

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Regular Meeting
MINUTES
June 22, 2020
VIA CONFERENCE CALL ONLY

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vallone called the conference call meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. 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, Council President David Karner, Councilman Ted McLean, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie, Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD

Absent, as Excused:

Absent:

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

REPORTS

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

Councilman Hand reported on issues regarding the recycling at the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds and the municipal building. He requested that vendors be required to breakdown or dispose of their recycling materials. Councilman Hand indicated that he reached out to Somerset County to obtain additional recycling containers to be utilized at the Fairgrounds. He also requested that an increase from \$17.50 to \$20.00 per visit be authorized for the contract with Mr. Dan McCollum, who processes the recycling for the Borough. There was a general consensus that the increase was acceptable.

With regard to the overgrowth and weeds at the ball field and playground area he indicated that Bedminster DPW Director, John Mantz had been contacted to groom the ball field after a weed treatment was applied and Baza Landscaping would be contacted to weed and freshen the mulch at the playground.

Councilwoman Tweedie – Health/Sanitation

Councilwoman Tweedie reported that a meeting to review the Borough's sewer ordinance for potential updates and revisions, pertaining to sewer charges when a leak into the sanitary sewer system has occurred, was scheduled for the first week in July.

Councilman McLean – Roads

Councilman McLean reported on the Mine Brook Road project, a joint road project with Bernards Township, and noted that the plans were to be submitted to the NJDOT for review and pending their approval the project would be bid.

Ms. Hicks informed the Council that a preconstruction meeting was scheduled for June 23, 2020 with Somerset County regarding the Douglas Road F1201 Bridge and Mr. Steve Bolio, Ferriero Engineering would be attending on behalf of the Borough.

Councilman Carty – Finance/Insurance

No report.

Councilwoman Chimenti – Laws, Ordinances, & Elections

Councilwoman Chimenti reported that the Court has been operational and functioning with the utilization of Zoom meetings for some proceedings.

She added that there was a Resolution on tonight's agenda regarding a new hire for the Violations Clerk position.

Council President Karner – Police

Council President Karner noted that the Resolution authorizing the purchase of the new police vehicle was on tonight's agenda.

He stated that there was a group of approximately 25 people was recently utilizing the fairgrounds and inquired if the Chief was aware of this activity. Chief DeCarolis responded that he was not.

Council President Karner also informed the Council of some upcoming personnel changes in the Police Department and the commencement of recruitment for a Patrol Officer and Class II Officer.

Lastly, Council President Karner informed the Council that Far Hills resident Ms. Mary Burns passed away recently.

Chief DeCarolis

Chief DeCarolis indicated that the Class II Officer position was recently advertised.

He also indicated that the WatchGuard Evidence Management System had been installed and training was scheduled this week.

Mayor Vallone

Mayor Vallone reported that he had been in touch with the Governor's office regarding the limits on outdoor gatherings. Currently the limit is 100 people, which is expected to increase to 250 next week, and possibly 500 by July 3, 2020. He indicated that this was vital due to the large events that were held in the Borough. Mayor Vallone stated that he would be meeting with representatives from the VNA and the Far Hills Race Association to review their respective events in consideration of the current executive orders and health advisories.

He apprised the Council that he also reached out to the Borough's Risk Manager, Human Resources Officer and Mr. Sordillo to review policies for the gradual reopening of the municipal building to the public.

**REGULAR AGENDA
APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

6/8/20 Regular Minutes

Motion by Councilman Hand, seconded by Councilman McLean was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content and release.

6/8/20 – Executive Session Minutes

Motion by Councilman Hand, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content only.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION

ORDINANCE 2020-10 – AN ORDINANCE GRANTING RENEWAL OF MUNICIPAL CONSENT TO COMCAST TO CONSTRUCT, CONNECT, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A CABLE TELEVISION AND COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM IN THE BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS, COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY.

Mr. Sordillo requested that the Ordinance 2020-10 be carried to the July 13, 2020 as the review by the BPU was still pending.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie and unanimously carried to carry the public hearing of Ordinance 2020-10 to the July 13, 2020 Borough Council meeting.

ORDINANCE 2020-11 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2013-03, REVISING AND UPDATING THE BOROUGH’S PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING CANVASSING, PEDDLING AND SOLICITATION THROUGHOUT THE BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Hand and unanimously carried to open the public hearing.

There were no comments from the public.

Ms. Hicks advised that the notice of the public hearing was published in the newspaper of record, and that no communication, either written or verbal was received regarding the Ordinance.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie and unanimously carried to close the public hearing.

Motion by Councilman Hand, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti that Ordinance 2020-11 be adopted.

Roll Call:

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

Nay:

Abstain:

Recused:

Motion Carried.

ORDINANCE 2020-13 – AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$37,463.27 FOR POLICE SUV.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Hand and unanimously carried to open the public hearing.

There were no comments from the public.

Ms. Hicks advised that the notice of the public hearing was published in the newspaper of record, and that no communication, either written or verbal was received regarding the Ordinance.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Hand and unanimously carried to close the public hearing.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Carty that Ordinance 2020-13 be adopted.

Roll Call:

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

Nay:

Abstain:

Recused:

Motion Carried.

**NEW BUSINESS
RESOLUTIONS**

Resolution 20-090 – Authorizing Consent for Water Quality Management Plan Amendment Application to NJDEP and Somerset County – Errico Acres Property

Mr. Sordillo provided a brief overview and explained that the Borough was only consenting to the submission of the application to the NJDEP and Somerset County, and advised that municipal consent for the application submission was required by statute.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Hand that Resolution 20-090 be approved.

Roll Call:

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

Nay:

Abstain:

Recused:

Motion Carried.

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 20-091 – Authorizing Issuance of Towing License - Mike's Towing & Recovery, Inc.

2. Resolution 20-092 – Authorizing Interlocal Agreement – Somerset County Recycling
3. Resolution 20-093 – Authorizing Purchase of Police SUV
4. Resolution 20-094 – Appointment – Violations Clerk – Municipal Court
5. Resolution 20-095 – Payment of Bill List

Chief DeCarolis commented that the application for Mike's Towing was reviewed and deemed acceptable.

Mayor Vallone asked Councilwoman Chimenti to comment on Resolution 20-094. Councilwoman Chimenti stated that an applicant had been recommended to Court Administrator, Marjorie Freeman by the Court vicinage.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the Violations Clerk and Deputy Court Administrator positions within the Municipal Court.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Carty that Resolutions 20-091 through 20-095 be approved.

Roll Call:

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

Nay:

Abstain:

Recused:

Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION

Mine Brook Road Improvements Project

Ms. Hicks provided a brief overview of the project.

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 Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie and unanimously carried to open the meeting to public comment.

Edward Grimes, 84 Hanover Road, East Hanover

Mr. Grimes inquired if medical cannabis had been banned in the Borough and expressed concern for the ease of accessibility for medical cannabis for wheelchair bound individuals.

Mr. Sordillo responded that Ordinance 2020-12 was introduced which authorized a ban on the commercial use of medical or recreational marijuana in the Borough. He noted that since it was a zoning ordinance it had to be reviewed by the Planning Board prior to the public hearing. It was noted that the public hearing was scheduled for the July 13, 2020 Borough Council meeting.

Council President Karner inquired if Mr. Grimes worked with an association that represented patients in need of medical marijuana and his interest in Far Hills, as he was a resident of East Hanover.

Mr. Grimes responded that he was a member of a group that advocates for medical marijuana for critically ill patients.

Hugh Giordano, 57 Argyle Avenue, Blackwood NJ

Mr. Giordano commented that he represented the United Food and Commercial Workers Union - Local 152 and expressed his opposition to Ordinance 2020-12, which would ban medical and recreational cannabis in the Borough of Far Hills.

He commented that by banning marijuana in the Borough would adversely affect workers which the UFCW Union represents from seed to sale. He provided information on the number of jobs cannabis has created as well as the tax revenue these business provide to many municipalities. Lastly, he suggested a visit to the Garden State Dispensary in Woodbridge, NJ might be beneficial to the Borough Council.

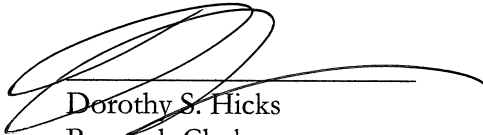
Mayor Vallone thanked the members of the public for their comments.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Council President Karner and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 7/13/2020