

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Regular Meeting
MINUTES
February 25, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vallone called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. at the Far Hills Municipal Building and read the open public meetings statement in accordance with the law.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Vallone led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Carty, Chimenti, Hand, Karner, Surks, Tweedie, Vallone

Absent, as Excused:

Absent:

Also Present: Clerk Hicks, Chief DeCarolis, Attorney Sordillo, Planner Banisch, and representatives from the Matheny School

REPORTS

Councilman Hand – Fire, Water, Light, Buildings & Grounds

Councilman Hand reported that he and Clerk Hicks met with representatives from the VNA and Mr. Guy Torsilieri on February 13, 2019 to review potential solutions to address the flooding issues at the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds. He noted that efforts to identify the existing drainage pipe laterals were currently underway.

Councilwoman Tweedie – Health/Sanitation

Councilwoman Tweedie reported that, weather permitting, the Borough Sewer Consultant, Natural Systems Utilities would resume videotaping of the sanitary sewer system.

Councilwoman Tweedie stated that she attended the Suburban Municipal Joint Insurance Fund (SMJIF) meeting on February 14, 2019 where a topic of discussion was the recent cyber-attack on the email server at PERMA Risk Management. Councilwoman Tweedie noted that Borough employees have received cyber security training via the KnowBe4 software package in an effort to minimize the potential for email phishing cyber campaigns.

Councilman Surks – Roads

Councilman Surks reported that John Mantz, Director Bedminster DPW has been notified to make the necessary repairs to potholes on Minebrook Road. He added that some of the Borough's tertiary roads had to be temporarily closed during the recent storms, due to fallen trees and downed wires and commended the police department for their timely response and traffic control.

Councilman Carty – Finance/Insurance

Councilman Carty reminded the Borough Council to submit the 2019 budgets for their respective departments. Mayor Vallone added that he would be meeting with Clerk Hicks and CFO Stern on March 1, 2019 to begin preliminary budget discussions.

Councilwoman Chimenti – Laws, Ordinances & Elections

Councilwoman Chimenti reported that Municipal Court deposits for the month of January 2019 were \$9,799.72.

Council President Karner – Police

Council President Karner reported the recent completion of the Distracted Driver enforcement detail and noted that another enforcement detail, specific for St. Patrick's Day, would commence in March. He noted that PBA contract negotiations were continuing and was optimistic that a resolution would be reached in the next few weeks.

Chief Michael DeCarolis – Police

Chief DeCarolis echoed Councilman Surks' comments as police patrol had been diligent in keeping up with road closures as a result of the recent inclement weather. Mayor Vallone outlined recent power outage events that affected the Borough and commented that the new JCP&L liaison, Mr. Tom Haynes had been extremely communicative throughout these events. Chief DeCarolis commented that notifications to residents were made through the Nixle system.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the current status of the NJ Transit Gladstone Branch which had been out of service due to damaged transit utility poles. Clerk Hicks was asked to contact the NJ Transit liaison to ascertain when service would be restored. Council President Karner also commented that a rut had developed adjacent to the bus stop on the corner of Route 202 and Liberty Corner Road. Clerk Hicks was asked to contact the NJDOT and NJ Transit to review the area but in the interim, Bedminster DPW would be asked to make temporary remediation. Councilwoman Tweedie commented that there were prior discussions regarding the installation of a bus stop enclosure at this location. Mr. Sordillo recalled that NJ Transit had offered to make those improvements; however, would require substantial funding from the Borough of Far Hills.

Mayor Vallone

Mayor Vallone informed the Council that the Far Hills-Bedminster Fire Department and First Aid Squad Annual Dinner would be held on Saturday, April 6, 2019 at Trump National Golf Course.

Mayor Vallone addressed a comment made at a prior Borough Council meeting concerning the use of self-funding by a nearby municipality to meet its affordable housing mandate. Mayor Vallone stated that he personally spoke with the Mayor and Administrator of Harding Township and confirmed that the Township was not self-funding its affordable housing obligation at this time.

REGULAR AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2/11/19 – Regular Meeting

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Surks, was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content and release.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

CONSENT AGENDA

The items listed within the consent agenda portion of the meeting have been referred to the Borough Council for reading and study and are considered routine and will be enacted with one motion of the Borough Council with no separate discussion. If separate discussion is required, the item may be removed from the agenda by Borough Council action and placed on the regular agenda under new business.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolution 19-053 – Authorizing a Large Event Permit – Miles for Matheny
2. Resolution 19-054 – Authorizing Alcohol at Fairgrounds - VNA Sale Spring 2019
3. Resolution 19-055 – Authorizing Waiver for Sign Permit - VNA Sale Spring 2019
4. Resolution 19-056 – Authorizing Contribution to Raritan Headwaters Association
5. Resolution 19-057 – Authorizing Transfer of Funds
6. Resolution 19-058 – Payment of Bill List

Mr. Sordillo stated the Matheny School and Hospital attended a previous Borough Council meeting to propose holding their annual “Miles for Matheny” event at the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds. Chief DeCarolis stated that coordination with surrounding municipalities would be necessary as some activities planned included a 5K road race and cycling event that spanned outside of the Borough. Council President Karner stated that event coordinators for Matheny contacted Monsignor Puleo of St. Elizabeth’s Church and the event schedule was adjusted to accommodate Sunday church services.

Regarding Resolution 19-056, Mr. Sordillo advised the contribution to the Raritan Headwaters Association was supported solely by the Clean Communities grant and not funded by Borough taxes.

Regarding Resolution 19-057, Mr. Sordillo advised that a transfer of funds was necessary to address the Borough’s share of the expenses for a Special Master appointed by the NJ Supreme Court to review the affordable housing agreements.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Hand that Resolutions 19-053 through 19-058 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Hand, Karner, Surks, Tweedie

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Representatives from the Matheny School and Hospital left the meeting at this time.

DISCUSSION

Borough Planner David Banisch provided an overview of the proposed Accessory Use Solar Photovoltaic Energy Systems Ordinance submitted by the Planning Board for consideration by the Borough Council. A general discussion ensued regarding setbacks, net metering systems, buffering and grandfathering provisions for the installation of roof and ground mounted solar panels. A general consensus indicated that notification to property owners prior to installation of either ground or roof mounted solar panels within the Borough was paramount. Mr. Banisch was directed to make the necessary revisions regarding the notification requirements as well as the inclusion of parameters to provide guidance to the Zoning Officer when initially reviewing applications. The revised Ordinance would be presented to the Planning Board for review at their next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT – *The Mayor and Council welcome comments from any member of the public. To help facilitate an orderly meeting and to permit the opportunity for anyone who wishes to be heard, speakers shall limit their comments to 5 minutes.*

Dr. George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, Far Hills expressed concern as to the level of communication and transparency afforded to residents during discussions regarding the proposed affordable housing developments in the Borough.

Rick Rinzler, 11 Hurlingham Road, Far Hills commended the Borough Council on their transparency during the numerous affordable housing discussions held at Council meetings.

Janine Silberberg, 90 Hidden Valley Road, Far Hills echoed the sentiments of Dr. Mellendick and expressed concern for the potential of overcrowding in the school district as a result of the affordable housing developments.

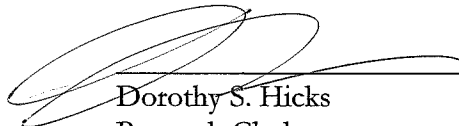
Ed Coury, 100 Lake Road, Far Hills expressed concern over the density of the affordable housing development. He detailed the correlation between the potential increase in school aged children and the need for additional municipal services required to accommodate this population growth with the potential for an increase in municipal taxes.

There were no further comments from the public.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Council President Karner and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 3/25/19