

**BOROUGH OF BARRINGTON CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024, 6:00PM, MAYOR/COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Mayor Hanson called the meeting to order in council chambers at 6:00pm with the Sunshine Statement and led everyone present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Deputy Borough Clerk called roll and the following were present: Councilman Cerrito, Councilman Drumm, Councilman Ludwig, Councilwoman Mercado-Miller and Councilman Robenolt. Council President Beach was absent with prior notice. Also present were Secretary Eileen Holcombe, Engineer Greg Evans and Solicitor Tim Higgins. The Borough Clerk was absent and the Deputy Clerk handled the meeting.

**Engineer's report—Greg Evans reported on the following**

We have no action items this evening.

Review of report—we submitted the DCA 2024 grant application; the applications for CDBG funding were submitted yesterday for senior center improvements and the senior program; the contractor for the Austin Ave program anticipates commencing March 18 and the residents will be notified; we are going back out to bid for the police department renovations and we have modified the scope of work; we are working on scope modifications for the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue pump station project. DPW is doing some test pits for us to see if we can modify the depth at all.

**First public portion**—on a motion by Councilman Drumm, second by Councilman Cerrito, the first public portion was opened. Present were Chris Burns and other neighbors from Ashland Avenue, who spoke about the lot at the end of their street. They received a letter from EPA of NJ that someone wants to build there and they are wetlands but want to make a change. We are concerned about displacing the wetlands because of wildlife and the flooding on Erie Avenue. We are looking for more information and would like support for our response to them that we want them to remain wetlands. Councilman Drumm asked Greg Evans how they can do that. Mayor Hanson explained that they did not request a change to the wetlands designation, rather they asked for an interpretation. They are trying to determine the extent of the wetlands and if they can build on the lot. Burns said the letter gave them the impression that they were trying to get the lot classified as no longer wetlands because it was accompanied by their plans for the house. Greg Evans explained they submitted a zoning application to the borough and the Zoning Officer required them to go to the DEP for a wetlands delineation to determine the extent of the wetlands. They had originally said that there weren't wetlands but we did not accept that. He recommended that all of the neighbors submit their concerns in writing to DEP. Greg added that if they were approved to build, they would be required to submit stormwater management with their plans. Councilman Ludwig added that there have been problems over that and he agrees that no house should be built over there. They asked if the borough would also send a letter opposing the building of the house. Solicitor Higgins responded that this is an active application before our zoning/planning board so we have to remain neutral. After more discussion, it was determined that no action can be taken by the borough as the decision as to the presence of wetlands is solely up to NJDEP. The residents asked if DEP determines there are no wetlands present on the lot, what happens then. Greg and Tim explained if there are no wetlands, and the lot meets our zoning requirements, then it is a buildable lot. The residents asked if the borough would weigh-in at that point. Mayor Hanson explained that would be in the hands of the Planning Board and they have monthly meetings you are welcome to attend. The residents were encouraged to send their concerns to DEP.

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

## **Administration—Mayor Hanson reviewed as the Clerk was absent**

Shared Service Agreement with Haddon Heights for fire services—we are extending the agreement with Haddon Heights. They passed their resolution last week and we will be passing ours at the council meeting. Councilman Robenolt asked what the length of the extension is and Mayor Hanson responded four years. Robenolt then asked what the out is and Tim Higgins responded it is 90 days before the end of a calendar year which is standard language. Councilman Robenolt added he does not believe it is working—we are losing members. We originally each had six members and now between the two towns, we have five. We are losing people on both sides. Councilman Ludwig said we had a problem with the fireman not showing up so you should be having a conversation with them. Mayor Hanson added that both public safety committees are working on plans to bolster the volunteers back up. The career staff is getting way more calls than they were getting before. Councilman Ludwig added it is not fair to assess after just one year. We have to give it time to grow.

Approval of the PBA contract—the contract was sent out to you last month. We were waiting for the PBA attorney to review. They finished their review and the contract can now be approved by resolution.

Increase in fees for performance of weddings—we discussed this last month. Eileen did a survey on surrounding towns and this is bringing us up to the average in the area.

Sale of fire truck—this was also discussed last month. We listed it with a broker and within a week we had a sale at the full asking price of \$650,000. That will payoff the debt of the truck that we owe including the broker's fee. Councilman Robenolt asked if we know if the truck is being sold stripped and Chief Hales, who was present, responded it is going with the ladder complement and six handlings.

## **Council agenda review--Deputy Clerk Moules reviewed the following**

Ordinances for public hearing and adoption:

- Ord. 1178--Amending Chapter 128 Zoning (height of accessory buildings)
- Ord. 1179—2024 Salary ordinance
- Ord. 1180—Salary Ordinance for police contract

Ordinances for introduction on first reading:

- Ord 1181—Police Department Salary Ordinance
- Ord. 1182—Amending Chapter 59, Fees (wedding fees)

Resolutions for approval by consent agenda: *preliminary—more may be added*

- Authorizing execution of a SSA with Haddon Heights for Fire Services
- Authorizing Execution of a contract with PBA Local 328
- Resolution authorizing LOSAP payments for 2023
- Authorizing sale of fire truck
- Approving the March bill list

Mayor Hanson added we will need a resolution for submission of the Municipal Alliance grant.

### **Finance—CFO Moules reported on the following**

Still working on the budget information—will be getting that this week and next. We are looking to have the budget meetings the third or fourth week of this month. Revenues are estimates based on what we collected last year. Standard reports are attached with the bank balances and expenditures. There are a few lines that are in the negative because we are waiting for payments on shared service agreements.

### **COUNCIL REPORTS**

Councilwoman Mercado-Miller—thank you to everyone for being patient with me with all my questions. We are trying to re-vamp the Board of Health and are setting up meetings. The website has been updated with meeting and membership information. We will also be collaborating with the Green Team on initiatives. Regarding senior services, we met with the Mews. We are trying to coordinate with the services that are offered by the borough and the Mews so we can work together to provide services for our seniors. We are also discussing projects we can work on together. We are looking for speakers for our senior meetings, particularly regarding support services for seniors.

There were no other council reports at this time.

Mayor Hanson—our April council meeting will be Student Government Day. One student will be shadowing each of us. You can give them your report to deliver if you like.

Little League is having a clean-up event this weekend.

Seeing no further business to be discussed, on a motion by Councilman Ludwig, second by Councilman Drumm, the meeting adjourned at 6:27pm with all in favor.

Approved: Terry Shannon  
Terry Shannon, Clerk/RMC