.19:44A-20.4. et. Seq., on January 5, 2022, at 9:00a.m. for Bid #9R-2021 Equipment Pump Maintenance Services; and

WHEREAS, the lowest bidder deemed responsive and responsible, was Rapid Pump & Meter Service Co., Inc., 285 Straight Street, Paterson, NJ 07509, who provided the response of \$117,700.00 per year for two(2) years; and

WHEREAS, subject to the Governing Body approving of future budgets, the Chief Financial Officer hereby certifies expected payments to Rapid Pump and Meter Service Company in the amount of:

2022-line item:	\$117,700.00
2023-line item:	\$117,700.00

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Council of the Town of Newton, Sussex County, that the recommendation of Newton's Qualified Purchasing Agent and Town Engineer are hereby accepted for the bid provided under Bid #9R-2021 by Rapid Pump & Meter Service Co., Inc., 285 Straight Street, Paterson, NJ 07509, in the amount not to exceed \$235,400.00 for a two (2) year contract, is hereby accepted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Manager or Mayor is hereby authorized to execute contract documents reflecting the specifications and services outlined in Bid #9R-2021.

RESOLUTION #63-2022*

Resolution Approving Vacation & Sick Leave and Accumulated Compensatory Time Payout for Mahir Kaylani"

WHEREAS, Mahir Kaylani, Police Officer, with the Newton Police Department, retires effective January 31, 2022 and is entitled to payout for unused and accrued vacation & sick leave, and accrued compensatory time pursuant to applicable law, Town ordinances, Policemen's Benevolent Association, Local #138 Association Agreement, and the Town of Newton Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual and Employee Handbook;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council authorizes the following payout for unused and vacation & sick leave, and accumulated compensatory time to Mahir Kaylani as follows:

<u>EMPLOYEE</u>	<u>RETIREMENT DATE</u>	<u>PAYOUT TOTAL</u>
Mahir Kaylani	January 31, 2022	\$7,243.21

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that appropriate Town employees are hereby authorized to make the payments set forth above, with any required revisions to the payout amounts.

RESOLUTION #64-2022*

“APPROVE BILLS AND VOUCHERS FOR PAYMENT”

BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Newton that payment is hereby approved for all vouchers that have been properly authenticated and presented for payment, representing expenditures for which appropriations were duly made in the 2021 and 2022 Budgets adopted by this local Governing Body, including any emergency appropriations, and where unexpended balances exist in said appropriation accounts for the payment of such vouchers.

List of Bills - CLEARING/CLAIMS

Check#	Vendor	Check Total
5229	ADVANCE AUTO PARTS	25.58
5230	BADGER METER, INC.....	163.08
5231	BOONTON TIRE SUPPLY INC.	5,070.39
5232	BRT SPORTS	198.00
5233	CARGILL, INCORPORATED.....	67,448.00
5234	CENTER FOR PREVENTION & COUNSELING, INC.....	1,000.00
5235	CENTURYLINK COMMUNICATIONS, INC.	147.03
5236	CENTURYLINK COMMUNICATIONS, INC.	41.41
5237	CENTURYLINK COMMUNICATIONS, INC.	3,835.82
5238	CINTAS	239.44
5239	CIVIC PLUS LLC	7,600.78
5240	CONSTELLATION NEWENERGY -GAS DIV.....	2,635.79
5241	COUNTY OF SUSSEX	12,025.83
5242	COUNTY OF SUSSEX	910,851.52
5243	COUNTY OF SUSSEX	862.78
5244	COUNTY OF SUSSEX	64,938.86
5245	COUNTY OF SUSSEX	58.59
5246	COUNTY OF SUSSEX	3,693.28
5247	COYNE CHEMICAL CORP., INC.	1,217.88
5248	D & E SERVICE CENTER, INC.....	509.88
5249	DANFORTH'S TRAILER & AUTO, INC.....	426.96
5250	DENVILLE LINE PAINTING, INC.....	2,956.31
5251	DOMINICK'S PIZZA LLC.....	25.00
5252	ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS SOLUTIONS INC.	3,624.00
5253	ELIZABETHTOWN GAS	3,805.97
5254	ERIC M. BERNSTEIN & ASSOCIATES, LLC.....	5,422.53
5255	FIRE & SAFETY SERVICES, LTD., INC.	8,885.00
5256	FIRE FIGHTERS EQUIPMENT CO. INC.....	785.00
5257	FIREFIGHTER ONE, LLC.	700.00
5258	GFOA OF NJ.....	90.00
5259	GLOBAL RECYCLING SOLUTIONS LLC.....	224.55
5260	HAMBURG PLUMBING SUPPLY CO INC.....	393.52
5261	HAYDEE BALLESTER	140.00
5262	HFE SERVICES LLC	2,176.00
5263	HOME DEPOT, INC.....	1,910.66
5264	IACP – MEMBERSHIP	190.00
5265	INSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOP	50.00
5266	J & D SALES & SERVICE,LLC.	375.00
5267	J. CALDWELL & ASSOCIATES, LLC.	2,385.00
5268	JCP&L	7,046.96
5269	JMC ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS, INC.....	5,467.50
5270	KEY-TECH, INC.....	1,620.00
5271	KIMBALL MIDWEST.....	6,222.88

5272	LADDEY, CLARK & RYAN, LLP	2,874.99
5273	LAW OFFICE OF DANIEL P. AGATINO, LLC.	1,333.32
5274	LEAD INC.	100.00
5275	LENOVO	519.00
5276	LOWE'S , INC.....	236.06
5277	MAIN POOL & CHEMICAL COMPANY, INC.	3,966.09
5278	MAJOR POLICE SUPPLY	3,108.36
5279	MI RANCHO MEXICAN GRILL	25.00
5280	MORRIS COUNTY COOP	1,100.00
5281	MUNIDEX, INC.	529.60
5282	NAFTO.....	650.00
5283	NAME BADGES, INC.	69.65
5284	NEC FINANCIAL SERVICES, CORP.	4,943.40
5285	NEWTON BOARD OF EDUCATION.....	1,110,506.41
5286	NEWTON PIZZA	210.40
5287	NJ CRIMINAL INTERDICTION LLC	450.00
5288	NJSACOP	364.00
5289	ONE CALL CONCEPTS, INC.	109.74
5290	OPTIMUM.....	121.65
5291	PASSAIC VALLEY SEWERAGE COMM.....	3,044.38
5292	PELLOW, HAROLD & ASSO, INC.	4,292.26
5293	PENTELEDATA	319.90
5294	PLANET NETWORKS INC.....	6,799.67
5295	PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING INC.....	7,735.00
5296	QUADIENT INC.	529.41
5297	QUALITY FACILITY SOLUTIONS CORP.....	2,255.97
5298	QUILL CORPORATION	1,599.41
5299	RACHLES/MICHELE'S OIL COMPANY, INC.	2,356.39
5300	RAPID PUMP	2,345.59
5301	READY REFRESH BY NESTLE	130.75
5302	SCMUA	874.08
5303	SF MOBILE-VISION, INC.....	35.00
5304	SIRCHIE FINGER PRINT LABS, LLC.	188.36
5305	SLOAN, JAMES P.	3,573.81
5306	SMALLEY, JOHN H.....	1,437.50
5307	SOME'S WORLD WIDE UNIFORMS, INC.	1,295.50
5308	SPARTA TOWNSHIP TAX COLLECTOR	17,002.82
5309	STAPLES	1,672.33
5310	STAPLES.....	1,704.20
5311	STAPLES CREDIT PLAN, INC.	328.96
5312	SUBURBAN CONSULTING ENGINEERS, INC.	5,615.35
5313	SUBURBAN PROPANE, LP.....	1,848.91
5314	SUSSEX CAR WASH INC	168.00
5315	SUSSEX CO.ASSOC.-CHIEFS-POLICE	600.00
5316	SUSSEX COUNTY ECONOMIC	70.00
5317	SYNCHRONY BANK.....	376.29
5318	SYNCHRONY BANK	874.40
5319	SYNCHRONY BANK	839.43
5320	TAYLOR OIL CO., INC.	1,151.56
5321	TCTANJ	300.00
5322	THE CANNING GROUP, LLC.....	541.65
5323	THE NJ SHADE TREE FEDERATION.....	300.00
5324	TIMMERMAN COMPANY, INC.	913.24
5325	TONY'S CONCRETE CONSTR CO, INC	22,761.48
5326	TRACTOR SUPPLY	493.38
5327	TREASURER, STATE OF NEW JERSEY	660.00
5328	TREASURER, STATE OF NEW JERSEY	7,730.00
5329	TREASURER, STATE OF NEW JERSEY	200.00
5330	TRIMBOLI & PRUSINOWSKI, LLC.....	731.00
5331	UGI ENERGY SERVICES LLC	4,085.17
5332	UNITED SITE SERVICES,INC	1,700.43
5333	V.E. RALPH & SON, INC.	777.24
5334	VAN NIEUWLAND STEVE	191.92

5335	VERIZON WIRELESS, INC.....	257.05
5336	VERIZON WIRELESS, INC.....	1,386.71
5337	W.B. MASON, INC.	217.93
5338	WALMART	127.24
5339	WEIS MARKETS, INC.....	545.73
5340	WILDFLOWERS WITH TAMI	152.00
5341	WITMER PUBLIC SAFETY GROUP, iINC.....	387.00
5342	BURKE, SHAWN	22,884.85
<hr/> TOTAL		2,407,113.70

Mayor Schlaffer asked if any member of the Council would like to pull a Resolution for discussion.

A motion was made by Mr. Dickson to approve the **COMBINED ACTION RESOLUTIONS**, it was seconded by Mrs. Diglio and roll call resulted as follows:

Mr. Couce(abstain check 5294)Yes		Mr. Dickson	Yes
Mrs. Diglio	Yes	Deputy Mayor Teets	Yes
	Mayor Schlaffer	Yes	

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mayor Schlaffer opened the meeting to the public.

Nancy Rella, 225 Spring Street questioned why they can't use some of the parking spots. There are about 20 spots along the fence, and they are told they cannot use them. The visiting nurses have nowhere to park. Can the Town do anything?

Susan Kelly, 225 Spring Street stated she doesn't want to bring a negative focus on the Town but she feels no one is making any kind of commitment to resolve what is causing the health issues. If the Town can't help, then what should they do? Call the News Stations? The EPA? She is looking for guidance because they are all suffering.

Mayor Schlaffer opened the meeting to the public on Zoom wishing to be heard.

Peg Baldini, 10 Barry Lane would like some more info, she saw on Facebook the Town canceled the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Does the Town have any other cancelations planned?

There being no one from the public to be heard, Mayor Schlaffer closed the meeting to the public.

DISCUSSION – None.

COUNCIL & MANAGER COMMENTS

Mayor Schlaffer advised the Town is investing time and money with having our legal counsel try to assist with the issues at the RPM building. We have to go through the proper channels and the laws of the State.

The St. Patrick's Day Parade is not a Town event, we just disseminated the information.

Mr. Couce questioned if it is a Town event because the Fire Department is a Town department.

Mr. Russo explained the event was taken on by the Fire Department as a volunteer organization not as a municipal department. They are two different things.

Deputy Mayor Teets expressed the Fire Department is very disappointed they are unable to have the parade. Moving forward they need volunteers, and are looking at ways to have them without them having to be a member of the Fire Department. Like an auxiliary. They will reach out through their social media for volunteers. The parade is costly and takes a lot of time.

Mr. Couce asked if Mr. Bernstein could provide an update to the residents as to where we are at with the issues.

Mr. Bernstein stated he has had multiple conversations with representatives of RPM, the County, and the State. He has kept Mr. Russo in the loop and he has been provided additional guidance. We have done just about everything possible short of driving down to Montclair and forcing RPM to come up. We have had several conversations on this matter and he sure we will have more. As the Mayor and Town Manager has pointed out, we do not own the building. Some of the other agencies that should get involved have not stepped up and we have become the de facto representatives for them. The Town does not have a Health Department, the County is the Town's Health Official. We have had conversations with the Department of Community Affairs, but we can't make them come to Newton. We will continue to pound away to try and resolve the issues. We can only do so much, unless you want to spend a lot on legal fees. His office spoke with RPM today.

Mr. Couce suggested since the Town does use the County for their Health Department it might be worth it for the residents to attend a County Commissioners meeting and bring the issues to them. They meet right here in Newton.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None.

There being no further business to be conducted, upon motion of Deputy Mayor Teets seconded by Mrs. Diglio and unanimously carried, the regular meeting was adjourned at 7:36 pm.

January 24, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Teresa A. Oswin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a blue ink color.

Teresa A. Oswin, RMC
Municipal Clerk