

BOROUGH OF BARRINGTON

CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES, Tuesday, November 1, 2016, 6:00pm

Mayor Klaus called the meeting to order at 6:00pm with the reading of the Sunshine Statement. He led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Clerk called roll with the following present: Council President Popiolek, Councilwoman Bergeron, Councilman Rink, Councilwoman Nicholson and Councilman Robenolt. Councilman Ludwig arrived at 6:05pm. Also present were Solicitor Tim Higgins, Secretary Eileen Holcombe, CFO Denise Moules and Clerk Terry Shannon.

First Public Portion—on a motion by Council President Popiolek, second by Councilwoman Bergeron, the first public portion of the meeting was opened. Present was Adam Moore of 137 Woodland Avenue who spoke about the CO program. He believes our inspection program is a nuisance. It creates an undue burden on people trying to move in or out of Barrington. He believes it should be eliminated or at least amended to be less of a burden. Construction Official John Szczerbinski was present and responded he would be happy to meet with Mr. Moore to discuss the specific complaints he has so he can address them. He would be happy to review any inspections that were done to go over with him what failed. After more discussion, it was stated that the program helps to ensure the health and safety of homes in the town but we would be taking a look at the whole process to see if it can be lessened. It will be reviewed by the committee.

Seeing no further public comment, on a motion by Councilman Rink, second by Councilwoman Bergeron, the first public portion was closed.

Engineer Report

Engineer Greg Evans reported the following action item for the council agenda:

Voucher No. 3 and Change Order No. 2 for the VFW ADA Restroom Improvements will be on the agenda for approval.

Evans then reviewed the monthly Engineer's report. Highlights included the following:

- Attended meeting representatives from DOT and Conrail as well as borough officials to discuss the traffic signal at Clements Bridge Road. The recommendation is that the signal go entirely red and that automatic gates be installed. Conrail expects the gates to be done in 2017 but the signal timing will be changed within two months. They will also replace the grade crossing in 2017. We prepared a letter for signature by the mayor to go to Conrail and request they expedite the measures.
- Wish Upon a Star Playground—we sent letter to Open Space program asking that they review the application and explain why it was not funded. We are requesting a response. We will also apply for CDBG supplemental funding.
- Copley Road—received preliminary approval for bumpouts from county engineer yesterday. We will prepare plans and funding options.
- Commerce Drive reconstruction—funding has been released. Pre-con meeting is tomorrow at 10am.
- White Horse Pike redevelopment—Greg deferred to Council President Popiolek who reported the ground breaking for Wild Wing Café is tomorrow morning. This is the final phase of the project.

Clerk Shannon said she received a letter from FedEx requesting release of their performance bond. Evans said they will review and make a recommendation. He then left the meeting.

Administration

Clerk Shannon reported on the following items:

Reminder about Election Day and that the council meeting will be on Wednesday.

Results of Town-Wide Yard Sale—67 participants raised \$670.00 for TNR program.

Fair and Open process for professional services—resolution will be on the agenda. RFQ's will be due in December.

Reorganization meeting will be January 8, 2017.

Open enrollment currently underway. We are holding employee meetings November 10.

Update on reassessment program—all field work is complete. Letters will be mailed out December 5-7 and residents can then schedule review meetings with the assessor.

Clerk Shannon then reviewed the resolutions for the council agenda. Councilman Robenolt asked if we would be able to hold another open enrollment depending on the results of police contract negotiations. Shannon responded that we can hold a special open enrollment whenever needed. Councilwoman Nicholson reported we will have a special youth service award on the agenda for Lance Weber.

CFO Denise Moules reported on the following items:

Review of standard monthly reports and police overtime. We will have a shortfall in court revenue. Resolution for cancelling of budget expenditures and/or transfers will be prepared for the December agenda. Budget expenditures are all in the black but we are waiting on the receivable from Runnemedede for the shared service.

Refunding bonds—we will have a savings of \$48,000 over three years with the refunding bonds so we will be going ahead with these bonds. Resolution will be on the agenda.

Working on getting the worksheets together so the department heads can begin working on their 2017 budgets.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilwoman Nicholson reported the Avon trunk or treat was very well attended. She would like us to get more involved next year. As Greg mentioned, we will be applying for CDBG funds for Wish Upon a Star and hopefully will make it one of only two fully inclusive playgrounds in the County. Senior dinner dance will be at the VFW this Thursday.

Councilman Ludwig reported that regarding the CO inspection program, the checklist does need to be reviewed. John Z asked for input from council as to the specific questions. He would be happy to review in detail with anyone. After more discussion, it was finally determined that the committee will review all the questions and recommendations and come up with a suggested revision to the program that makes sense.

Councilwoman Bergeron reported that Aetna and Amerihealth have pulled out of New Jersey for their Medicare 65 supplemental plan. We are holding weekly classes for seniors to discuss their options. If the municipalities get any calls from seniors, refer them to the Senior Services county office.

Councilman President Popielek reported we already discussed the ground breaking tomorrow morning. We also have some ribbon cuttings this Saturday for two new businesses.

Mayor Klaus thanked everyone for their work on the Harvest Festival. Town Wide Yard Sale was well received by the participants. We will be thanking Kevin Becica at the council meeting for her efforts in getting Clements Bridge Road done. Eagle Scout project at the memorial came out very well. We will recognize Vincent Teti at Reorg.

On a motion by Councilwoman Bergeron, second by Councilman Ludwig, the second public portion was opened. Clerk Shannon thanked everyone for the lovely gift and their sympathies during her difficult time at the loss of her mom.

Seeing no further public comment, on a motion by Councilwoman Bergeron, second by Councilman Ludwig, the public portion was closed.

On a motion by Councilwoman Bergeron, second by Councilman Ludwig, a resolution authorizing a Closed Session was approved with the following poll vote: Popiolek-yes; Bergeron-yes; Rink-yes; Nicholson-yes; Ludwig-yes; Robenolt-yes.

On a motion by Councilwoman Nicholson, second by Councilman Ludwig, the meeting was adjourned to Closed Session at 7:10pm.

CLOSED SESSION

The Closed Session began at 7:30pm.

Councilman Ludwig asked about the borough's ownership of park strip trees—specifically the Austin Avenue situation. If we control the trees in the park strip and they are doing damage to sidewalks, why aren't we responsible? Solicitor Higgins responded that municipalities own the cartways but we can delegate the abutting landowner the responsibility for maintenance of the sidewalks which we have done by ordinance. Ludwig asked if we can change the ordinance and Higgins responded that yes you can but he does not recommend it. Higgins also clarified that we do own the trees in the public right-of-way. Ludwig said he believes we have a moral obligation that if we own the trees and the trees are damaging the sidewalks, we should be fixing the problem. We are working against our residents. Councilman Robenolt added that the sidewalks have been destroyed by the trees on that block of Austin (400 block). Higgins said you could be embarking on a program to have the municipalities repair sidewalks but there is a middle ground. Create the program specifically for the type of situation that occurred on Austin where the park strip is clearly too small to support the shade trees. There have been some recent cases in North Jersey where if the municipality knew about the hazard and someone was injured, the town could be held liable. You may want to consider a partnership with the homeowner wherein you repair just the blocks damaged by the tree and the homeowner can pay to replace the rest. Ludwig agreed that we may not be able to do 100 house per year but we should be able to come up with some program that makes sense. Councilwoman Nicholson asked if we could use the funds raised by the vacant property program. Higgins said you could go out to bid and award to one vendor for a reduced price on all sidewalk work to be done that year. After more discussion, it was determined that we would explore revising the ordinance and coming up with a program to help homeowners. Higgins said he will prepare an ordinance for first reading for the governing body to consider.

Seeing no further discussion for closed session, on a motion by Councilwoman Nicholson, second by Councilman Ludwig, the meeting went back into open session. On a motion by Councilwoman Bergeron, second by Councilman Rink, the caucus meeting was adjourned by 8:18pm.

Approved: *Terry Shannon*
Terry Shannon, Clerk/RMC