

Second time is the charm for bond

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The Mountain Lakes Borough Council approved an \$872,500 bond ordinance, twice. Of course there will only be one bond but the vote and accompanying public notice had to be "done over" due to a clerical error.

A notice is required to appear in a newspaper 10 days prior to the public meeting. The email was sent without the notice being attached and the omission wasn't caught until it was too late. On the advice of the borough's bond attorney, a second public hearing and vote took place in September.

Council members were upset about the mistake.

"It puts us in a tough position," said Councilman Peter Holmberg. "We can't keep repeating this."

Councilwoman Blair Bravo agreed. "I'm very disappointed," she said, "and frustrated. We have to get back to basics."

Barry Lewis, borough manager, assured the Council that, "a new procedure has been put in place that will require the clerk to get an actual copy of the printed ad."

Councilman Steve Shaw looked on the bright side.

"What's good about this is that it shows our government is open. We're not trying to hide anything from the public. There are issues in the front office and we're addressing them as they arise," he said.

The aggregate bond total includes \$200,000 from the State of New Jersey Department of Transportation Local Aid Grant, a \$20,000 Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant and a \$63,546.59 Clean Energy Incentive Grant.

The bond money will be used for a wide range of items including the rehabilitation and repair of a dam and administrative, public works, water/sewer utility fire department and police equipment. Almost \$170,000, which includes some Block Grant money, will be spent in the area of building and grounds to improve the Mountain Lakes facility with energy efficient

replacements, repair and maintenance of the tennis courts storage building, upgrades to public buildings, repairs to walls, steps and walkways in public areas, and the installation of lighting and fencing and other improvements at parks and beaches.

However, the big ticket item, \$530,000, is the infrastructure, repair upgrades, replacements and maintenance of the water mains, storm drains, sidewalks, curbing and the storm water system. Also, road milling/resurfacing, the acquisition and installation of fire hydrants and the replacement and rebuilding of Well No. 4.

The Council voted unanimously to approve the bond both times.

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