

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Reorganization Meeting
MINUTES
January 6, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vallone called the meeting to order at 6:04 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: Councilman Joseph Carty, Councilwoman Mary Chimenti, Councilman Richard Hand, Councilman David Karner, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie, Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD

Absent, as Excused:

Absent:

Also Present: Borough Clerk Dorothy S. Hicks, Borough Attorney Joseph Sordillo, Chief of Police Michael DeCarolis

HONORED GUESTS

Senator Thomas Kean, Jr., Somerset County Republican Organization Chair Al Gabura

REGULAR AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 20-001 – Appointment – Borough Council – Ted McLean

Mr. Sordillo provided a brief overview of the municipal vacancy law and noted that the term of this appointment would be until the next general election to be held in November, 2020 where the remainder of the three year term, expiring December 31, 2022 would be on the ballot.

Motion by Councilman Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie that Resolution 20-001 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Hand, Karner, Tweedie

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

OATH OF OFFICE

Senator Thomas Kean, Jr. administered the Oath of Office to Ted McLean as a member of the Borough Council for a term expiring at the next general election to be held November, 2020.

Senator Thomas Kean, Jr. administered the Oath of Office to David Karner as a member of the Borough Council for a three-year term expiring December 31, 2022.

ELECTION OF BOROUGH COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Carty to nominate Councilman Karner as Council President for a one-year term expiring December 31, 2020.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Hand, McLean, Tweedie

Nay:

Abstain: Karner

Motion Carried.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor's Address – State of the Borough:

Distinguished guests, members of the Borough Council, Ladies and Gentlemen, Neighbors and Friends.

Good evening and welcome to the 2020 Reorganization Meeting for the Borough of Far Hills. As we begin 2020, let me first take this opportunity to wish you and your family's health, happiness and prosperity in the year to come.

As we begin 2020, I want to thank the residents of Far Hills for their continued support of me and this Council, of whom I am very proud. I want to also congratulate Council President David Karner on his re-election this past November and to welcome Councilman Ted McLean as the newest member of the Council. I thank the Council for working collaboratively and utilizing their strengths and talents for the betterment of all the residents of Far Hills. I also want to thank the members of the Planning Board, Board of Health and all our professionals who contribute so much to the Borough. To our Administration, our Borough Clerk Dorothy Hicks and to her staff who go above and beyond to ensure that the business of government runs smoothly. To our Chief of Police Michael DeCarolis and his team of talented and dedicated officers who safeguard our Borough and its residents.

Before we look forward to 2020, let's take a brief look back. 2019 was an extremely busy year, the majority of which was dedicated to Affordable Housing. Working collaboratively with our professionals, especially our Borough Attorney Joseph Sordillo and our Borough Planner David Banisch, we have worked diligently to address our Supreme Court mandated responsibilities, a mandate which has been a topic of great debate and discussion, not only here in Far Hills but throughout the state of New Jersey. We have made great progress and will continue to secure the best possible outcome for our residents through working with our residents while also adhering to the Courts constant oversight.

We have completed the Douglas Road Improvements project, working collaboratively with our neighbors in Bernards Township and will continue to do this in 2020 with the Minebrook Road Improvements project. Through the utilization of grants from the NJDOT we are being ever mindful of completing these expensive projects with the least impact on our taxpayers.

2019 saw the completion of two successful VNA Rummage Sales which helps to benefit our residents in need of medical support.

The Essex Horse Trials and the Far Hills Race Meet were both very well attended providing monies for various charities in and around our area, that benefit our residents. In conjunction with our Police

Department and surrounding police and county forces, we have continued to make this a much more family friendly and enjoyable equestrian event.

For the third year in a row, our municipal tax rate continues to be one of the lowest in the state of New Jersey, something we are very proud of and work hard to maintain. By utilizing cooperative purchasing, monitoring and certifying the number of school children and maximizing shared service agreements with our neighboring municipalities, I and this Council will continue to be extremely fiscally prudent. I want to thank our CFO Debi Stern and our auditors Nisivoccia for their guidance as well.

Due to the tremendous efforts of Council President Karner and Councilman Carty, we have a new five year PBA contract with our police force continuing to provide our residents with the officers they know and trust, which is very important to our residents, all while being fiscally prudent.

2019 saw some personnel changes and to those who have retired or relocated, we wish them well. We extend a warm welcome our new employee, Shana Goodchild as Planning Board secretary.

So what lies ahead as we begin the new decade? In 2020, we are working with our Construction Department to obtain software that will enhance our ability to monitor projects throughout the Borough and streamline and further implement new state requirements. Proposals are currently being reviewed. We will continue to work with our police department to provide the latest software programs and technology to augment those already in place and which upgrades are required by state and national enforcement agencies.

We will continue to move forward with the final components of our Affordable Housing obligation and we will, over the next several months, fully satisfy the Courts and Fair Share Housing Centers requirements so that Far Hills is protected through court immunity. We will continue to do so with public input and in a fiscally responsible and esthetically pleasing manner.

We will continue to improve the Borough website which has made excellent progress and will do so without subjecting the Borough to tens of thousands of dollars in technical support and IT costs to the taxpayer. Again, I want to thank Dorothy Hicks for her efforts here.

Plans are in place to address drainage issues in town, which are planned to commence in the spring. Additionally, the drainage issues at the Fairgrounds will also be reviewed. Plans are also in the works to enhance the Fairgrounds and Councilman Hand will be spearheading those initiatives.

We continue to maintain an independent court system which is financially positive for the Borough and I thank Councilwoman Chimenti for her input. I also want to thank Councilwoman Tweedie who will be beginning a video impact study of the Borough's sewer system in order to fix leaks and address issues which, in turn reduce our long term costs.

We will continue to preserve the charm and character of our Borough, to remember its history and to prepare for our 100th anniversary celebration which will happen in April of 2021. Council President Karner and my wife, Janis will co-chair that event. I also want to thank my wife Janis for her continuing support which is invaluable.

In conclusion, Far Hills continues to be in excellent health, and I, this Council and administration will continue to work with you the residents, to hear your thoughts and ideas so we can continue to work

together going forward in a positive manner. By doing so, we can surmount any challenge and together very confidently move into 2020.

Thank you and God Bless America!

Paul J. Vallone, MD
Mayor Borough of Far Hills

Senator Thomas Kean, Jr. left the meeting at this time.

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 20-002 – Establishing Rules and Procedures for the Conduct of Business at Borough Council Meetings
2. Resolution 20-003 – Establishing 2020 Borough Council Meeting Dates
3. Resolution 20-004 – Designation of Official Newspapers
4. Resolution 20-005 – Temporary Appropriations for Operating Purposes
5. Resolution 20-006 – Tax Grace & Interest on Delinquent Taxes
6. Resolution 20-007 – Designation of Depositories for Borough Funds
7. Resolution 20-008 – Designation of Signatories for Borough Accounts
8. Resolution 20-009 – Authorization of Payroll Signatures
9. Resolution 20-010 – Authorizing Opening of Petty Cash Account
10. Resolution 20-011 – Authorizing Mileage Reimbursement
11. Resolution 20-012 – Authorizing Municipal Attorney to File Corrective Appeals with the Somerset County Board of Taxation
12. Resolution 20-013 – Authorizing Flexible Spending Account
13. Resolution 20-014 – Authorizing Mileage Stipend
14. Resolution 20-015 – Authorizing the CFO to Approve Payment of Bills
15. Resolution 20-016 – Authorizing Tax Collector to Cancel Tax Payments/Refunds
16. Resolution 20-017 – Appointment – Personnel
17. Resolution 20-018 – Appointment – Boards, Committees and Commissions
18. Resolution 20-019 – Appointment – Recommendations to the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders
19. Resolution 20-020 – Appointment – Somerset County Wastewater Management Planning Committee
20. Resolution 20-021 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Attorney DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC
21. Resolution 20-022 – Professional Services Contract, Bond Counsel Hawkins Delafield & Wood, LLP
22. Resolution 20-023 – Professional Services Contract, Certified Municipal Recycling Coordinator Kevin Murray
23. Resolution 20-024 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Engineer Ferriero Engineering

CONSENT AGENDA, continued

24. Resolution 20-025 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Labor Counsel
Trimboli & Prusinowski, LLC
25. Resolution 20-026 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Planner
Banisch Associates, Inc.
26. Resolution 20-027 – Professional Services Contract, Environmental Engineer
Natural Systems Utilities, Inc.
27. Resolution 20-028 – Professional Services Contract, Municipal Accountant/Auditor
Nisivoccia, LLP
28. Resolution 20-029 – Professional Services Contract, Municipal Prosecutor
DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC
29. Resolution 20-030 – Appointment, Alternate Municipal Prosecutor
DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC
30. Resolution 20-031 – Professional Services Contract, Municipal Public Defender
Mitzner & Mitzner, PA
31. Resolution 20-032 – Professional Services Contract, Alternate Municipal Public Defender
Kuchinsky and Rotunno, PC
32. Resolution 20-033 – Professional Services Contract, Reassessment Services
Assessor Services, LLC
33. Resolution 20-034 – Professional Services Contract, Special Counsel
Jeffrey R. Surenian and Associates, LLC
34. Resolution 20-035 – Professional Services Contract, Court Interpreter
Haydee Ballester
35. Resolution 20-036 – Professional Services Contract, Alternate Court Interpreter
Accurate Language Services, LLC
36. Resolution 20-037 – Professional Services Contract, HR Consultant
Searing Associates, LLC
37. Resolution 20-038 – Award of Contract – Community Health Services
VNA of Somerset Hills
38. Resolution 20-039 – Award of Contract – Information Technology Services
ATON Computing, Inc.
39. Resolution 20-040 – Confirming Resignation – Planning Board

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Hand that Resolutions 20-002 through 20-040 be approved.

Roll Call:

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

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION

Borough Council Committee Appointments for 2020

Mayor Vallone reviewed the appointments for 2020 and it was the consensus of the Borough Council that the appointments be accepted.

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.*

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Council President Karner to open the meeting to public comment.

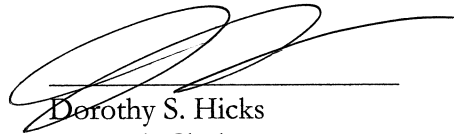
There were no comments from the public.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie to close the meeting to public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dorothy S. Hicks', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 1-27-2020