

BOROUGH OF BARRINGTON
CAUCUS MINUTES, APRIL 2, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Klaus at 6:30pm. Mayor Klaus led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Clerk called roll with the following present: Council President Popiolek, Councilwoman Bergeron, Councilman DelVecchio, Councilwoman Nicholson and Councilman Robenolt. Councilman Ludwig had not yet arrived. Also present was CFO Denise Moules, Eileen Holcombe, Secretary to Mayor and Council, Greg Evans, Borough Engineer and Tim Higgins Solicitor.

Clerk Shannon introduced Brian Schneider, our new Tax Assessor. She informed the group that interviews had been conducted by a committee made-up of the Mayor, Tax Collector, Council President and the Clerk and Brian was clearly the best candidate. We need to get him sworn into office as he actually started yesterday. On a motion by Councilwoman Nicholson, second by Councilman President Popiolek, resolution 4-2013-39, Appointing Brian Schneider as Tax Assessor, was approved with the following poll vote: Councilman Popiolek-yes; Councilwoman Bergeron-yes; Councilman DelVecchio-yes; Councilwoman Nicholson-yes; Councilwoman Robenolt-yes. Brian was then sworn into office by Mayor Klaus.

At this point, the meeting was moved into the council room as there were several residents in attendance.

First Public Portion—on a motion by Council President Popiolek, second by Councilwoman Bergeron, the public portion of the meeting was opened.

Pat McLernon, 401 Reading Avenue, stood and reported there is a tree on the curb strip that he wanted to have removed. He asked last year and was told it could not be removed. He reported that the tree is dead and it is damaging the sidewalk. The town came out and trimmed it but the tree is done. Mayor Klaus said we will refer to the Shade Tree Committee. Clerk Shannon added that we are using a new certified tree expert and we will have him evaluate the tree. Mr. McLernon added that the tree is actually on 4th Avenue. Councilman DelVecchio asked if the tree is dropping limbs and Mr. McLernon said that yes it is and it is also shedding bark. Clerk Shannon said we will get back to Mr. McLernon to let him know the decision.

Kevin Shell, 3 Lauren Lane (Hidden Ponds) asked if there was an update on the situation with their pump station. Tim Higgins, Solicitor, said we met with Runnemedede to see if they will be of help. We also had our engineer and superintendent of Public Works evaluate the problem. Kevin said they hired someone to maintain the landscaping--Fultano Landscaping. Is there anything more that we can do to help? Higgins responded that the issue of the homeowners association is still not resolved. Kevin responded that at this point, the homeowners association is two people—Joe Ragusa and Vince Cangelosi, who passed away. We don't want to set-up the association until we know what is going on. A lot of us are on board with helping out because the alarms keep going off. We don't know what is going on. Higgins said we are in the midst of contract negotiations so we can't reveal too much information at this time to see what can be done. There is a lot being looked into at this time.

Rich King, 6 Alyse Court, said we have attempted to work with the lawyer for the association but nothing has happened. We have attempted to get information but you can't just turn it over with a letter. Higgins said he will contact the lawyer in the morning and ask him to reach out to you to discuss. Mayor Klaus said the initial issue is to get the problems that are causing the alarms to go off resolved. He asked if there was anyone in particular their lawyer should contact. Rich said he does not want to speak for the residents who were not present. Mayor Klaus said we will send the email chain we have currently to their attorney.

Mayor Klaus asked if there is any more public comment. Seeing none, on a motion by Council President Popiolek, second by Councilwoman Bergeron, the public portion of the meeting was closed.

Clerk Shannon announced that the record will reflect that Councilman Ludwig arrived at 6:50pm.

Engineer:

Mayor Klaus called for the engineer to give his report. Greg Evans reviewed the monthly report and specifically reported on the following items:

- Camden County Open Space application will be submitted by Friday the 5th for continuation of improvements at the Amphitheater and Deerr Field.
- Year 35 CDBG application for funding has been submitted for architectural barrier removal at the VFW Senior Center and will include improvements to the parking area, walkways and entrance.
- Curb ramp improvement program by LGP Contracting—we are working with the solicitor to prepare a letter to go to the bonding company notifying them of the contractor's deficiencies and inability to complete the project in the required time period.
- Municipal Aid Application—no announcement yet.
- Earmark funding—we did get a response from Conrail on the lease for the pavilion. Despite our efforts to get them to waive a rental fee that will not waive but they pro-rated over three years. They are looking for \$4800 in 2013, \$6400 in 2014, \$8000 in 2015 and \$9600 in 2016. We advised them of the significance of this project and no one notified us previously of the rental requirements. Mayor Klaus asked Mr. Higgins to write a strong letter to Conrail and see what response we get.
- USDA loan—we are amending the plans and specs in accordance with the Program's March 15 review comments and will re-submit in two weeks.
- Pedestrian safety improvements at Highland and Mercer—anticipate submitting construction plans and specs to the County next week. Upon their review and approval, the County will go out to bid and will complete construction. We did talk to PSE&G about hard-wiring and that would require being metered. We spoke to another vendor and the new solar system they have may work even though it is under the tree canopy so we will look into that.
- Clements Bridge grade crossing—reached out to Congressman Andrews' office and they have a new rep who is reaching out to Conrail. They did reach out to the County and Director Martello advised it is not a County issue—it has to go to Conrail.
- White Horse Pike Redevelopment Phase I—anticipate receiving approval shortly. Phase II—traffic signalization required some revisions per DOT and Shropshire will submit revisions to the DOT within the next two weeks. Regarding the DEP permits, we are modifying to permit additional filling within the wetlands buffer.
- Federal Express—still moving forward with traffic signal. Site improvements are complete. As you are aware, this project began six years ago and a performance bond was never posted. They are requesting that as the work has been complete for six years, the maintenance bond requirement be waived as they are unable to obtain a maintenance bond when a performance bond was never posted. Solicitor Higgins said he needs to discuss this in greater detail with Greg before a decision can be made.

Mayor Klaus asked if there were any questions for Greg. Councilman Ludwig asked if there was any discussion about Hidden Ponds. Solicitor Higgins said we cannot discuss details due to ongoing contract negotiations.

Clerk Shannon asked for clarification about LGP. Greg responded we are preparing a letter to the bonding company to call the bond. Council President asked if the bonding company hires a replacement contractor or if we do. Higgins said there were a couple of options. Clerk Shannon added that these intersections have been torn-up since December and we are coming into the rainy season. Higgins said letter will go out tomorrow and we should have a response in a week.

Mayor Klaus asked about Mercer and Highland—what will the time frame be once the County gets the plans. Greg estimated it would take them a month to a month and a half to get bids out. Mayor Klaus if the solar over the hard-wiring is a large increase. Greg said he would follow-up with suppliers and try to get that information. Mayor Klaus then asked if Lawnside called about the traffic light. Greg said no and Higgins added he has been trying to connect with their solicitor.

Councilman DelVecchio asked if funds were included in the Streetscape funding to resurface Clements Bridge Road. Greg responded that no funds were included in that funding for that purpose. We have reached out to the County several times to request they resurface Clements Bridge Road but we have not had a positive response yet. DelVecchio asked how we can get this done—road is in bad shape. Mayor Klaus said most of the potholes have been marked out and Mike Ciocco is waiting for a response from Director Martello at the County as to when the repairs will be made. DelVecchio said it needs to be resurfaced but Mayor Klaus said we are not on the County list for this year. Councilman Ludwig said he will follow-up to see if he can get updated information.

At 7:05pm Mayor Klaus reported we would take a five minute break and the meeting adjourned to return to council chambers.

The meeting reconvened in council chambers at 7:20pm.

Administration: Terry reported on the following

- Health Benefits—met with representative from SHBP and Conner Strong. You have a chart that shows the annualized savings to move to the SHBP. The annual savings is about \$70,000. The soonest we could get in is August 1 which drops the savings to \$29,000. We are going to save \$18,000 with the HIF because they are moving to a Medicare Advantage plan. This is a blended plan and the retirees will all get new medical cards. They will no longer have to submit a Medicare card and an Aetna card—they will just submit the new card and Aetna will handle any submissions to Medicare. Their benefits will be even better in that they will have zero co-pays for medical. This change reduces the savings to \$9000. For \$9000, after speaking with Council President Popielek, it does not make sense to go through the difficulty of meeting with the employees and the retirees and handling the huge amount of administrative work that would be involved. Rather it would make sense to wait until October when the 2014 rates are released to consider moving for 2014. We are expecting rate relief on the prescription side as we had one individual who was using very expensive drugs and is no longer using them. The prescription rates are where the bulk of the difference between the HIF and the SHBP is so hopefully this gap will close. If not, we will have the last quarter of this year to conduct employee and retiree meetings and prepare to move to the SHBP.

- Raising of Opt-out Benefits—I would like to propose we raise the amount provided for in our Opt-out policy. Currently, the maximum an employee can receive is \$3000. We can go to the state maximum which is \$5000 for family coverage which may be an incentive for anyone who is eligible to take advantage of the program. This benefit was previously not available to the police but we are proposing it in the new contract. Councilwoman Nicholson asked if we have many that opt-out. Terry said we only have one but if we make it more attractive, perhaps more would take advantage. If you agree, I will prepare a schedule of cash incentives for your approval and we can adopt by resolution. Mayor Klaus asked if everyone was all right with that and everyone concurred.

- Rabies Clinic—the rabies clinic has been set for April 27 from 9am-11am. So far, the letters that went out have only generated an additional 20 licenses. We are hopeful we will get a lot more at the rabies clinic.

- LSRP to complete Environmental Work on WHP—Scott Smith was concerned that the three proposals we received were so disparate that there was confusion as to the scope of work. This

Thursday, he and I are meeting with each firm who submitted a proposal to make sure everyone was on the same page. I am hopeful we may have a recommendation of award in time for council.

Review of action items for the agenda: Terry reviewed the following items that will be on the agenda

Ordinances for public hearing and adoption—

- Ord. 993 Amending Chapter 99, Rental Properties, in the Borough Code
- Ord. 994 Amending Chapter 53, Construction Code Enforcing Agency, in the Borough Code
- Ord. 995 Approving the Acquisition of Certain Land by the Borough of Barrington from Vernon Duckrey, and Authorizing the Litigation Necessary to Implement Said Acquisition
- Ord. 996 Approving the Acquisition of Certain Land by the Borough of Barrington from Shiv Estates, LLC, and Authorizing the Litigation Necessary to Implement Said Acquisition
- Ord. 997 Adopting the Amendment to Ordinance No. 753, Regarding the Barrington Economic Redevelopment-Phase I and II, Project Area Redevelopment Plan

These ordinances were on the February agenda for adoption but we never opened the public hearing. They have been re-advertised and will be considered for adoption following a public hearing at the April 9 meeting.

Resolutions—

- Amending the Personnel Policies Pertaining to Opt-Out of Medical Benefits
- Authorizing Execution of a Direct Install Agreement with PSE&G
- Awarding a Contract for LSRP Services Relative to the White Horse Pike Project
- Anti-Idling Resolution (Councilman Robenolt will discuss)
- Introduction of the 2013 Municipal Budget
- Approving the April Bill List

Solicitor Tim Higgins added that there will be four additional ordinances—three for additional property acquisitions and one amending the fire inspection ordinance. Terry stated we will also introduce the COLA ordinance pertaining to the budget. Denise added that we will also have a resolution for the calculation of the reserve for uncollected taxes and another for emergency appropriations for the temporary budget.

Finance: Denise reported on the following items

- Review of monthly financial reports—the standard monthly reports are attached. Also attached is a letter from 1st Colonial that the interest rate is dropping to .4%. It was previously .6%. They are still absorbing transaction charges. The budget expenditures will show some accounts in the negative but that is due to the temp budget. The emergency appropriation resolution will take care of that. Also attached is the police overtime report.
- Budget schedule—the top page of the budget is the departmental summary. We are within the CAP calculation requirement. Denise then reviewed the variances by department. There were many questions on each department's budget and concerns about a tax increase so it was determined that a special meeting would be convened to review the budget in detail. April 13 at 2:00pm was set as the date for the budget review.

► COUNCIL REPORTS

Council President Popiolek reported on the following:

WHP Redevelopment Status/DOT Update--Planning Board determined that the application is complete and will review the site plan this month. This month we will be presenting the project to the Planning Board for site plan and final approval. Engineer, Solicitor, redeveloper and Wawa will all be present.

Rich Hill Apartment Project Update/Review—they are working on getting County Planning Board approval at this phase.

Roadhouse--Bach Associates has recommended to the Planning Board that they consider declaring the "Roadhouse" property an area in need of rehabilitation. Tim Higgins asked why rehabilitation as opposed to redevelopment. Kirk said he will have to defer to Mr. Bach for that. He asked Tim to follow-up with Steve Bach.

Barrington Business Association--Attempting to resurrect and bring into focus the efforts of the BBA. They are working on restructuring. The old president resigned. They are making a new beginning and establishing a purpose. Chief Eisenhardt has been very instrumental and we thank him for his involvement. Their next meeting is April 18 at the Coffee House.

We had to appoint Brian Schneider as Tax Assessor because of the timing. Steve retired as of today so we had to get him appointed. We have 68 residential appeals that were received so he will hit the ground running.

Councilwoman Bergeron reported on the following:

Received an email from a resident requesting a "Children at Play" sign at Moore and Austin. Mayor Klaus said it has already been taken care of. Councilman DeVecchio said he responded to the resident within minutes of getting the email and he contacted Lt. Roberts who took care of it.

Fire Company and Fire Alliance—reached out to Freeholder McCray and expressed our concerns over the radios that were left out of the conversion program—specifically the Fire Marshal. Wayne explained that apparently the radios he uses did not make it onto the County list. All radios were supposed to be replaced one for one but his radios were left off. We have him covered for a portable radio but he doesn't have one for the car. The County is not committing as to if they have any extras but we are still working on it. Councilman DeVecchio offered his services as he knows people at the County.

The Ambulance Association is buying an ID card maker.

Government Day is May 17. Not sure if we are having a council meeting that day but I will report back after I speak to the School.

Councilman DeVecchio reported on the following:

After getting back the proposed contracts with the language corrections, we will meet again with the PBA. Progress is being made.

Mayor Klaus asked Bob to explain why we are changing to the monthly billing. Bob asked Denise to explain the reason for the change. Denise explained that billing at the beginning of the month will improve cash flow and streamline the billing process. We were currently billing in arrears after inspections were done and collections were always behind. This will streamline the process so everyone due to be inspected that month is billed at the beginning of the month. Terry added Steve was concerned because it was listed as an "inspection fee" so Tim said it could be easily remedied by

changing the wording to be a “registration fee”. That is the ordinance language that is being introduced.

Councilwoman Nicholson

Senior Brunch was March 17th, and was attended by 30 seniors and served by 4th graders. It was a great event.

Women’s League - Easter Egg Hunt over 180 kids attended.

Earth Day- April 20 –meeting with Eileen Wednesday to get all the paperwork out to the businesses.

Barrington Day-all entertainment is booked and invoices were sent to Denise today. Just need to confirm businesses. New this year is a 24-person game ride with 4-D interaction—it is the largest in state. Also the Camden County Department of Corrections K-9 unit will attend.

Independence Day Parade—Barrington Band wants Bob D to organize the parking for them and he said he would do it. We are waiting for a response from the Camden High Marching Band.

Little League Benefit raised \$6500 at their Casing Night. Opening Day was very nice –tribute to Fred Govito and Ray Kennedy which was very nice.

Girls’ Softball opening day is this Saturday—please try to attend.

Summer Recreation – Hired Bob Haas as the new Director. Received lots of emails and phone calls and we anticipate about 65 kids. Bob has lots of activities and trips planned. Registration deadline May 31. It is for Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Constituent Services- received a thank you for Councilman Ludwig from resident on Reading regarding tree removal scheduled for Friday.

Councilman Ludwig reported on the following:

Green Team met yesterday. Working on accreditation and solar. Next meeting is May 6 at 6pm. Tree on Reading is coming down on Friday.

Councilman Robenolt reported on the following:

Wayne asked about the Fire Company grant—are we okay with that? Denise responded that there is a timing issue that we missed. With the FEMA grant, we were supposed to make purchases within 12 months. Denise is working with him on getting an extension. Wayne asked how much the grant was and Denise responded it was over \$100,000. She thinks we will get the extension and she will keep council advised.

Boy Scouts have a new Scout Master-- Joe Connulli from Kingston Avenue is going to take that role. My boys are in the program and I went through it as well and I would hate to see it fall apart.

Regarding Judicial, I wanted to look at a possible increase for the deputy administrator but Kirk explained it is covered in the AFSCME contract and negotiations have not yet started.

The anti-idling resolution is an initiative that came out of the Green Team. I spoke to Chief Eisenhardt and we are going to meet with the School Green Team to do an education campaign.

Mayor Klaus reported that the current property maintenance officer, Jim McHugh, will be resigning. I spoke to John Szczerbinski and he is willing to do it and will do so for \$1000. Does anyone have comments? Everyone was okay with the change.

The senior bus needs a resolution for an IOU to Runnemedede for the CDBG funds.

We met with Mark Greco from MLG Realty. He answered all of our questions. We are going to work with him to help in any way we can to get tenants in place. He claims the taxes he pays are much higher than in other towns where he owns rental properties causing him to have to charge higher rents. We are going to have him meet with the new assessor. He provides incentives to new tenants and works with them any way he can. He has 47 rental properties in various towns and our taxes are the highest and he has the highest percentage of vacancy.

Mayor Klaus also reported that we had a food distribution here on the 23rd and we served 65 families.

Mayor Klaus called for a motion to approve a closed session. On a motion by Councilwoman Bergeron, second by Council President Popiolek, Resolution 4-2013-40, Authorizing a Closed Session, was approved with the following poll vote: Popiolek-yes; Bergeron-yes; DeVecchio-yes; Nicholson-yes; Ludwig-yes; Robenolt-yes.

On a motion by Councilman Popiolek, second by Councilman Ludwig, the meeting was adjourned to closed session at 9:20pm.

Terry Shannon
Municipal Clerk