



*City of Lambertville*  
**WORK SESSION**  
**MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER**  
**25 SOUTH UNION STREET**  
**AGENDA**

*Please note: A Work Session is a meeting of the Mayor and Council held for the purpose of determining the contents of the regular council session agenda. All work sessions will be limited to one hour.*

**COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

Mayor Fahl called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked the City Clerk to read the statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act into the record.

The City Clerk read the following statement: Adequate notice of the Monday, March 2 Work Session was provided to the Trenton Times and the Hunterdon County Democrat, to those listed on the Listserv, to Department Heads, the City Attorney and City Planner, and by posting of the meeting agenda on the city's website at [www.lambertvillenj.org](http://www.lambertvillenj.org) and on the Bulletin Board at City Hall.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Councilwoman Urbish, Council President Asaro, Mayor Fahl.

Absent: Councilman Sanders, Councilwoman Taylor

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Fahl led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

The City Clerk led the public in a moment of silence in honor of those serving in the United States Armed Forces in Country and Abroad.

**FORM AND FUNCTION**

Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public present that the Governing Body would first address the resolutions listed on the meeting agenda and they will have a conversation about our capital expenses and planning. This is a little bit of a packed working session so Council President Asaro will talk about Resolution Number 49-2020.

**RESOLUTIONS**

RESOLUTION NUMBER 49-2020: Resolution Authorizing the Business Administrator, Mayor and City Attorney to Execute the Contract with the Hunterdon County PBA, Local Number 188 Through December 31, 2021.

Council President Asaro read the resolution into the record by title and asked for Council questions or comments. There being no questions or comments, Council President Asaro asked for questions or comments from the public. There being no questions or comments from the public, Council President Asaro asked for a motion to adopt the resolution.

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER 49-2020**

*A Resolution to Authorize the Mayor, City Attorney and City Clerk to Execute the Contract with the Hunterdon County PBA Local # 188.*

**WHEREAS**, representatives of the City Council and Hunterdon County PBA Local #188 met on several occasions to discuss the new contract: and

**WHEREAS**, the following changes to the contract are proposed:

1. For unit employees hired before January 1, 2017, a 2% increase to all salaries in that guide effective and retroactive to 1/1/19, a 2% increase to 1<sup>st</sup> Class Step and Sergeant step in guide effective 1/1/20, and a 2% increase to 1<sup>st</sup> Class Step and Sergeant step in guide effective 1/1/21;
2. For unit employees hired on or after January 1, 2017, a revised 11-step salary guide inclusive of a 1<sup>st</sup> Class Step and Sergeant step;
3. Provision of prescription and dental benefits for unit employees effective for the 2020 and 2021.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Governing Body of the City of Lambertville, in the County of Hunterdon, in the State of NJ that the Mayor, City Attorney and City Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the contract with the Hunterdon County PBA Local #188.

**ADOPTED:** March 2, 2020

Councilwoman Urbish made the resolution and Mayor Fahl seconded the resolution. An affirmative voice vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present.

MOTION CARRIED.

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 50-2020:** *A Resolution to Authorize the Submittal of a LEAP Grant*

Mayor Fahl read the resolution into the record by title. She informed the members of the public present that the City has been in conversation with the County and the State about potential means for encouraging shared services agreements to address administrative challenges that local small towns and cities face around duplication of services. The City came up with a project for a shared department of economic and community development with Frenchtown and the State would fund up to \$150,000 with grant funds to look at shared services for zoning, fire prevention, construction with Lambertville serving as the lead agency for shared services and potentially branching out to include Stockton and Milford. This resolution will support the grant application.

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 50-2020**

*A Resolution Authorizing the LEAP Grant Application*

**WHEREAS**, the State of New Jersey has allocated \$150,000 within each county for a statewide total of \$3.15 million in Local Efficiency Achievement Program (LEAP) funds to promote innovation among peer local units across New Jersey, and

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WHEREAS, the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) administers the LEAP grant program; and

WHEREAS, the LEAP Challenge Grant exists to challenge municipalities and counties to collaborate on more extensive partnership and collaborations to produce efficiencies through shared services; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lambertville and the Borough of Frenchtown, have determined to apply for a LEAP Challenge Grant through the State of New Jersey Local Efficiency Achievement Program in the amount of \$150,000; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lambertville has agreed to be the lead agency in this program; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body of the City of Lambertville, is acknowledging and accepting the responsibility of acting as applicant and administrator for this grant on behalf of all participating local units.

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey has made LEAP grants available to assist local units to study, develop and implement new shared services initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the project submitted in this grant application is intended to provide benefits to the participant local units' residents through the creation of an Interim River Towns Community and Economic Development Coordinator.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the City of Lambertville, that the City of Lambertville does hereby make application for a LEAP challenge grant to support undertaking this endeavor.

ADOPTED: March 2, 2020

Mayor Fahl asked for Council comments. There being no Council comments, Mayor Fahl asked for public comments.

Paul Stevens asked what the innovative aspects of the grant were. Mayor Fahl responded that it is to look at shared spaces and positions among the municipalities. It doesn't pay for salaries, but it does fund consultants. It will look at other inefficiencies that exist among river towns. This is also a revenue opportunity because construction office is tax neutral. This will help us fund the background work.

Mayor Fahl thanked the City Planner and Business Administrator for their work on the grant proposal.

Mayor Fahl asked for a motion to adopt the resolution supporting the grant application. Councilwoman Urbish made the resolution and Mayor Fahl seconded the resolution. An

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affirmative voice vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present.  
MOTION CARRIED.

**NEW BUSINESS/CONSTITUENT CONCERNS**

**2020 Budget and Capital Budget Discussion**

Mayor Fahl addressed the members of the public and said as a Governing Body, we did a lot to change budget process.

1. August, in each department head, city employees, consultants to put together list of capital expenses needed in the next five years.
2. October/November it was presented to the members of the public. Had \$30 million request which is high.
3. March Work Sessions: as part of that process, as we move to getting closer to introducing our budget for 2020 is to call those request down and have the governing body drive the narrative and choices on the capital plan over the next several years.
4. This is the first of many, will do this again as soon as we done passing this budget on working on next year's budget with more input from council.

The key to the stated goal, was we wanted to begin to build a five-year capital improvement plan. Rather than passing multiple ordinances for bonds over the years that we begin to plan for five years on what or capital needs are. Pass one bond ordinance at the beginning of the year and then that ordinance funds capital projects for the year. Will take a while to put this into process.

**CAPITAL SPENDING:** The Business Administrator – Alex Torpey gave an overview of the Capital Budget.

Tax Impact of different spending levels:

2015 the city authorized 2.5million in debt

2016 the city authorized 1.2 million in debt

2017 the city authorized 1.7 million in debt

2018 the city authorized 1.7 million in debt

2019 the city authorized \$45,000 in debt

One priority last year was trying to get a handle on capital spending. The Capital spending done without a capital plan landed the city in the financial position we are in with the debt service. In 2019, the City brought annual capital spending down 97%.

Important pre curser, three stages to borrowing

1: if you borrow you are required to put 5% down payment. 2: bond anticipation note is a loan in anticipation of a permanent financing, you get a great interest rate for up to 3

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years. The third year you start paying the interest – 10-year life you are paying 1/10 plus interest rate for every year. For instance, in 2015, the city borrowed 2.5 mil and paid \$125,000 in first year, and for the next 3 years we paid \$50,000 but in year 4 through year 10, the City paid \$260,000 per year. The cost of borrowing doesn't really happen until year 4. Once the principal comes online jumps significantly.

Mayor Fahl commented on two important notes:

1. In previous years, we were relying on cheap rate to borrow without having a long-term plan for year 4. 2019, 222,000 impact with no plan on how to pay that and it created a structural deficit in the budget.
2. Last year, significant conversations with the business community and residents in increasing our parking meter rates and all of that was tied into this budget conversation. These things are intimately connected, long conversation with removing revenue and more with widening and strengthening our tax base. Our budget we have a video directly about structural deficit.

The Business Administrator commented that the State of New Jersey only requires a 3-year capital plan and gives no guidance to municipalities. This is a place holder that isn't accurate. The problem with that, you aren't anticipating the principal payments in year four. We are doing a six-year capital plan to ensure the debt we are authorizing so the Governing Body knows what the impact is for 2020 through 2025. So that's important because it helps to guide decision making now. The purpose isn't to make sure it's good for one year but set us up for future years.

Councilwoman Urbish asked the Business Administrator to talk about activities and how that is different over the operating budget. Mr. Torpey responded that when you buy something large, (building, pave a road, garbage truck), that road cost \$250,000 and will be used for 10 or 15 years. If we didn't borrow the money to pay for that road, the taxpayers would be pay for that road in this budget cycle. That is part of the reason governing body borrows money, it spreads the cost of the product over the useful life of when it will be used. The downside having a credit card can be dangerous, and easy to lose track if you don't look at the numbers up front.

Mayor Fahl commented that the goal of what we are doing is taking a look at all of the capital expenses requested and all of those requests have been detailed on line and we are the public access in the 2020 budget folder on the city's website. Some are aspirational, some are important like vital flooding and flood mitigation, some are things we need to invest in every year. The tough part is that all the requests made are important, and it is our job to winnow that list down. We will meet with our financial advisory team, mayor, financial advisors, Certified Municipal Finance Officer, and take the conversation and the tool we used to grade these and inform that meeting so that when we put the budget together the Governing Body will have direct influence on what this will look like. This is the first time it has ever been done. We hope to introduce at

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the March 19<sup>th</sup> meeting with a full public hearing in April which will include a capital planning discussion.

A member of the public asked if the financial team be present? Mayor Fahl responded that the City will have them there. In previous years have brought the auditors in as the experts, we are moving away from that practice, either the Certified Municipal Finance Officer or the financial advisors will be our experts that night.

**2023 IMPACTS AND CONCERNS:**

The Financial Team has talked in budget meetings about the following:

- Debt Service is not funded in budget.
  - \$227,000 in 2019,
  - \$120,000 in 2020.
  - Over the next couple of years, it goes down a small amount and a large drop off in 2025.
- Part of our job is to figure out what the debt service is for the next 10 years, we have the same thing for all the debt mapped out for the life of the debt.
- We don't know the new debt.
- Reserve for debt service is being used to plug the hole, but that is a onetime fix. It doesn't regenerate.
- Surplus is generated from different sources. Unfortunately, the amount of surplus has been going down. We have two accounts we need to be careful of how we use them.
- We have a transition period over the next four or five years.
  - 24% of our annual budget is debt service payments, best practice is 5-8%.
  - We have it as a goal to bring that number down. Over the next five years, unless there is an appetite for creating a low cap.
  - After 2025, (and this is tied to some of the other plans we discussed regarding community development so that these increases don't fall squarely on taxpayers) we bring in someone new revenues. Up until that happens, we need to be careful about capital spending.

Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public present that the city between now and 2025 has a significant debt obligation. We need to incentivize new taxpayers to come into town. We don't need you to cycle out of your homes, we need new businesses or houses. In 2021 or 2022 we have smaller funds to work with, debt for service and surplus. In 2023 they will be depleted; we must as a community we need to figure out how we will bring in new tax ratables, so this doesn't have a direct tax impact.

Councilwoman Urbish asked as we are going through capital request, this is very difficult to pick and choose, there are almost no choice because we have state and federal guidelines to figure out what we are going to do but when we are going to do it

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over the next couple of year. Certain things we must do right away because of state and federal mandates. This is a good exercise to go through.

Mayor Fahl asked the Business Administrator to address 2023. The Business Administrator commented that in 2022, and 2023, we are anticipating when the reserve for debt service runs out and we can't take any more out of surplus without impacting credit rating or cash one hand. The interest rates go up and the cost of borrowing goes up. Trying to think through, what can we borrow to do capital projects, what is important to be done. Taking into consideration the City's Affordable housing, professional and legal fees, that is not a budget line, we have to borrow for, we have to have the money available to pay attorneys working on the cases, that funding source will come from a capital account, no discretion.

Total all in number, rough guidance, we have a goal of getting to 2023, where we would anticipate a new ratable to contribute, 2025, significant drop off all estimates, nothing exact. 5/8/12 useful life, use 10 years

When you borrow \$250,000 for each year that follows, the property taxes on the average assessed value cost:

Year 1: \$6

Year 3: \$11

Year 5: \$25

Year 2: \$8

Year 4: \$13

Year 6: \$38

One thing the finance team is trying to do, is review the money already borrowed with a balance, to see how much money is there to use to reallocate towards new capital spending. There isn't that much available, maybe \$100,000, and some of that is obligated already. The unfortunate part, is the balances we have for George Street, (bonded for \$420,0000 and we are going to do that project under \$100,000), but that \$320,00 difference is on a bond anticipation note, we only save the interest we are paying on that.

Mayor Fahl commented that in previous years, the City would finance projects, bond ordinances for a larger amount than what was needed and when those projects were under, we pushed that money into debt service. We had to pay interest on expensive money to hold. We are stopping that practice and reducing the overall amount of capital borrowing we are doing year over year. We are turning over every rock between now and 2025 when debt comes off the books to see if there is any money, we can spend that has already been borrowed. We are looking to see significant cost savings in those projects. The Clinton Street Phase II project saw significant savings. We will see it in George street. We will be borrowing less, spending less, and still there are only so many rocks to turn over.

Councilwoman Urbish commented that you're doing estimates of potential tax impacts on numbers to give context of if we are borrowing \$250,000 toward capital spending it

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will have single to the \$20 to \$30 range but that helps frame ok if we are keeping it in that range or under we can keep tax impact to a minimum.

The Business Administrator commented that we are setting the maximum number for spending. There's not cash sitting in an account, that is still possible for us to reallocate towards new spending. The Introduction of budget on 19<sup>th</sup> is setting maximum amount but we will work internally to bring numbers down more if we can do so. The plan is to give you the maximum number and if we save money - so much the better. The City won't be incurring a greater cost. George street is saving a significant amount, the tax impact won't happen for several years, we will put that out for a bond sale in a couple of the years, we haven't borrowed the money yet. We have been trying to figure out ways to bring the cost down, but savings doesn't happen until year 3 or 5.

Mayor Fahl asked for questions or comments from the Governing Body and the members of the public.

A member of the public commented that it would have been nice if there was a presentation that went out with minutes. He said he applaud your opening the budget process but even then, you put things with abbreviations, but put something that says what it means. Mayor Fahl commented that the City will put a key together and we will send out a 10-minute video that explains where we are on the budget on the website. We will send that and the power point. If you aren't on the email list all were asked to sign in on the email list on the podium. Mayor Fahl said she would try to not use jargon if you are reading anything let Alex know so he can correct it.

Mayor Fahl commented that the City Department Heads put together the capital request for 2019 through 2025. Each Council member rated the Capital projects using a scale of 1 as most important and 3 as least important. Some of them are that are nondiscretionary; like the COAH or Police Cost for updates to police things fingerprinting.

The Business Administrator will update the spreadsheet and then this will be posted on the city's website for the public. Mayor Fahl: stated goal is to go over highest priority. Of the stuff that is the highest priority, what is the highest, with public input. 2020 number highest priorities include: City Building, annual maintenance and COAH professional fees.

Mayor Fahl informed the members of public present that between 2015 and 2019 the City expended \$350,000 in COAH professional fees, primarily around litigation. This is what we have been spending money on, we are working on a new public plan to address the spending.

Hester Null, a member of the public asked if there was any way for the City to use a smart board for everyone to see. Mayor Fahl commented that we didn't consider it and will do it future meetings. We will put a presentation together, spreadsheet, hundreds, hard to see. We will do it for a presentation for the 19<sup>th</sup>.



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Kim Gaglio commented that she does this for a living, we need to see this before the 19<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Fahl responded that this will be available for folks to see.

Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public present that all the capital requests from department heads are in the budget presentations but not in the ranking sheet. Council President Asaro commented that the ranking sheet calculations need to be fixed prior to posting it on the website.

The following projects were discussed: (DPW) repairs for trucks; requests from Recreation Commission and Shade Tree Commission which may qualify for grant funding. The City has a lot of interested volunteer that have exciting visions for Lambertville, this is an opportunity aggregate for five-year plan. How else can we fund those projects? Careful about tax impact but also what we believe we can accomplish over the next five years.

Councilwoman Urbish commented that in general terms, there are some things that seemed to be called out as a priority without getting in the weeds. Early years, its necessary to fund building maintenance. There are requirements for Police Department (fingerprinting), Public Works (gas tanks); some that have an immediate need, those are the things coming out more. Beyond that some are just cool projects not necessary but in 2024 or 2025 when things look better financially.

Council President Asaro commented that there is a Hierarchy of need.

The following requests were reviewed and discussed:

- Public Works (DPW): 4 major request, one everyone agreed garbage trucks need repair, the other one is the replacement of gas and fuel tanks, an ongoing issue and one that she flagged as one of my tip top priorities.
- Ely Field parking lot is dangerous, and patching is a waste of money.
- Shade Tree plantings are not called out as a number 1, but I want to use this opportunity because in previous years, the City never funded the Shade Tree Commission. This stopped them from applying for grants, stopped annual beautification of city. Last year we put tougher Mayor's \$52,000 in that line items which included trees as capital improvement. We can't divorce ourselves from beautification. It's a small investment, and through tree city USA, the City should budget \$2 per capita, or \$7,200 and this has no direct tax impact, provides an opportunity to go after grants. Councilwoman Urbish commented that it helps with stormwater.

Lauren Kovacs commented that the shade tree has not put in any of the documents so that they could be a tree city. She strongly opposes the City budgeting this when they haven't gone after grants available to them.

Steve Stegman asked about the fuel tanks at the yard, how many gallons are those tanks? The question is, if it is a high priority to get replaced, if they are in that type of

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condition, can't we drain them and purchase gas or diesel locally? The Business Administrator responded that the gas tank is 1,000 gallons; the diesel is 330 gallons. Public works got a quote for removal and installation, \$2,000 gas, and diesel, \$30,000.

Councilwoman Urbish commented it was an interesting thought and the City should look at. Be careful though, temporary fix could be there forever.

Mayor Fahl continued reviewing the following requests:

- Police request had three things with low score which included Live scan and the Alcohol breathalyzer test, which the state is mandating this investment, nondiscretionary. Those are the two items that were flagged as most important.
- Clerk's office and the request for record digitation:
- invest as a community in digitizing because keeping records cost money
- the cost is not incredibly high but could save us a good amount of money over time, detail is helpful
- we need to seed the good governance stuff evening if it saves us money.
- one thing that hard is the amount of time it takes to find paper records.
- Going forward putting records in digital format, we could reduce our future deferred maintenance cost. Could be taken into account.

Marsha O'Connell, wanted to express support for overall budget in terms of incredible effort, excited about some of the plans for consolidating services, York street used to house – library, city hall, police, applaud you for this budget process. Argue that very few cities with transparency and inclusion.

Mayor Fahl noted that because we are still so early in the planning stages, we pulled all the facilities, any facility investment conversation, we are still in very earliest stages of figuring out what that plan looks like. Those are the highest rated. Anything else on this list that didn't get discussed that needed to.

Urbish: flood mitigation projects – what the city can undertake on its own, what US Army Corp is looking at. That is something that is very much in the capital budget space and very important. Certainly, a priority. One thing that I personally care deeply about, and focus needs to be on flood insurance premiums. The goal should be to reduce flood insurance premiums for folks. It is a complicated process.

The Business Administration commented about the work we have been doing with new engineers, Suburban Engineering. They have looked at all of the different projects that could be related to flood mitigation, and with the help with Cindy, created summary sheets, all of the information is in one place. The top priority out of that list was the predicate grant Hibernia/Fisherman's Mark, through city/state and federal gov. That was the first thing we plugged our engineers into. The next thing is trying to get a handle on different flood project that the city has been in conversation about. Swan creek, Lambert Lane, Alexuaken Creek and North Franklin Street. Projects were not always

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discussed holistically, and different agencies adopted pieces of it, and they don't talk to each other. This makes sure everyone is on the same page. The Army Corp of Engineers decided to take on the Alexauken Creek flood issues, with no commitment from the State for Swan Creek, which is a higher priority. Swan Creek suffers from flash flooding and back flooding in the river when it gets too high then swan can't drain into the river. We are trying to figure out the resources and to figure out how to have funding directing to the things we need to focus on. The meeting with residents for an update was discussed/announced.

Chris Connors commented that he was questioning your information about flash flooding on Swan Street. He experienced one flash flood and 4 separate river events. My understanding is the river flowing up swan creek. The Business Administrator commented that the actual source of water is from swan creek but there is no way for the water to flow into the river. Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public that the City is not moving away from flood gates, instead they are trying to deal with the multiple issues, and we should be treating them holistically. Mayor Fahl commented that she was working with John Miller.

Lauren Kovacs commented that she is concerned about flooding at the Police site and she asked why there was such a large image on this site. She cited Federal and State guidelines about moving police to any flood hazard area, like the ACME site. She commented that she wonders how this was proposed as a concept to put our police in our flood plain. She asked the Governing Body to consider not moving the police station from high and dry to somewhere else. Councilwoman Urbish responded saying it was a good point, and she can answer why considered one of many, because the city already owns it. The other sites the City considered are privately owned. Ms. Kovacs asked, "Why move?" Councilwoman Urbish responded saying that looking as affordable housing settlement, the Mayor has talked about this at several meetings, this is the third or fourth plan for affordable housing. Lauren Kovacs commended that the February 4, 2020 decision changed our housing, a very recent decision from this council. Council President Asaro commented that the Police Department building is in bad shape, we must assume that that site is one of the ones to do because it could cost so much to fix.

Mayor Fahl note that your point is excellent. OEM, and emergency services should be extremely high priority. As we start to look at sites for the Police Department and other municipal buildings, that has been high on our list. We used the ACME Site as a place to build out a picture of a vision. We need to turn that vision into a plan. We need to decide what of these potential sites are up for sale, do a cost benefit analysis. We have not done all that work.

Lauren Kovacs commented that we need to factor in current expected insurance rates. I don't know how that will affect the budget, also paying for flood insurance

Peter Page commented that he understood what you are saying, water gets to a certain height, flash flooding occurs, the creek fills up fast with not very much rain. He resides

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in Rock Creek Woods, the stone walls that go down to the creek are eroded where there is not stream bed, it's down to stone. As a habitat it is sterile, there is very little life in the creek. No support for those old stone walls on 518. There is a lot of supports for houses in jeopardy. The Business Administrator commented that the grant at Hibernia will fix this by the bridge at the site. It is dangerous without doing work. It will cost \$350,000 to fix it; but how many times verses finding a perm solution to solve the flooding problem, so it goes back to some echo system. Peter Page commented that the speed with which the volume of water all by itself is the scouring action. Nothing can get started in there. Mayor Fahl said she appreciated his comment. They are talking about Swan Creek and have some developments from their pushing the Department of Environmental Protection and private owners, pushing towards action, flood mitigation and investing in flood mitigation must be part of long-term planning.

There will be a public meeting to discuss Flood Mitigation tomorrow evening, March 3, 2020 at 6 pm at the Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center.

Steve Stegman: asked about the Police Department, going back to get third party analysis, want to know what figure Council President Asaro is using to say it is expensive to fix. Mayor Fahl commented that it was an analysis prepared by the City Architect, Michael Burns. We have posted those numbers online, the conversation we are having about affordable housing investment. Since 2015 the City has been working toward a settlement agreement with Fair Share Housing Center, which was adopted on May 22, 2018. The introduction of the overlay zoning implementing ordinances based on that settlement agreement in November of 2018 sparked conversation that was really intense around overlay. The City had push back from the overlay to include the Closson property, YMAC, Finkle's lot, and the NAPA Autobody. It became clear, those overlay plans as a means were not acceptable to the public. When that too failed and we were in a position to remain in compliance with fair share housing center and using a public site where in we don't have to condemn and we have to zone for affordable housing in a walkable area because seemingly the only move that didn't force us to place the overlays on. The obligation of affordable housing is driving the City.

Lauren Kovacs asked if the YMAC was considered, why not chosen? The City Planner, Emily Goldman responded that there was a contract purchaser. The City was working with him, and then it fell apart. We cannot force those overlays on private properties although we did a lot of work. The Burd property, Corboy site, Trenton Cracker Factory are all included in the overlay. In this case with the YMAC, the Developer didn't want to move forward, and it was clear from public at Raritan Pointe that they were not in favor. The densification at the degree to address affordable housing, 30 apartments, would have been huge and significant with a lot of kick back. The contract purchaser is moving forward on an as-of-right planning board application.

Lauren Kovacs commented that if you had sat the entire community together that perhaps the outcome would have been very different than stab a marble than have a ...

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please include the entire community in planning moving forward. Mayor Fahl, excellent note, appreciate it, try to move forward ways to engage the public with the Community Development Fairs She said she liked her suggestion about design charrettes and we have discussed this, actively look for ways to engage, not history of plenaries, discussed as options. This is complicated, some is not discretionary, some is, active conversation right now, some in kitchens, coffee houses, formal settings like this.

Mayor Fahl thanked the Governing Body for engaging our discussion of our total capital spending. She said they would take this information to finance advisory team.

Councilwoman Urbish commented that we should figure out how to clean up the draft and make sure it is available for folks to read and digest. Something will be out to the public and a memo from finance advisory team before the 19<sup>th</sup> budget hearing.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION: Goal Setting and Visioning Meeting, MARCH 11, 2020, 8 – 10 AM at City Hall, 18 York Street.

OPENING FOR UCC SUBCODE INSPECTOR. Please go to [lambertvillenj.org](http://lambertvillenj.org) for more information

JUSTICE CENTER PARKING: Parking Space Number 16 is available for lease at the Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center. The fee is \$55 per month. If interested, call Kristina Majeski at 609-397-0110, ext. 12.

DOG AND CAT LICENSES: Dog and Cat Licenses are due by February 28<sup>th</sup>. You need to provide the City with proof of rabies.

LANDLORD REGISTRATION: The process of registering your rental unit has been changed. Please wait to receive instructions from Frank D'Amore, the Fire Official, before mailing in your renewal. Thank you!

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Paul Stevens asked about the goal settings and vision meeting scheduled for March 11 from 8 – 10 am on a weekday. Mayor Fahl responded that every six months the Governing Body holds a retreat to figure out priorities for the next six months. There is a process in place to take internal team, and go over priorities, reflect on campaign promises, what we accomplished, and how we can continue. I produce memo to Governing Body and then they reflect and come back with their own priorities. It is public, people can attend, opportunity for outside structure talk more about \$10,000 or \$30,00 vision, and this is a nonvoting session.

Mayor Fahl announced that the March 3 meeting was cancelled since the City has accomplished everything on our list.

Jeanette Emmons asked about adopting auditors corrective action plan and budget transfers. Mayor Fahl commented that this is an extremely tight operating budget that

**WORK SESSION**

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was not reflective of true cost. For instance, the general election in a presidential year cost \$5,000, we would often budget \$2,000 and then transfer to fill that gap. Everything from buying paper to hard cost were treated this way. This will take time to bring all those line items to their true height and making them reflective of the actual cost of governing. Alex and budget did a lot in background, and Sue who bore the brunt of this to realize the different of real cost. She is hoping to significantly reduce transfers.

A member of the public asked about the meeting scheduled for tomorrow night here at the Justice Center at 6 pm to talk about Swan Creek and the movement at DEP. Mayor Fahl commented that the new City Engineer will be present to discuss the project.

Lynn Haberkorn asked about the publication of meeting minutes, some of these minutes are on the website but some are not. The City Clerk informed the public that the meeting minutes are posted once they are approved by the Governing Body.

Carolyn Murphy of Stockton Borough addressed the Governing Body. She said she was following up from last council meeting because she didn't hear anything. She asked about the process to hire an Animal Control Officer since Montgomery is no longer an option. Mayor Fahl commented that Montgomery had some capacity issues and the shared service agreement fell apart. The City is taking some time to reorganize. You are on our list and before making any decisions you will hear from us.

Lauren Kovacs asked the governing body the following questions:

1. How long has the City been exploring the creation of a municipal complex?
2. How much taxpayer money was spent to date on preparing cost estimates, plans, and renderings for the municipal complex? Please include time spent by professional and City employees.
3. What differentiates the "financial support" provided for the Mayor's from McManamon, Scotland & Baumann, Suburban Consulting Engineers, and Clarke Caton Hintze different from Pay to Play violations?
4. Who calculated the renovation and construction cost estimates presented by the City? What qualifications do they each have for this task?
5. What data has been gathered regarding combining our municipal services with other municipalities? What evidence does this data provide to support the need for a large municipal complex?
6. In a municipality with high property values, why is the City proposing Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Overlays?
7. Why is the City proposing tax abatements for developers while raising taxes on residents?
8. How did the City's recent informational Fairs comply with the Open Public Records and Open Public Meeting Acts in regard to comments made by City representatives? What uniform written guidance was provided to City representatives for use at the event?

**CLOSED SESSION:** The Governing Body may go into Closed Session to discuss matters related to COAH (attorney/client privileged).

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**RESOLUTION**

*“Authorizing a Closed Session at the March 2, 2020 Work Session of the Lambertville City Council Meeting to Discuss COAH (attorney/client privileged)”*

**WHEREAS**, the Council of the City of Lambertville is subject to certain requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq.; and

**WHEREAS**, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, provides that a closed session, not open to the public, may be held for certain specified purposes when authorized by N.J.S.A 10:4-12(b).

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Lambertville that a closed session shall be held on March 2, 2020, in the Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center, located at 25 South Union Street, Lambertville, to discuss the following matters: *COAH (attorney/client privileged)*.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the deliberations conducted in closed session may be disclosed to the public upon the determination of the Lambertville Mayor and City Council.

ADOPTED: March 2, 2020

Mayor Fahl and City Council convened in closed session at 8:51 p.m. with a motion made by Council President Asaro and seconded by Councilwoman Urbish. An affirmative voice/roll call vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Fahl and City Council re-convened in regular session at 9:25 p.m. with a motion made by Mayor Fahl and seconded by Councilwoman Urbish. An affirmative voice/roll call vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m. with a motion made by Council President Asaro and seconded by Councilwoman Urbish. An affirmative voice vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

[Cle/-4-07-2020](#)

Cynthia L. Ege, CMR, RMC, City Clerk

*The March 2, 2020 work session minutes were approved at the regularly scheduled voting session held on ~~March 19~~[April 7](#), 2020.*