

**GLOUCESTER TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING
JUNE 8, 2020
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, CHEWS LANDING NEW JERSEY**

Pledge Allegiance to the Flag

Invocation: Reverend Wilson of Chews United Methodist Church

Statement: Mr. Mercado read a statement setting forth the time, date and place of this meeting, that it was properly advertised, posted and filed in the Office of the Township Clerk pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act.

Roll Call:	Mr. Hutchison	Mr. Carlamere, Solicitor
	Mr. Owens	Mr. Cardis, Business Administrator
	Mrs. Stubbs - via telephone	Mrs. Power, Township Clerk, RMC
	Mrs. Winters-via telephone	Mr. Lechner, Community Development-abs.
	Mr. Mignone	Chief Harkins, Police
	Mrs. Trotto	Mr. Chadwell, Engineer - abs.
	Mr. Mercado	

PUBLIC PORTION:

Mr. Mercado opened the public portion.

Ray Polidoro of Erial asked Council to consider postponing the meeting until the state opens up and allows the public to attend in person. Mr. Mercado explained approval was received from the Division of Local Government Services to move forward with the budget and third quarter estimated tax bills will be revised tonight to be sent out to residents.

Peter Heinbaugh of Morningstar Court asked for clarification on the amendments to the budget. Mr. Cardis outlined those amendments. Mr. Heinbaugh asked if council can cancel the authorized \$53 million loan. Mr. Mercado explained the tax anticipation note and explained that it is not a loan. Mr. Cardis advised funds may be needed if State Aid is disrupted or property tax payments cannot be made by residents.

Sam Sweet of Erial asked Mr. Cardis to repeat the amendments to the budget. Mr. Sweet inquired about the budget subcommittee.

Ms. Appling asked for explanation of tax abatements. Mr. Cardis provided explanation of the process. Amber McWiggin expressed her views regarding the Safe and Secure Communities Grant and different use of those funds.

Paul Krugg of Blackwood Estates stated additional details were not posted for Resolution 121. Mrs. Power stated the resolution was approved today and forwarded to the township website. Mr. Mercado explained the resolution could not be posted until authorization is received from the Division of Local Government Services.

There being no comment, the public portion was closed.

RESOLUTIONS:

CONSENT AGENDA

R-20:06-112

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Township Council of the Township of Gloucester, in the County of Camden, that the following bills are approved by the Township Council in accordance with the provisions of Ordinance 0-82-16 and certified by the Chief Financial Officer that the claims are proper obligation of the township, that adequate funds are available to honor these claims in the account indicated and the claim should be paid:

CURRENT ACCOUNT

Per attached computer readout of the claims presented in the amount of \$ 7,468,530.75

CAPITAL ACCOUNT

Per attached computer read out of the claims presented in the amount of \$ 363,016.86

TRUST

Per attached computer readout of the claims presented in the amount of \$ 42,561.43

ANIMAL

Per attached computer readout of the claims presented in the amount of \$ 12,409.00

DEVELOPERS ESCROW

Per attached computer readout of the claims presented in the amount of \$ 24,828.50

MANUAL CHECKS

Per attached computer readout of the claims presented in the amount of \$ 143,161.25

Adopted: June 8, 2020

ATTEST:

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mrs. Trotto. Roll call vote: Mr. Owens abstained from Invoice 117 Purchase Order 20-02269. All in favor. Motion Carried. 7-0.

R-20:06-113

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUNDING OF TAXES

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Gloucester to authorize the refunding of the following credit balances:

BLOCK	LOT	NAME AND ADDRESS	YEAR	AMOUNT	REASON
13103	32	Lereta Tax Service P.O. Box 35605 Dallas, TX 75235-9788 Attn: Refund Dept.	2020	\$2,906.04	Overpayment
18302	3	Independence Square Equities 2020 210 Ocean Ave. Lakewood, NJ 08701		\$8,162.91	Overpayment

ADOPTED: June 8, 2020

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mrs. Trotto. Roll call vote: All in favor. Motion Carried. 7-0.

R-20:06-114

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUNDS OF ENCROACHMENT DEPOSITS AND PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Gloucester that the following inspection fee escrow encroachment deposits and performance guarantee be and are hereby authorized to be refunded:

Anthony R. Alberto, Inc
139 Hurffville-Grenloch Road
Sewell, NJ 08080

APPLICATION: #S000026A
ESCROW: #S000026 I
PERMIT: # 000026

ESCROW AMOUNT: \$37.25
PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE: \$1200.00

ADOPTED: June 8, 2020

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

ATTEST:

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mrs. Trotto. Roll call vote: All in favor. Motion Carried. 7-0.

R-20:06-115

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF GLOUCESTER, CAMDEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING THE EXTENSION AND SIGNING OF A SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH THE GLOUCESTER TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY (GTMUA) FOR GRASS, COMPOST AND RECYCLING

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Gloucester is authorized to sign the extension of the Shared Service Agreement with the Gloucester Township Municipal Utilities Authority for the grass, compost and recycling; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Gloucester and the Gloucester Township Municipal Utilities Authority desires to extend the Shared Service Agreement for the implementation and administration of certain activities relating to the operation of a composting facility, the collection and disposal of grass and leaves, the recycling of glass, papers, plastics and cans within the Township of Gloucester; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Gloucester, County of Camden and State of New Jersey, does hereby authorize the extension and signing of a Shared Service Agreement with the Gloucester Township Municipal Utilities Authority.

Adopted: June 8, 2020

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

ATTEST:

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mrs. Trotto. Roll call vote: All in favor. Motion Carried. 7-0.

R-20:06-116

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF GLOUCESTER ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT FOR DISPOSAL OF RECYCLABLE MATERIAL BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF GLOUCESTER AND FCR CAMDEN, LLC AND AUTHORIZING THE PROPER OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE SAID AGREEMENT

(ID #57-CCCPS)

WHEREAS, state law requires municipalities to provide recyclable and disposal services; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Gloucester intends to pick up and dispose of its recyclable materials, and

WHEREAS, the Township of Gloucester is interested in entering into an agreement with the FCR Camden, LLC to dispose of its recyclable materials; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Township Council of the Township of Gloucester, County of Camden, State of New Jersey that the Township of Gloucester is hereby authorized to enter into an Interlocal Services Agreement with the County of Camden for recyclable disposal services and Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to execute such agreement with FCR Camden, LLC for such service, for the remaining year 2020 through April 30, 2021 with one (1) one-year option to renew as per Master Contract by and between the County and FCR pursuant to the County's Competitive Contracting Request for Proposals #17-10, a copy of the agreement is attached hereto; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the proper Township Officials are hereby authorized to implement said Resolution by appropriate action as may be necessary and that it shall become effective upon final passage and adoption of this Resolution.

Adopted: June 8, 2020

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

ATTEST:

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mrs. Trotto. Roll call vote: All in favor. Motion Carried. 7-0.

R-20:06-117

RESOLUTION AMENDING RESOLUTION R-20:05-110 ENTITLED "RESOLUTION AMENDING RESOLUTION R-20:05-095 ENTITLED "RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT A GRANT FROM THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE, OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL – SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM"

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Office of the Attorney General, has awarded the Township of Gloucester a Safe and Secure Communities Program Grant (#20-0415) in the amount of \$90,000, Local Match in the amount of \$428,626.28 with a total project cost of \$518,626.28 for the purpose of partially funding the salary of four (4) police officers which foster a safer community and enable the continued implementation of the holistic Broken Windows approach from May 9, 2020 to May 8, 2021, and

WHEREAS, the Township of Gloucester will provide "fringe benefit" matching funds, and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Gloucester, Camden County, New Jersey, that the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Office of the Attorney General, Safe and Secure Communities Program Grant (#20-0415) in the amount of \$90,000.00 is hereby gratefully accepted.

Adopted: June 8 2020

Attest:

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mrs. Trotto. Roll call vote: All in favor.
Motion Carried. 7-0.

**RESOLUTIONS:
REGULAR AGENDA**

R-20:06-118

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF GLOUCESTER RESCINDING RESOLUTION R-20:05-101 ENTITLED “RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF GLOUCESTER, COUNTY OF CAMDEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING THE TAX COLLECTOR TO PROCESS THIRD QUARTER “ESTIMATED” TAX BILLS, DUE AUGUST 1, 2020”

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Gloucester adopted resolution R-20:05-101, entitled, “**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF GLOUCESTER, COUNTY OF CAMDEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING THE TAX COLLECTOR TO PROCESS THIRD QUARTER “ESTIMATED” TAX BILLS, DUE AUGUST 1, 2020**” on May 11th, 2020, and

WHEREAS, this resolution is hereby rescinded due to error

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that resolution R-20:05-101 is hereby rescinded.

Adopted: June 8, 2020

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mr. Owens. Roll call vote: All in favor.
Motion Carried. 7-0

R-20:06-119

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF GLOUCESTER, COUNTY OF CAMDEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING THE TAX COLLECTOR TO PROCESS THIRD QUARTER “ESTIMATED” TAX BILLS, DUE AUGUST 1, 2020

WHEREAS, in light of the disruption caused by the coronavirus outbreak, the State delayed the adoption of the State Fiscal Year 2021 Budget to September 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) cannot certify State Aid allocations to municipal budgets until State Aid Appropriations are known; and

WHEREAS, the DLGS cannot approve municipal budgets and the County Board of Taxation cannot certify taxes until after the June 30, 2020 deadline to process third quarter tax bills due August 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, without an adopted 2020 Municipal Budget and without a 2020 Certified Tax Rate, the Tax Collector cannot process the final 2020 Tax Levy; and

WHEREAS, the DLGS “strongly recommends” under Local Finance Notice 2020-07 that municipalities prepare to issue estimated property tax bills for 2020, and

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer, computed and certified an estimated Tax Levy necessary to bill third quarter taxes due August 1, 2020

WHEREAS, the general tax rate for each separate area of the Township based upon the applicable Fire District, is anticipated to be the following:

Fire District 1

\$3.965 per \$100 assessed valuation resulting in a \$14,739,762.27 levy in 2020 which is equal to 101.99% of the 2019 tax levy; and

Fire District 2

\$4.023 per \$100 assessed valuation resulting in a \$46,843,994.95 levy in 2020 which is equal to 101.95% of the 2019 tax levy; and

Fire District 3

\$3.966 per \$100 assessed valuation resulting in a \$16,478,762.92 levy in 2020 which is equal to 101.71% of the 2019 tax levy; and

Fire District 4

\$4.133 per \$100 assessed valuation resulting in a \$27,013,100.87 levy in 2020 which is equal to 102.44% of the 2019 tax levy; and

Fire District 5

\$4.090 per \$100 assessed valuation resulting in a \$32,366,863.40 levy in 2020 which is equal to 102.62% of the 2019 tax levy; and

Fire District 6

\$4.016 per \$100 assessed valuation resulting in a \$41,724,982.39 levy in 2020 which is equal to 102.61% of the 2019 tax levy; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Gloucester in the County of Camden and State of New Jersey on this 8th day of June, 2020, that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized and directed to process estimated tax bills for the third quarterly installment of 2020 taxes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, the third quarterly installment of 2020 taxes shall not be subject to interest until the later of August 10, 2020 or the twenty-fifth (25) calendar day after the

date the estimated tax bills were mailed. The estimated tax bills shall contain a notice specifying the date on which interest may begin to accrue.

Adopted: June 8, 2020

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mr. Owens. Roll call vote: All in favor. Motion Carried. 7-0

R-20:06-120

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF GLOUCESTER AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP CLERK TO READ THE 2020 TOWNSHIP BUDGET BY TITLE ONLY

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-8 provides that the budget, as advertised, may be read by title only at the time of the public hearing provided that at least one week prior to the hearing a complete copy of the approved budget, as advertised, is posted in a public place where public notices are customarily posted in the municipal building and that the approved budget, as advertised, was made available to each person requesting same, and

WHEREAS, the Township has complied with those two requirements, posting a copy of the approved budget, as advertised, on the municipal building notice board, and provided copies to each person who requested same.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Gloucester, County of Camden, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The conditions set forth regarding posting and providing copies of the approved budget, as advertised, have been met.
2. The 2020 Township budget shall be read by title only.

Adopted: June 8, 2020

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

ATTEST:

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mr. Owens. Roll call vote: All in favor.
Motion Carried. 7-0

R-20:06-121

**RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE 2020 BUDGET OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
GLOUCESTER, COUNTY OF CAMDEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

WHEREAS, the local municipal budget for the year 2020 was approved on the 11th day of May, 2020, and

WHEREAS, the public hearing on said budget has been held as advertised, and

WHEREAS, it is desired to amend said approved budget, which does not require advertisement,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Gloucester, County of Camden, that the following amendments to the approved budget of 2020 be made:

GENERAL REVENUES

	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
1. Surplus Anticipated (Sheet 4)	\$3,500,000.00	\$3,600,000.00
Total Surplus Anticipated	\$3,500,000.00	\$3,600,000.00
2. Miscellaneous Revenues - Section A: Special Items of General Revenue Anticipated with Prior Written Consent of Director of Local Government Services- Other Special Items		
Interest on Investment and Deposits (Sheet 4)	\$100,000.00	\$150,000.00
Tax Abatement in Lieu of Billing (Sheet 4a)	\$2,000,000.00	\$2,100,000.00
Total Section A: Local Revenues (Sheet 4c)	\$4,143,200.00	\$4,293,200.00
Summary of Revenues (Sheet 11)		
1. Surplus Anticipated (Sheet4, #1)	\$3,500,000.00	\$3,600,000.00
3. Miscellaneous Revenues		
Total Section A: Local Revenues	\$4,143,200.00	\$4,293,200.00
Total Miscellaneous Revenues	\$10,839,847.86	\$10,989,847.86
5. Subtotal General Revenues (Items 1, 2, 3 and 4)	\$14,539,847.86	\$14,789,847.86
6. Amount to be raised by Taxes for Support of Municipal Budget:		
a) Local Tax for Municipal Purposes Including Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	\$52,838,421.58	\$52,386,269.36
Total Amount to be raised by Taxes for Support of Municipal Budget	\$52,838,421.58	\$52,386,269.36
7. Total General Revenues	\$67,378,269.44	\$67,176,117.22

GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS

(A) Operations - within "CAPS"
 Maintenance of Parks

Salaries and Wages (Sheet 15b)	\$1,713,900.00	\$1,613,900.00
Total Operations (Item 8 (A)) within "CAPS" (Sheet 17a)	\$49,248,919.00	\$49,148,919.00
Total Operations Including Contingent - within "CAPS" (Sheet 17a)	\$49,248,919.00	\$49,148,919.00
Detail:		
Salaries & Wages	\$27,185,695.00	\$27,085,695.00
	From	To
(E) Deferred Charges and Statutory Expenditures - Municipal Within "CAPS"		
(2) Statutory Expenditures		
Social Security (O.A.S.I.) (Sheet 19)	\$2,200,000.00	\$2,100,000.00
Total Deferred Charges and Statutory Expenditures - Municipal Within "CAPS"	\$7,617,667.00	\$7,517,667.00
(H-1) Total General Appropriations for Municipal Purposes within "CAPS" (Sheet 19)	\$56,866,586.00	\$56,666,586.00
(L) Subtotal General Appropriations {Items H-1 and O} (Sheet 29)	\$66,523,348.86	\$66,323,348.86
(M) Reserve for Uncollected Taxes (Sheet 29)	\$854,920.58	\$852,768.36
9. Total General Appropriations (Sheet 29)	\$67,378,269.44	\$67,176,117.22

SUMMARY OF APPROPRIATIONS (Sheet 30)

(H-1) Total General Appropriations for Municipal Purposes within "CAPS"	\$56,866,586.00	\$56,666,586.00
(M) Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	\$854,920.58	\$852,768.36
Total General Appropriations	\$67,378,269.44	\$67,176,117.22

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that two certified copies of this resolution be filed forthwith in the Office of the Director of Local Government Services for certification of the local municipal budget so amended.

It is hereby certified that this is a true copy of a resolution amending the budget, adopted by the Township Council on the 8th day of June, 2020.

Introduced: May 11, 2020

Adopted (Public Hearing): June 8, 2020

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Hutchison – Yes
Mr. Owens – Yes
Mrs. Stubbs – Yes
Mrs. Winters – Yes

Mr. Mignone – Yes
Mrs. Trotto – Yes
Mr. Mercado - Yes

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mr. Owens. Roll call vote: All in favor.
Motion Carried. 7-0

R-20:06-122

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF GLOUCESTER, COUNTY OF CAMDEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY,
ADOPTING THE 2020 CALENDAR YEAR BUDGET**

WHEREAS, Township Council of the Township of Gloucester has previously introduced and approved the 2020 Calendar Year Budget; and

WHEREAS, Township Council of the Township of Gloucester has followed the laws of the State of New Jersey regarding the introduction, first reading, properly advertising for and the scheduling of a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, Township Council of the Township of Gloucester has received approval from the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services, and State of New Jersey for the Calendar Year 2020 Budget.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED and approved that the 2020 Calendar Year Budget be and is hereby adopted as submitted and approved.

Introduced on: May 11, 2020
Adopted: June 8, 2020

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

ATTEST:

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Mercado opened the public hearing.

Michael Pastore of Argyle Avenue expressed his concern this is not the time to raise taxes. Mr. Mercado explained the township collects taxes for several entities, including the county, fire departments, and schools along with municipal taxes. Mr. Mercado clarified that the 10% increase is only on the municipal portion of the tax bill.

Ms. Diro of Pheasant Road expressed her concerns with the police budget and lack of amendments to the police budget.

Mr. and Mrs. Deluca of Emerson Court urged Council to revisit the budget and make more cuts.

Candy Ruggieri of Lee Ann Drive recommends to postpone the meeting because residents do not have the amended budget to read. Mrs. Ruggieri does not think this is the time to make salary increases when the rest of the country is reducing their workforce.

Carol Coyle of Pine Street asked council to consolidate the schools, postpone salary increases, and cut services until this pandemic is over. Mr. Mercado explained the school districts are separate entities from the township.

Brian Burns of Longwood Drive thanked the residents who worked on the citizens' budget. Mr. Burns expresses his concerns with development occurring in the township. Mr. Mercado explained the raises in the budget are 2.5% due to an additional pay period in December and contracts settled prior to the Corona Pandemic. Mr. Mercado explained the development is occurring on private property and there is not much the township can do to halt development as long as zoning ordinances are followed.

Ms. Scully of Bradley Court expressed her concerns on raising taxes on behalf of her parents.

Ms. Scully does not think township employees should be receiving raises while residents are not receiving pay increases. Mr. Mercado provided an example of township employees responding to calls during the recent derecho storm.

Ms. Appling of Willowplace does not agree with salary increases. Ms. Appling asked what the MUA does. Mr. Mercado explained.

Michael DeFrancesco of South Lecrow asked how many times the subcommittee met, if minutes were kept, and if the subcommittee received the citizens' budget. Mrs. Trotto explained the subcommittee met several times and stated minutes were not required to be kept because the subcommittee was not an open public meeting. Mr. Cardis explained the citizens' budget was not a financially responsible budget that only utilized the run rate.

Reshaun Martin of Hamilton Drive does not feel this is the time to raise taxes. Mr. Mercado explained how the township collects taxes for several entities but the 10% increase only applies to the municipal portion. Mr. Mercado explained the services the township provides.

Dave Leader of Huntington Avenue explained that taxes won't be paid if taxes are raised during this time.

Nancy Howard of Garwood Road asked for the number of properties in the township that are delinquent. Mr. Mercado stated he would have to gather this information but will provide it tomorrow. Ms. Howard asked for clarification regarding the line item reserve for unpaid taxes. Mr. Cardis explained the township is required to pay the county, fire districts, and schools, even if the funds are not collected. Mr. Cardis explained the accelerated tax sale process.

April Ross of Gibbons Drive wished to voice her concerns regarding the tax increase during this public health emergency. Mr. Cardis provided sample tax increases for a home in each fire district. Mr. Mercado explained the 10% increase only applies to the municipal portion of the tax bill. Ms. Ross suggested private entities can raise funds to help pay for various activities in the town to help cut costs.

Barbara Arnold of La Coste Drive asked council if they have already made their decision regarding the tax increase. Mr. Mercado explained the difference between the proposed and amended budget. Mrs. Arnold stated she was informed residents have already seen the increase on their tax bills. Mr. Cardis explained the website reflected an estimated third quarter bill which has been revised. Mrs. Arnold is upset the mayor is getting a salary increase. Mr. Mercado clarified the mayor receives \$52,000 and has never taken an increase since he has been elected to office in 2010. Mr. Mercado explained the increase in the budget is for employees that work in his office.

Earl Arnold of La Coste Drive stated he verified online that the mayor makes \$189,000 a year and he receives income from Comcast and other county jobs. Mr. Mercado clarified the mayor makes \$52,000 a year as mayor of the township and any other income Mayor Mayer has is not the responsibility of the township.

Sam Sweet of Erial expressed his view to not raise taxes this year while other taxing entities in the township did not raise their taxes. Mr. Sweet recalls council telling residents in the past that the different festivals in the township do not cost the township much money. Mr. Mercado stated there is a cost to the township for these festivals. Mr. Sweet expressed his upset that he could not participate in the budget subcommittee and would like to pose questions to the subcommittee.

Peter Heinbaugh of Morningstar Court requested council revisit the budget an additional two times and make cuts.

Paul Krugg of Blackwood Estates stated council approves the school budget. Mr. Mercado corrected Mr. Krugg as council does not oversee the school budget. Mr. Krugg states taxes have gone up 40%. Mr. Krugg asked why the public was not invited to the subcommittee meeting. Mr. Carlamere stated the meeting should not be opened to the public because the amount of the public able to attend would have to be limited and how would that take place fairly.

Ray Polidoro of Erial asked how many more employee contracts are coming due. Mr. Mercado replied 5. Mr. Polidoro had questions regarding employee contract negotiations. A discussion was held regarding negotiations.

Josh Davidson of Sicklerville is concerned about the township's bid process and openings. Mr. Davidson expressed his concerns with the dialogue taking place between residents and council. Mr. Davidson asked for specifics regarding the budget in comparison to last year. Mr. Cardis led a discussion regarding the major differences.

Amber McWiggins of Blackwood expressed her concerns with the police budget. A discussion was held regarding the police budget, salaries, and contract negotiations. Ms. McWiggins asked for a definition of fringe benefits. Mr. Cardis explained.

Jen O'Donnell from Erial stated she cannot hear people calling on the phone.

Denise Coyne of Chews Landing Road questioned PILOT revenue in the budget. Mr. Cardis explained.

Michael Chesnick of Sicklerville expressed his concerns.

Sam Sweet of Erial questioned the NIKE Base sale. Mr. Cardis explained the sale has not closed and cannot be included in the budget. Mr. Sweet asked if council is content with raising taxes during this time period. Mrs. Trotto stated this budget has not been taken lightly but hard decisions have to be made.

Ray Polidoro of Erial inquired about the state aid on the budget. Mr. Cardis clarified. Mr. Polidoro inquired how a lack of state aid will affect the budget. Mr. Cardis explained.

Josh Davidson of Sicklerville asked for a line item budget for salaries and information on contract negotiations. Mr. Hutchison suggested Mr. Davidson to email Mr. Cardis with his requests.

Candy Ruggieri of Lee Ann Drive made suggestions to the township regarding line items on the budget.

Ms. Appling of Willowplace asked which Fire District she was in and what would her approximate increase in taxes be. Mr. Hutchison provided an estimate.

Ms. Diro of Pheasant Road discussed the police budget.

There being no further comment, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mr. Owens. Roll call vote: Motion Carried. 6-1

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Hutchison – Yes

Mr. Owens – Yes

Mrs. Stubbs – No

Mrs. Winters – Yes

Mr. Mignone – Yes

Mrs. Trotto – Yes

Mr. Mercado - Yes

R-20:06-123

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF GLOUCESTER TO TEMPORARILY SUSPEND TOWNSHIP ZONING REGULATION THAT WOULD PROHIBIT OUTDOOR DINING AT TOWNSHIP RESTAURANTS AND THE EXPANSION OF THE PREMISES FOR ALL RETAIL LIQUOR CONSUMPTION LICENSES TO PERMIT OUTDOOR SERVICE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SERVICE OF FOOD

WHEREAS, The Mayor and Township Council of the Township of Gloucester have been informed of, and provided with a copy of the State of New Jersey Executive Order No. 150 allowing outdoor dining at food or beverage establishments in New Jersey. Said Executive Order No. 150 permits outdoor dining commencing on Monday, June 15th 2020. The Executive Order No. 150 contains an Executive Directive from the New Jersey Department of Health that established health and safety standards that food or beverage establishments are to follow, and

WHEREAS, In addition to Executive Order No. 150, the Governor announced a special ruling by the New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control to permit liquor license holders to temporarily expand the premises on which they may serve alcohol, and

WHEREAS, The Mayor and Township Council is aware that the New Jersey Restaurant and Hospitality Association (NJRH) has established guidelines, available on its website, that include sanitizing tables and chairs in between use, keeping tables six-feet apart, only offering individual condiment packets when requested and doing away with table lemons and unwrapped straws ,and

WHEREAS, The Mayor and Township Council desires to promote the reestablishment of public commerce in the Township of Gloucester, while maintaining the threat and spread of the COVIT-19 Pandemic,

WHEREAS, The Mayor and Township Council desires to implement a temporary suspension of zoning regulations and the necessity for application permits that would prohibit outdoor dining, and regulations for the expansion of the premises for all retail liquor consumption license to permit outdoor service of alcoholic beverages in conjunction with the service of food.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, and Approved by the Township Council of the Township of Gloucester that there be a temporary suspension of any Township Zoning Regulation that would prohibit outdoor dining at Township Restaurants.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that there is hereby approved an expansion of the premises for all Retail Liquor Consumption Licenses to permit outdoor service of alcoholic beverages in conjunction with the service of food.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all establishments shall be required to continue to follow health and safety protocols established by the New Jersey Department of Health as well as the guidelines for such expansion established by the New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

Adopted: June 8th 2020

President of Council
Orlando Mercado

ATTEST:

Township Clerk, RMC
Nancy Power

Mr. Hutchison made a motion to accept, seconded by Mr. Owens. Roll call vote: All in favor. Motion Carried. 7-0.

GT E-GOV ACCESS:

Bob Alvarez of Meadowyck Drive asked the following question:

1. If a budget amendment to freeze the 2020 budget at last year's level isn't in the cards, please postpone the budget vote. There must be a way to reduce and dial back the \$1.2 million increase. Businesses have asked for 20% salary reductions. Employees have accepted it willingly because "we are in this together". Others are laid off, furloughed waiting for recall for 3 months. Gloucester Township residents are imploring you to set aside the wish list and concentrate on the needs. Renegotiate every contract, commitment and promise. Do the right thing.

Alice Harvey of the Links at Valleybrook asked the following question:

1. It has been reported that according to Senator Madden's Office, there is a 2% cap on property tax increases. Any increase higher than that would need to be balloted and voted on by homeowners. Can you please comment on this in relation to the proposed property tax increase? Also, what were the findings of the Council Subcommittee that reviewed the proposed budget and related tax increase?

Mr. Cardis explained the tax levy cap.

Gary Sampson of Juniper Lane asked the following question:

1. I understand there is talk of spending money on a "BROKEN WINDOW" initiative. I and my wife are firmly against this for reasons too long to elaborate in an email. I have lived in Blackwood since 1983 and all my children do too. None of us feel more police presence is needed or required.

Robert and Jane Wright of Lee Ann Drive asked the following question:

1. During these trying times for so many, please consider this when preparing this budget. Please don't make this so difficult for people to live in this township. Also, could you please consider giving seniors a break on the school tax. Thank you for your time.

Mr. Mercado explained the school districts are separate entities.

Christina Harrop of Eva Place asked the following question:

1. Could you please advise the proposed zoning and plans for the property on the Black Horse Pike (the old New Deal Lumber and Big Apple Pizza). With the potential tax increase and a property owner in Liberty Park I am attempting to assess the impact on my home's value. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mary Condon of Augusta Lane asked the following question:

1. We have been assured by Governor Murphy's and Senator Madden's offices that the 2% cap on raising real estate taxes is in effect. In light of the current health and economic crises there should not be any increase in our already out of control property taxes. Does the budget you are voting on reflect a no increase or max increase of 2% in our real estate taxes?

Mr. Mercado explained this tax increase is within the 2% cap.

R. Jeanne Muehlhauser of Lee Ann Drive asked the following question:

1. Good Evening, Council. I'm very concerned about the high percentage tax rate increase that is being proposed and voted on this evening. I am a member of your Senior Citizen community who is on a fixed income, and I'm finding it very difficult to keep up with these increases. Isn't there some way for you to lower the percentage on us or exempt us from paying the school tax increase as our children are grown adults. I would think that you could find some way to help us so we can continue to live in Gloucester Township without being "house poor". Thank you for your time.

Mr. Mercado explained council does not have the authority to exempt anyone from paying school tax.

Jason Mento of Stonecrop Court asked the following question:

1. My question is, DO YOU HEAR US? I am writing you this email in concern for the upcoming vote on a tax increase in Gloucester Township. You are not listening to the average family trying to make it through these hard times. You need to hear how we are struggling. How are we supposed to pay for a 10% tax increase right now? How do you expect anyone that has been laid off to pay any of their taxes, let alone an additional 10%, when there are no jobs because of COVID? Taking COVID out of the equation, you've raised our taxes over 65% since 2010. What has the average citizen gained from that increase? We loved raising our kids in this Township and we realize providing services for our kids takes money, but how much money? Why are other towns able to more than meet their obligations to the tax payer without continually raising taxes? Unfortunately, we will have to start looking at moving out of Gloucester Township. The point is, we don't want to move. We want council to be fiscally responsible just as we are expected to be. You were elected to serve the interests of the people of Gloucester Township, not some political boss. The people of this county have been victims of Norcross's hold for far too long. I do have faith that it's not too late to turn things around. In the meantime, we are struggling with the fact that we may need to walk away from the place we raised our family and hoped to stay and create more memories. But, the tax burden is too high and not sustainable for us and many others. The average family is just trying to get back on their feet after this virus and should not have to feel like we are constantly struggling. Why are you kicking us when we are down?

Mr. Mercado explained council is not trying to kick anyone when they are down. Mr. Mercado clarified the tax increase is only on the municipal portion of the taxes.

April Ross of Hidden Drive asked the following question:

1. Please do not raise our taxes, especially during a pandemic when almost every citizen is financially struggling. This will surely make everyone want to vote Republican if you do this to your people, who you are responsible for taking care of and who put their faith in you to do the right thing. Thank you

David Leader of Huntington Avenue asked the following question:

1. Are you sure you want to raise taxes? During this time of unemployment taxes should be reduced, not raised. By reducing taxes you might have less defaulters than if you did nothing. I read the article in Patch and I am concerned that the council got it exactly wrong. All non-essential services and projects should be postponed until unemployment levels return to some percentage, 10%? I hate to suggest that we add to the unemployment but do we really need all the employees that we currently maintain. Families are making do with less and government should set an example of cost cutting. I can't be the only one thinking that raising taxes for next year is illogical. Explain to residents that once the country springs back non-essential programs will resume. Until then lower taxes will adequately support both the community and the government.

Joanne Carr of Clement Drive asked the following question:

1. What part of the budget is council responsible for? What part of the budget is the mayor and his admin. responsible for? Who are in this administration? What is our current total debt?

Mr. Mercado explained the budget is put together by the business administrator, CFO, Mayor's office, and human resources.

Marilyn Lanni of Stony Bridge Road asked the following question:

1. Respectfully submitted: I know that I don't need to tell you all how much economical pain we are all in right now, how much pain this country is in. You already know. I have done, as I'm sure all of my neighbors have done, everything I can and tightened my belt to try to hold on until the situation gets better. The stock market is looking better and the jobs report was encouraging last week. But that's the future which is still far from certain. It's not today. That's the problem with trickle down economics. You have to wait for the trickle to reach you. I know you've had your subcommittee meetings and also, I know that you have all probably made up your minds. I know that there is probably never a tax vote where you all are not faced with angry constituents. These meetings are usually held in person. But this time it's really different and you don't even have to face us in person thanks to the pandemic. This time there is no objection to the tax increase from a place of anger. This objection comes from a place of pain. Real pain. You listened to our voices and our questions and our comments at the last meeting. I guess my question for you all is did you really hear us? Will you keep taxes flat without an increase and allow us a chance to hold on and recover, or will you add to our pain and our

mounting debt? I will speak for myself and tell you that I have no additional money right now for you to take. That COLA raise I was expecting never came through.

PUBLIC PORTION:

Mr. Mercado opened the public portion.

Paul Krugg of Blackwood Estates thanked council for motivating him to attend meetings.

Sam Sweet of Erial requested Mrs. Stubbs reasoning for voting no on the budget. Mrs. Stubbs explained her reasoning.

Amber McWiggins expressed her concerns regarding the police department, their budget, and the attitude the police department cannot be touched. Mr. Hutchison clarified his comments regarding the police department and defunding.

There being no further comment, the public portion was closed.

POLLING OF DIRECTORS:

Chief Harkins recalled this past weekend's storm and damage. The police department received approximately 200 calls within an hour. With the help of public works, approximately 10 intersections were functional with generators to reduce having to pay officers to patrol the intersections. Chief Harkins explained how officer training in deescalation and officer referrals to the SAVE program have been beneficial to the community. Chief Harkins expressed the men and women of the police department are hurting over recent events and the tragic death of Mr. Floyd and reassured the community that Gloucester Township officers have never utilized the techniques that were used on Mr. Floyd.

POLLING OF COUNCIL:

Mr. Hutchison expressed the budget vote has affected his sleep. Mr. Hutchison explained that he is sorry to raise taxes but government has to be funded.

Mr. Owens stated as a council member, the residents of the township are heard, but difficult decisions have to be made to fund the township. Mr. Owens spoke to the current environment around the country regarding the death of Mr. Floyd. Mr. Owens thanked the police department and public works. Mr. Owens urged residents to continue social distancing. Mr. Owens congratulated all of the graduating students and thanked teachers.

Mrs. Stubbs thanked Chief Harkins for his powerful words. Mrs. Stubbs reiterated that this is a very stressful time with everything going on at the same time.

Mrs. Winters urged residents to be safe, smart, and continue to wear masks. Mrs. Winters thanked the police department and public works.

Mr. Mignone urged everyone to just be nice to others.

Mrs. Trotto stated the budget decision was not taken lightly. Mrs. Trotto thanked Chief Harkins for his leadership. Mrs. Trotto thanked public works and the police department for their hard work during the storm.

Mr. Mercado thanked residents for calling in for tonight's meeting.

Mr. Owens made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Trotto. Roll call vote: All in favor. Motion carried. 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Council President
Orlando Mercado

Nancy Power
Township Clerk, RMC

