Meeting was called to order by Mayor Gorman at 6:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**:

Present: Clute, Coppola, Crawford, DiPietro, Maldonado, Santo and Gorman

Absent:

Invocation: Mayor Gorman asked for a moment of silence in honor of Robert Knoebel.

Councilman Santo led in the flag salute

On January 8, 2020, official notice of this meeting was given to The Press of Atlantic City, the Mainland Journal, and the Galloway Patriot and was duly posted in Council Chambers and on the Township website.

Also Present: Christian Johansen, Manager

Kelli Danieli, Township Clerk

Al Marmero, Solicitor

After consulting with the township solicitor, Councilman Coppola read a statement concerning N.J.S.A 10:4-6, the Senator Bryan M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act commonly known as the sunshine law. In summary, Councilman Coppola feels the reorganization meeting is in violation of the act because of text messages sent and received between four council members concerning professional appointments and the selection of the mayor and deputy mayor. At issue is the release of confidential information which attempted to influence the appointments to the Planning and Zoning Boards. In addition, Robert Maldonado is not a member of the Democratic Party therefore these text messages cannot be considered a political caucus. The OPMA requires business be conducted in a properly advertised meeting. The text messages are in violation of the act and shows the 2020 reorganization meeting was a rubber stamp meeting by a majority of council. Councilman Coppola asked council to declare the reorganization meeting in violation of N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 and instruct the clerk to properly advertise the reorganization meeting so council can impartially & justly perform their duties without collusion as required by law. The reorganization meeting can be declared void here or in Superior Court. He further added he does not believe council can move forward with township business until a determination is made concerning what he believes to be a violation of the Open Public Meeting Act. Councilman Coppola made a motion to declare the reorganization meeting of 2020 in violation of N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 OPMA and as such is voided and the township will readvertise and conduct the meeting as required by law. Councilman DiPietro seconded the motion. Mayor Gorman commented he doesn’t believe the meeting was in violation and asked the solicitor for comment. The solicitor said he doesn’t agree with the legal assessment provided by Councilman Coppola as he did not see a group text with four participants. He saw individual texts. Councilman Coppola added the content of one text suggests having a rehearsal and they actually prepared a document stating which professionals would be appointed and which councilperson would make the motion and second. This document shows clear collusion. The solicitor said there is nothing unusual with circulating a document. The solicitor said roll call on the motion should be called. Councilman Clute asked a question of the solicitor before he votes. The question is can the solicitor make a decision since he financially benefitted at the reorganization meeting. The solicitor commented that he is not making a decision, but is providing a legal analysis.

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Y, Crawford-N, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–N, Santo-N, and Gorman-N

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. **Reorganization Meeting Minutes – January 2, 2020**

Motions: Maldonado/Crawford

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Y, Crawford-Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

1. **Regular Meeting Minutes** **– January 2, 2020**

Motions: Crawford/Santo-

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Y, Crawford-Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**:

Councilman Maldonado – Commented on members of the public who were holding up signs in the back of the room. It’s offensive, disrespectful and not appreciated.

Deputy Mayor Crawford – The budget committee met to discuss restructuring the fleet department. The committee gave the ok to move forward and the changes will be reflected in the 2020 budget. More information on the 2020 budget will be forthcoming. The Task Force for a Sustainable Galloway met with Wendy Fitzgerald of Village Greene at Smithville and she is happy to announce the Farmers market will be starting on June 25, 2020.

Mayor Gorman – Asked the manager to discuss negotiations with the professionals. The manager reported the labor attorney reduced his rate to $140.00/hour and the Township Engineer and Planner agreed to match Polistina’s rates.

Councilman DiPietro – As far as the renegotiating rates with the professionals who were chosen, wouldn’t it be fair to allow the other proposers to renegotiate? The township solicitor explained that once a professional is selected, council can renegotiate with that professional to negotiate rates downward.

**ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION (First Reading***) – N/A*

**ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING (Public Hearing):**

**2026-2020** – **Authorize the acceptance of Land Donations (Redwood, Washington & University Avenues)**

This ordinance authorizes acceptance of land donations on Redwood Avenue (Block 627, Lot 10), Washington Avenue (Block 660, Lot 14) and University Avenue (Block 1086, Lot 3). Public Comment: N/A

Council Comment: Councilman Coppola asked if the lots are undersized.

Motions: Maldonado/Crawford

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Y, Crawford-Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

**2027-2020** – **Authorize the acceptance of land donations (Avenue D, Chestnut & Linden)**

This ordinance authorizes acceptance of land donations on Avenue D (Block 570, Lots 6.01 & 6.02), Chestnut Avenue (Block 847, Lots 5.01 & 5.02), Linden Avenue (Block 758, Lots 3.01 & 3.02)

Public Comment: N/A

Council Comment: N/A

Motions: Crawford/Maldonado

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Y, Crawford-Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

**2028-2020** – **Authorize the purchase of land (Old Port and S. New York Roads)**

This ordinance authorizes the purchase of land (Block 1173.01, Lots 1.01, 1.02, 3 and 5) to be used for various contemplated public improvements.

Public Comment: N/A

Council Comment: N/A

Motions: Maldonado/Santo

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Y, Crawford-Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

**2029-2020** – **Authorize acceptance of land donations (Ironwood & Hayes Avenues)**

This ordinance is consistent with previous planning board application D&R where the developer was to maintain the basins and recreational equipment for ten years located at Block 770, Lots 1, 2, & 3 along with Block 771, Lot 3.

Public Comment: N/A

Council Comment: Councilman Coppola asked if these lots are undersized and drainage basins. Also asked if remediation was conducted and the manager responded the issues were rectified.

Motions: Maldonado/Crawford

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Y, Crawford-Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**043-20** **Payment of bills in the amount of $5,329,713.82**

Public Comment: N/A

Council Comment: N/A

Motions: Maldonado/Santo

Roll Call: Clute-Y (abstaining from fire related payments), Coppola-Y, Crawford–Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

**044-20 Closed Session**

The manager explained there are two matters to be discussed and action is not expected to be taken after the closed session.

Motions: Maldonado/Santo

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Y, Crawford–Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

**051-20 Authorize Person-to-Person Liquor License transfer – McGettigan’s 19th Hole**

This resolution authorizes a transfer of ownership to Cusandson3 LLC

Motions: Santo/Crawford

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Abstain, Crawford–Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

**058-20** **Authorize appointment of Christian Johansen as Township Manager**

This resolution reappoints Christian Johansen as Township Manager through December 31, 2022.

The mayor recommends the reappointment.

Motions: Maldonado/Santo

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Y, Crawford–Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

**Consent Agenda**

*Consent Agenda includes items of business which are not controversial & do not require individual discussion. A Motion approving the Consent Agenda is moved, seconded & voted upon as one item by the Township Council. If any discussion is requested on a Consent Agenda item, it is removed from the Consent Agenda to the Regular Agenda.*

**Consent Agenda Resolutions**

**045-20** Authorize application & acceptance of subgrant award of the federal fiscal year 2019 of the department of homeland security emergence management performance grant program**.**

**046-20** Authorizethe cancellation of taxes for township owned property.

**047-20** Authorize discharge of mortgage– 17 Arapaho Place

**048-20** Authorize discharge of mortgage **–** 1526 W. Kennedy Avenue

**049-20** Authorize acceptance of the Atlantic County Municipal JIF 2020 Safety Contract

**050-20** Appoint members to *Go Green Galloway*, a Task Force for a Sustainable Galloway

**052-20** Authorize the release of escrow account E-00521 & E-00672

**053-20** Authorize cancellation of sewer charges at 23 E. Jimmie Leeds Road & render account inactive

**054-20** Authorize extension of shared services agreement with Mullica Twp – PW Administration

**055-20** Authorize award of contract to Seashore Associated Mechanical in the amount of $36,649.70

**056-20** Authorize application for a grant from Sustainable Jersey

**057-20** Amend resolution #032-20 appointing members to the Parks & Recreation Committee

Public Comment: N/A

Motions: Maldonado/Crawford

Roll Call: Clute-Y, Coppola-Y, Crawford–Y, DiPietro-Y, Maldonado–Y, Santo-Y, and Gorman-Y

**MANAGER COMMENTS:**

Bulk waste drop off is January 25th at Galloway Road. The first paper shredding event is scheduled for February 1st at the municipal complex court side parking lot. Taxes are dues February 1st with a 10-day grace period to avoid interest. Sewer bills will be mailed out soon and are due March 20th.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Councilman Clute – Congratulated the newest member of the GTPD, K-9 officer Evo graduated last week.

Councilman Coppola – Apologized to the public for not realizing the events of the reorganization meeting would take place. He is encouraged by all of the support he has received over the past few weeks. Will continue to do what is best for Galloway Township.

Councilman Santo – Reported the township is working hard to update GTV from an analog system to digital. This is not a band aid fix and the upgrade will be operational soon. He asked the Township Engineer and the manager to look at the parking problem at Arthur Rann School. Last week he attended the funeral of Robert Knowbel, it was a very moving experience.

Councilman Maldonado – Spoke on his disappointment in being verbally attacked before the reorganization meeting. His rights provide him the opportunity to share his thoughts as he sees fit. He is encouraged by the support he has received over the past few weeks. In response to the comments about the highest vote getter last November, Councilman Maldonado reminded the public that council selects who will be mayor, not the public. I represent 37,000 people.

Councilman DiPietro – Congratulated Dave LoSasso and his canine partner Evo. Wished to add to the statement he made at the last meeting, our job is to do what is best for the township, three council members did not have input on the selection of the professionals. That is not in the best interest of the township. Thanked everyone in attendance for coming out tonight.

Deputy Mayor Crawford – This year is the 100th anniversary of women’s right to vote. Hope to see many more women on the dais and at all levels of government. 2020 is also the 100th anniversary of the League of Women Voters. Atlantic County has a chapter and is looking for members, both women and men. The census will be starting soon. Encouraged everyone to be counted. The census effects government funding and representation. Get counted! EEO Committee will be meeting to discuss the census. Lastly, every person on the dais wants to do what is best for Galloway. Council worked well for the past 2 years and the Deputy Mayor expects council to continue to work well over the next 2 years.

Mayor Gorman – Expressed his condolences to the family of Robert Knoebel. McGettigan’s is selling on January 22, 2020 and thanked the McGettigan family for 57 years of service. Stated that he did have conversations with Councilman Coppola prior to the 2020 reorganization meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Robert Campbell – Not a Galloway resident. A veteran. Received a piece of literature attacking Robert Maldonado. He is a friend of Mr. Maldonado for 30 years and he can attest that is a good citizen, parent and veteran. If you have a problem, address it at the polls. Thanked the Township for passing the Veterans Set Aside Act.

Sheila Hurliss – 50-year Galloway resident. Knows Mr. Maldonado and she is not in agreement with his recent actions. Wants a leader like Tony Coppola. This is a personal issue and she does not agree with the selection of engineer. Wants the professionals to be local, they put money back in the community.

Justin Vidal – He is an officer in the Air Force. Feels Mr. Maldonado is a good person who made a bad choice. Has supported Mr. Maldonado in the past. Feels he lost sight of his military core values. Mr. Maldonado should have been transparent with his intentions. Galloway voters should remember what transpired the next time they vote.

Don Purdy – Odessa Avenue - Asked the mayor and Councilman Maldonado questions related to resolutions on the agenda. Commented on council members who were kept in the dark prior to the reorganization meeting.

Rick Goldberg – 45 year resident. Has volunteered with GTAA and PAL. People have forgotten how to be civil. Refreshing that Mr. Maldonado voted how he thought best. 7 good people are on council – work together.

Wayne Boyer, Motts Creek Road – Saw information on social media about Robert Maldonado. Asked Councilman Maldonado why he missed so many meetings. Councilman Maldonado replied he was involved in a work place incident as a security guard at Oakcrest HS. Mr. Boyer responded he was there that day as he works with Mr. Maldonado. Said those absences should not be held against Mr. Maldonado.

Ernest Aponte – Owns property on the White Horse Pike. Know Mr. Maldonado for 30 years. He is a gentleman. People supporting Mr. Maldonado will be respectful. Councilman Coppola responded that he never advocated for disrespect and threatening behavior. Has never said anything derogatory about Robert or his family.

Joe MacNamara, Brandywine Drive - Thank you for not raising taxes over the past 6 years. Does not want his taxes raised.

Michele Torsie – Wood Lane - 20 year resident. Believes an Ethics Committee is needed for oversight. Make sure money is spent correctly.

Dan Carew, Jim Leeds Road – 9 year resident. Pleased with the progress the Township has made. Disgusted with the democratic campaign mailers this past election. If a councilperson had a problem with something, they should have acted at the time. Keep it professional, not personal.

Doug Browne, Smithville – 30 year resident. Concerned over the tax rate. Understands we have made progress lowering the tax rate. Further discussed the mass tax appeal of the Four-Seasons community many years ago and the one-time tax increase to cover the cost. The tax payers have not recouped the cost of that tax increase. Told council to be honest and not mislead the public. Councilman Coppola commented about the foreclosure rates throughout Atlantic County, just not Galloway Township. Commented on the tax appeal that goes to judgment. For every $1.00 in taxes, $0.75 leaves the township. Further explained that Mr. Brown should be aware as his wife was a Councilperson for the Township and he is involved in politics.

Sue Goldstein, Four Seasons – 15 year resident. Said her taxes have doubled since she first came to the township. Admires the strength of conviction of Councilman Maldonado.

Denise Irvin - Has voted for both democrats and republicans. Council should support the taxpayers. Keep township dollars in the township, not beyond. Why were the questions of changing the professionals not answered? Why would council take the money out of Galloway or out of Atlantic County? Mayor Gorman responded the professional selected will be good for Galloway. Deputy Mayor Crawford stated the previous professionals did not live in Galloway.

Brian Southrey, Ridgewood Avenue – Veteran. Spoke of the core values of the military. Why the change? Commented on the statement the “Jim Gorman might be a better mayor”? If people aren’t happy, recall the mayor.

Bobby Ray – 25 years resident of Galloway. Robert Maldonado is a good man. Can speak to his character. He will pray for council and the audience and hopes everyone can get past this and come together. Thanked Robert Maldonado.

Bob Mueller, Blue Heron Pines – 19 year resident. Need to respect one another. Reviewed the proposals and the mayor & manager renegotised rates. Out of 34 positions listed, CME dropped the cost of 4 positions. All other positions remained at $115.00/hour. Next year he would like to see the total cost for professionals paid in 2019, 2020 and what is projected for 2021.

Tom Bassford, New York Road - Asked several questions concerning the engineers main office. Asked Mayor Gorman if he knew them before they were appointed, and how did he meet them, etc. Asked about the text message Mayor Gorman sent to rehearse for the reorganization meeting. Mayor Gorman responded 4 council members never met to rehearse. Asked Councilman Maldonado about Apple Road street paving and reseeding his property. Mr. Bassford said he has a report for the change order.

James Kreiss, Dickenson Avenue – Lived here for 3 years. Commented on Councilman Maldonado turning against his team. Robert Maldonado ran with people the community trusted. Not sure he can trust Mr. Maldonado again. Received flyers in mail during the last election. Jim Gorman did not come to his door. Tony Coppola knocked on his door while campaigning. Discussed a street light problem he was having. Appreciates that he talked to him directly. Mayor Gorman responded that he also went door to door.

Sheila Hurliss – Knows about working with both parties. Does not want the township to go backwards. We need to keep our eyes on council.

Bishop Eddie Sultonel - Works at Oakcrest High School and knows Robert Maldonado. He is a good man, a family man. He deals in truth and integrity.

Anna Jezycki, Gail Lane – This is not about religion. Knows Robert Maldonado, he has been to her home. Expressed her disappointment, he betrayed the voice of the people. She has been coming to council meetings for 50-years and people are here tonight because they are disgruntled. Encouraged those in attendance to come to council meetings, be part of the solution. Told Councilman Maldonado she supported him, she campaigned for him and he went against what the township stands for.

Bryan Hoffstetter, 8th Avenue – Asked Councilman Maldonado what was so wrong that he changed. The councilman responded it is his privilege to vote for fresh ideas, fresh eyes. It is an opportunity to see what else is out there. Mayor Gorman added it is an opportunity to move in another direction. Councilman DiPietro asked what is wrong. Mayor Gorman commented that he has heard people say they don’t like the way things are done, does not like what Coppola has done. They are hoping for change. Mr. Hoffstetter said he believes in Tony Coppola and his team, likes what they have done.

Don Purdy, Odessa Avenue – Asked Councilman Maldonado about a time when he asked him for help to arrange for a limo for his daughter’s wedding. Also asked about the paving of Apple Road resulting in a change order in the amount of $40,000.00. Mr. Purdy does not appreciate the negative things said about him when he wasn’t running for office.

Bill Reilly, Blue Heron Pines – Concerned about the upcoming census. He is a Galloway resident, with an Egg Harbor City zip code. Wants to make sure he is counted towards Galloway.

Andrea Arnold, Smith Bowen Road – Commented votes were disenfranchised. Feels Councilman Maldonado betrayed the voters. Asked why he would go against the voters. Councilman Maldonado responded he represents 36,000 voters, not 4400. Ms. Arnold stated when something is right, why change?

Kristine McGinty, Elm Avenue – has volunteered for Galloway for many years. Stated council may be in different chairs, but the sports teams in Galloway need all of you. Asked Mayor Gorman and Deputy Mayor Crawford if they will give their continued support for community activities and children’s organizations. Both responded yes.

Matthew Houseworth, Coventry Way – If you voted for what you thought was best, why can’t you answer the questions being asked? Galloway has always been a great community. If you vote for what you think is best, that’s fine, but when you don’t answer questions, that isn’t good.

Dave McNabb, Independence Place – Commented that his son follows the elections closely. Has questions concerning how he should vote. Does council know how many 18-year olds are now voting? How does the public know a councilperson they voted into office isn’t going to flip.

Tom Bassford, New York Road – Questioned Councilman Maldonado’s party affiliation. Wants to know why the change, what was so wrong? 4400 people voted loud and clear. Asked Councilman Maldonado was work done in his yard? Councilman Maldonado responded no.

Josh DeLeon – Robert Maldonado’s son-in-law. Commented that he paid the limo driver $90.00. The owner of the limo company said “not to worry about it”.

Frank McGinley, 6th Avenue – Commented that Sheila Hurliss’s son works for Polistina. He has had to wait months for a call back from Polistina. Councilman Maldonado has defended Polistina & Associates in the past. Has had issues with Mr. Bassford when he was mayor and Dixon Engineers. The people complaining are sore losers. Wants people to know there are other reasons why people are at this meeting. Why all this conflict, it’s over, move on. If things don’t work out, get new professionals in January.

Nadine Feldman, Highlands Avenue – Wants council to work together, there are 7 of you. Her main concern with the new engineer is the proposed Shop-Rite. They will tear down 15 acres of trees. Asked questions specific to the CSM engineering, are they well equipped? Asked council to please work together. Deputy Mayor Crawford commented the new engineer is well versed on the Shop Rite project and they are aware of your concerns.

Joe Keister, Sandy Lane – 30 plus year resident. It isn’t fair that people are getting on Robert Maldonado for switching parties. Talked about VanDrew switching parties. Dixon Engineering tore down woods and built a building that is half empty. His opinion is each mayor does their own things that will benefit them.

Ken Kachmic, Cara Mia Lane – The lack of respect shown here tonight is bothersome. Understands passions are high. The residents elect council members and council picks the mayor. 2 years ago Jim Gorman received the most votes, but he wasn’t selected mayor at the time. This is all about sour grapes. If people aren’t happy, get a recall going. We need to conduct business, not this nonsense.

Anna Jezycki, Gail Lane – Does not like the solicitor stating council does not have to answer questions from those in attendance. Council owes the residents answers. He is the first solicitor to ever say that. The public wants answers. Lastly, there is a budget committee that she has been a member for many, many years. She wants it to continue and she will be the eyes to watch what happens.

Hearing no further comment from the public, the mayor asked for a motion to adjourn to closed session. Motion was made by Councilman Maldonado and seconded by Deputy Mayor Crawford. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Accepted:

Kelli Danieli, RMC /s/ Jim Gorman /s/

Kelli Danieli, RMC, Township Clerk Jim Gorman, Mayor