

BOROUGH OF BARRINGTON CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 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 Borough Clerk called roll and the following were present: Council President Beach, Councilman Cerrito, Councilman Drumm, Councilman Ludwig, Councilwoman Mercado-Miller and Councilman Robenolt. Also present were Secretary Eileen Holcombe, Solicitor Tim Higgins, CFO Denise Moules and Clerk Terry Shannon.

Engineer's report

Greg Evans reported on the following action item: we received bids from four contractors for the Lost World Park playground installation. We are still reviewing the bids and will be making a recommendation. We have voucher No. 5 for the Austin Avenue project and also Change Order No. 4 with no change to the contract. We also have voucher No. 5 and Change Order No. 1 for the police renovations.

Greg then reported that the borough did receive confirmation from CDBG that funding was received in the amount of \$28,000 for senior programs.

Public Portion

On a motion by Councilman Ludwig, second by Councilman Drumm, the first public portion was opened. Present was Gina Yacovelli from Austin Avenue who said she received a violation for having a commercial vehicle parked at her house. She said Brian Kelly was very dismissive to Christian, who is the driver of the vehicle and believes they are being targeted. We are in full compliance according to the ordinance which states the vehicle has to be parked behind the house line of the property which it is. They received a letter that the truck had to be removed including a certified letter that was received the same day the truck was to be removed. We have lived here for 20 years and never had an issue. Solicitor Higgins responded that Mayor Hanson asked him to look into this and he will come out to look at the situation and they will discuss in detail. He will also talk to Brian about the situation. Higgins said he will be in touch with her. Yacovelli added that the truck is only there one week a month so the visit will need to be arranged accordingly.

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

Administration

Mayor Hanson reported that the new owner of 600 Clements Bridge Road would like to have the zoning amended from commercial to residential. He would like to present his plans to convert the building to apartments. The new owner was present and distributed copies of the plans he has for the building. The plans are for two apartments on the first floor and one apartment on the second floor. There will be no structural changes to the building or the outside. Mayor Hanson explained we would have to amend the ordinance and then it would go to the planning board. The governing body reviewed the plans and had no objections. Mayor Hanson asked Solicitor Higgins to have an ordinance to amend the redevelopment plan ready for introduction.

Clerk Shannon reported on the following:

Purchase of ambulance by Public Works from Barrington Ambulance Association—agreed upon price of \$4000.00. Resolution authorizing purchase will be on agenda.

Resolution designating Block 1, Lot 1.01 as an area in need of redevelopment. Mayor Hanson added a developer wants to purchase the building and put in 23 affordable senior rental units. We needed a study done which has been completed. Planning Board is holding a meeting on October 7 to review report prepared by engineer and if they agree that this property is an area in need of redevelopment, then we will need a corresponding resolution. Councilman Drumm said he does not want to be told it will be for seniors and then have it turn into something else. Solicitor Higgins said when they get their funding, it will have to be for senior housing. You may also want to put a deed restriction in. Drumm said that is the only way he will agree to it. Higgins said he will prepare the necessary resolution. Councilman Ludwig asked if the deed restriction can be included in the resolution. Solicitor Higgins responded that he will draft an ordinance for review. The Planning Board will be reviewing the study designating the property as an area in need of redevelopment. We will pass an ordinance and a resolution designating it as an area in need of redevelopment and amending the redevelopment plan.

Resolution to join purchasing co-operative—the fire department is purchasing a pickup truck, and Denise has certified as to funding. The truck is being purchased through the Bergen County Purchasing Co-operative and resolution to join that co-op and authorizing this purchase will be on the agenda.

Sustainable Jersey Certification—the Green Team has received Bronze Certification through the Sustainable Jersey program. There will be a formal presentation at the Sustainable Jersey luncheon to be held during the NJLM Convention.

Possible sale of VFW Senior/Community Center—Mayor Hanson discussed the possibility of selling the building. He was approached by someone who would like to purchase it for a restaurant. The building is in a redevelopment zone. Councilwoman Mercado-Miller and I sat down with Eileen and Megan about moving the senior program to the second floor of this building. There are some kinks to work-out but everyone was receptive. The new restaurant would still host our senior dinners. Councilman Drumm said he is supportive but if a new VFW group wants to get started, we have to help them find a location. Councilman Robenolt asked about the CDBG money used for renovations and Mayor Hanson said we would have to return those funds in the amount of \$180,000. The interested buyer offered \$350,000. We need to have the building appraised. Councilman Robenolt asked if we have to open it up to other potential buyers and Councilman Ludwig agreed that is what we should do. Solicitor Higgins said because it is in a redevelopment zone, you don't have to but council thought it was the best way to proceed. Councilwoman Mercado-Miller added that before Covid, the rentals were profitable but since then, the building is not profitable. Councilman Ludwig added if we can get a good business operating in there, that would be good for the town. After more discussion, it was agreed this will be explored further and we will get the building appraised. It is also important that the building continues to offer a tribute to the VFW.

New and revised agreement with Delco Development for final payment of special assessment congruent with the borough's bond payment schedule. CFO Moules explained that the new agreement provides a new payment schedule that will be over the length of the final bond payments and adds an administrative fee and covers the interest. Councilman Ludwig asked how long the PILOT continues and Higgins responded 30 years. Councilman Robenolt asked if there are any issues with the developer now that Chuck Lager has gone out of business. Higgins said the developer is already talking to new potential businesses. Clerk Shannon added the resolution authorizing the revised agreement will be on the council agenda.

Antisemitism resolution requested by David Spector, JCRC Government Affairs Chair—we received a sample resolution recognizing the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition of Antisemitism and they requested we approve a similar resolution. The sample is attached and the Mayor would like this on the council agenda.

Resolution approving contracts with Chief Minardi and Captain Pawling—new contracts have been negotiated with both the Chief and the Captain and their contracts will now be aligned with the PBA contract, so they are on the same terms. Resolution to approve these contracts will be on the council agenda.

Moving November caucus to Monday, November 4—we are moving the November caucus meeting from Wednesday, November 6 to Monday, November 4. Proper notice will be made.

Council agenda review

Clerk Shannon reported on the following for the council agenda:

Introduction of ordinance to amend zoning/redevelopment zone/master plan (Tim will prepare)

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

- Purchase of ambulance from Ambulance Association
- Resolution designating Block 1, Lot 1.01, as an Area in Need of Redevelopment
- Resolution to join Bergen County Co-op and authorizing purchase of pickup truck
- Resolution approving revised agreement with Delco Development
- Antisemitism resolution
- Resolution approving contracts with Chief and Captain
- Resolution to move November caucus meeting
- Resolution setting hours for Trick or Treating
- Resolution authorizing shared service agreement with Camden County for Drug Alliance grant
- Resolution to purchase unbuildable lot at Barrington and Erie for zero dollars
- Approving the October bill list

Finance

CFO Moules reported the standard monthly reports were distributed. There are no concerns at this point. The Best Practices questionnaire is out again and I will be working on completion of this so it can be presented at the next meeting.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilwoman Mercado-Miller—I will be on leave—if you need me, email or text me and I will see you in a couple of months. Everyone wished her the best of luck with the birth of her new baby. The baby's name will be Selena.

Councilman Beach—Public Works and the Green Team completed the Rain Garden and it looks great. Thank you to Public Works and the Green Team for their hard work on this project.

Mayor Hanson—Harvest Fest is next weekend—parking and road closure info was posted today. This is the biggest event in town so I hope to see you all there.

Seeing no additional business to be discussed, on a motion by Councilman Ludwig, second by Councilman Beach, the meeting adjourned at 6:52pm with all in favor.

Approved: Terry Shannon
Terry Shannon, Clerk/RMC