

**BOROUGH OF BARRINGTON
MINUTES OF MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 14, 2025, 6:00PM
COUNCIL ROOM AT MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A regular monthly Council Meeting of the Borough of Barrington was held with Mayor Hanson presiding.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hanson called the meeting to order with the following statement: "This meeting is held in compliance with Chapter 231 of the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975 and appropriate notice has been given. Notice of the meeting was filed with the Retrospect and Courier Post and is also posted in the main office of the Borough Clerk where notices are primarily kept. He then led everyone present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The Deputy Municipal Clerk called roll of Council with the following in attendance: Council President Beach, Councilman Beyer, Councilman Cerrito, Councilwoman Mercado-Miller, and Councilman Robenolt. Councilman Drumm was absent with prior notice. Mayor Hanson, Municipal Deputy Clerk Moules, and Solicitor Timothy Higgins.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Hanson reported that Council was provided with the minutes of the December 3, 2024, caucus, and the December 10, 2024, council meetings and asked if there were any corrections or abstentions. On a motion by Councilman Robenolt, second by Councilman Cerrito, the minutes were approved with all members present in favor. Councilman Beach abstained on the caucus minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Hanson reported that the monthly departmental reports were distributed to the governing body, are posted outside of council chambers, and posted on the borough website. If there are no questions on the reports, I will entertain a motion to accept monthly reports.

On a motion by Beach, second by Cerrito, the monthly departmental reports were accepted with the following poll vote: Beach-yes, Beyer-yes, Cerrito-yes, Mercado-Miller- yes, Robenolt-yes

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION ON FIRST READING

Deputy Clerk Moules read the following ordinances by title:

Ord. 1197 Ordinance of the Borough of Barrington, County of Camden, State of New Jersey, Adding Article II., Lead Paint Inspections, to Chapter 267, Rental Properties, in the Code of the Borough of Barrington

On a motion by Beach, second by Robenolt, the first reading of the ordinance was approved with the following poll vote: Beach-yes, Beyer-yes, Cerrito-yes, Mercado-Miller-yes, Robenolt-yes

Ord. 1198 Ordinance of the Borough of Barrington, County of Camden and State of New Jersey, Rescinding and Replacing Ordinance No. 1176, Amending Chapter 178, Flood Damage Prevention, in the Code of the Borough of Barrington

On a motion by Cerrito, second by Beach, the first reading of the ordinance was approved with the following poll vote: Beach-yes, Beyer-yes, Cerrito-yes, Mercado-Miller-yes, Robenolt-yes

Ord. 1199 Ordinance of the Borough of Barrington, County of Camden and State of New Jersey, Authorizing a Tax Abatement Agreement Between the Borough of

Barrington and 102 Clements Bridge, LLC, Pursuant to Chapter 313 of the Borough Code

On a motion by Mercado-Miller, second by Cerrito, the first reading of the ordinance was approved with the following poll vote: Beach-yes, Beyer-yes, Cerrito-yes, Mercado-Miller-yes, Robenolt-yes

Ord. 1200 Ordinance Amending the 2024 Non-Condemnation Redevelopment Plan Update for Phases I, II and III in the Borough of Barrington (2024 Redevelopment Plan Update) as it Relates to the Subject Property Identified as Block 49, Lot 12, Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12-6

On a motion by Robenolt, second by Mercado-Miller, the first reading of the ordinance was approved with the following poll vote: Beach-yes, Beyer-yes, Cerrito-yes, Mercado-Miller-yes, Robenolt-yes

Ord. 1201 Ordinance of the Borough of Barrington Amending Chapter 267, Rental Properties, in the Code of the Borough of Barrington

On a motion by Beach, second by Mercado-Miller the first reading of the ordinance was approved with the following poll vote: Beach-yes, Beyer-yes, Cerrito-abstain, Mercado-Miller-yes, Robenolt-yes.

Mayor Hanson announced that these ordinances will be considered for adoption following proper notice and a public hearing to be held during the February 11, 2025, council meeting

RESOLUTION CONSENT AGENDA

The Clerk read the following resolutions to be approved by consent agenda:

- 1-2025-17 Resolution to Approve the Application of 102 Clements Bridge, LLC, for a Tax Abatement Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:20-1 Et Seq., and Borough Ordinance 313-1 Et Seq., in Connection with a Certain Redevelopment Project
- 1-2025-18 Awarding a Contract for Animal Shelter Services for 2025
- 1-2025-19 Resolution Referring Certain Matters to the Barrington Planning Board for Review and Recommendations Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-26
- 1-2025-20 Authorizing Refund of Street Opening Escrows
- 1-2025-21 Resolution Adopting the Fourth Round of Affordable Housing Obligations or the Borough of Barrington
- 1-2025-22 Approving a Cash Management Plan for the Borough of Barrington
- 1-2025-23 Authorizing a Contract with E3 IT for IT Services
- 1-2025-24 Authorizing the Public Sale of Property No Longer Needed for Borough Operations
- 1-2025-25 Authorizing Agreement with Realtor for Marketing of Property
- 1-2025-26 Approving the January Bill List in the Amount of: \$992,911.79

On a motion by Robenolt, second by Beyer, the resolution consent agenda was approved with the following poll vote: Beach-yes, Beyer-yes, Cerrito-yes, Mercado-Miller-yes, Robenolt-yes

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Hanson advised that if you have comments or questions, please come forward and state your name for the record. Public comment is limited to five minutes per person. On a motion by Beach, second by Mercado-Miller, the public portion of the meeting was opened.

Barrington Mews residents in attendance who asked questions the following questions: Edward Billingham, Sarah Sheikman, Dawn Tilton, Theresa Coselli, Debra Cosey, Christine (last name unknown). How can the borough help them, is there anything new from AAH Management or proposed new owners, what about a rent control ordinance, what about the PILOT agreement you approved last month, what about the owners not picking up trash, or cleaning the building and the elevators smell like feces, when will the meeting minutes be available, what about the disabled under 62 years of age, doesn't each town by law have to have a certain amount of affordable housing? Why did you extend the PILOT agreement? The building was for sale for two years with no notice. Why don't you adopt a rent control ordinance which would limit how much they raise the rents.

Mayor and Council answered the questions presented to them. Mayor Hanson said the original PILOT agreement is with AAH Management and will be null and void with the new owners. If their apartments are market value, then they will not get a PILOT agreement and will have to pay regular taxes. On December 23, 2024, a letter was sent to current and proposed new owners advising that the borough intends to enforce the deed restriction, we have not heard back from the potential buyers and have no communication with the current owners. We are not sure where the sale stands. When asked about who they should pay their rent to they were advised by Mayor Hanson that tomorrow we are having a resource fair in town and legal services will be available to answer questions about your lease. Councilwoman Mercado-Miller added that other sources will be available at a later date for further legal services. Please keep in contact with the Councilwoman, the Mayor or Eileen and Meg who run senior services. Answering questions on affordable housing, the Mayor advised that he has reached out to The NJ Department of Community Affairs to see if the sale goes through, and the new owners make the units market rate how that would affect our numbers. He has not yet heard back from them but is hoping to have information at the next council meeting. With reference to a rent control ordinance Mayor Hanson advised it would not govern the new owners because it is past their legal period of due diligence, and it would not affect them and the rents in that building. For council meeting minutes all were advised that the minutes from this meeting will be available after they are approved at the February council meeting and will be available upon request and posted on the borough website. He advised that any legal questions as to the rights of the current renters should be asked to Volunteer Up at the Resource Fair being held tomorrow at the VFW Memorial Senior Center. Volunteer Up is prepped on the situation so they should come prepared to answer your questions.

Dawn Tilton presented a petition signed by more than 420 people and addressed to Governor Murphy regarding what is happening to the residents of the Mews. She read the petition to the Governing Body. Mayor Hanson responded that we are doing everything we can to help the residents. We did look into a rent control ordinance but because the new owner had already gotten past their legal period of due diligence, it would not apply to them. We have explored everything. Because it is a private sale, we are limited on how we can intervene. We have tried to communicate with management, but they do not respond to us. We are on your side. We have also reached out to various agencies to try to get help for residents with moving.

About health concerns, our board of health director has contacted the Camden County Board of Health to have them intervene. Councilwoman Mercado-Miller advised that after the December meeting, she did email the Board of Health but they did not respond to her email at the time; she will be happy to meet with the Mews residents after council and get the pictures they have.

Eileen Holcombe, Barrington Senior Coordinator – advised that the bus is running tomorrow every half hour to bring the Mews residents to the Resource Fair so please let everyone know. She advised that she did send information to the office and understands that they did not post it. We have mailed or emailed information to everyone we have an address or email address for. The

bus is handicapped accessible. She reiterated that Mayor & Council are doing everything they legally can, even though it doesn't seem that way, we are as dumbfounded as you as to how the office does not return our calls.

Peggy Reid – years ago SCUCS had shared housing. Eileen advised that SCUCS does have a new program for shared housing and they will be at the resource fair tomorrow. The Mayor will look into accessory dwellings.

Seeing no further comments from the public, on a motion by Cerrito, second by Mercado-Miller, the public portion of the meeting was closed.

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BODY

COUNCILMAN BEYER – good evening, lots of heavy, serious stuff going on. It's important for us to help everyone both personally and professionally. This is my first official council meeting, and I look forward to doing whatever I can for all the residents of town in all capacities.

COUNCILMAN CERRITO – it's a few council meetings now witnessing people coming forward about the Mews and what I am hearing is disgusting. Just because people are doing things according to the law, and hopefully the Mews is, it doesn't make it right. Sounds like you get better treatment at a fast-food restaurant than what you are getting. We do sympathize with you, and I guarantee our Mayor and Council are doing all we can as we are restricted and bound by the law. What is happening to you is sick and disgusting that conditions are not up to the standards you deserve.

COUNCILMAN ROBENOLT – echoed what Councilman Cerrito said. Hopefully in the near future we will get some type of information that will be helpful.

COUNCILWOMAN MERCADO-MILLER – happy 2025. I echo my fellow council members' comments; we are behind you and for you. We are doing all we can; if you feel we are not, do this again, and come to a meeting, that is what this forum is for. Our job is to develop a better town for you. Thanks to all employees and volunteers for their work throughout the past year and look forward to you continuing to help us in 2025. As the Mayor said, we are working diligently on the Mews situation. The Board of Health has a member meeting on the 7th and a Mayor's Wellness Campaign meeting on the 9th. If you would like to participate or provide feedback or suggestions, please contact us to join in the meetings. Our next board of health meeting is the 20th. For health and senior services reach out to me or for seniors Eileen and Meg.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT BEACH – I know for a fact that the Mayor and Councilwoman, along with the rest of council, are doing all we can to help with the Barrington Mews. Its not enough if our veterans, heroes and most vulnerable, seniors and disabled persons, end up in this kind of situation. We are in a legal bind but still doing all we can to help you. It's embarrassing that we are hitting the walls we are, we will keep you informed. If it were my parents, I would want Mayor Hanson and Councilwoman Mercado-Miller to have my back. It's disheartening to be in this situation. The Council President thanked Mayor and Council and all employees for the past year and look forward to a good year going forward.

MAYOR HANSON – echoed his earlier comments promising that we are working as hard as we can within legal means, we are trying however we can. We have the same issue as you with the barrier of communication where we can't reach every resident and realize a portion can't leave their apartment without assistance. We are not getting any help from management. We know from our last meeting they don't communicate with you or us. As a privately owned business we are not able to intervene as much as we would like to. The Resource Fair tomorrow is one of the steps we took to assist the Mews residents. We are here for you to call, leave a message and we will

get back to you. Councilwoman Mercado-Miller and the Mayor have taken any interviews they can with the media to get information out so those who can't attend may see it on CBS news or whoever picks it up and reach out to us. We are not able to promise you anything which is unfortunate, but we are working to help you.

Seeing no further business to be transacted, on a motion by Beach, second by Robenolt, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

APPROVED: Terry Shannon
Terry Shannon, Borough Clerk