

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Regular Meeting
MINUTES
January 25, 2021
VIA REMOTE MEETING ACCESS ONLY

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vallone called the remote meeting to order at 7:05 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: Councilwoman Mary Chimenti, Council President David Karner,
Councilman Ted McLean, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie,
Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD

Absent, as Excused: Councilman Joseph Carty, Councilman Richard Hand

Absent:

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

REPORTS

Councilwoman Tweedie – Health/Sanitation

Councilwoman Tweedie reported that due to the heavy snowstorm and accumulation of surface water the Borough's sanitary flows were higher than normal. The Borough Environmental Engineer, Natural Systems Utilities would be inspecting the manholes for signs of inflow and infiltration (I&I) and any recommendations for repairs would be submitted to the Borough for consideration.

Councilman McLean – Roads

No report.

Councilwoman Chimenti – Laws, Ordinances & Elections

Councilwoman Chimenti reported Municipal Court deposits for the month of December 2020 were \$1,987.46 and attributed the decrease to the cancellations of cases due to the holidays.

Council President Karner – Police

Council President Karner provided an update on the Borough's 100th Anniversary Event indicating that the festivities may need to be scaled back due to COVID-19 restrictions for large gatherings.

Chief DeCarolis – Police

Chief DeCarolis informed the Borough Council that the December 2020 Police Report had been submitted and year-end reporting had been completed. He indicated that Detective Merkle was doing an exceptional job on his deployment to the Somerset County Narcotics Task Force, and was anticipated to return to the Far Hills Police Department on July 1, 2021.

Mayor Vallone

Mayor Vallone provided a brief update on COVID testing and vaccination sites in Somerset County. He acknowledged the efforts of Council President Karner and his wife, Janis Pulton-Vallone as co-

chairs of the 100th Anniversary event. He indicated that the installation of the time capsule and a proclamation would occur on May 15, 2021, however, the picnic celebration would be postponed if the COVID protocols continue to prohibit large gatherings.

Mayor Vallone reported he received a letter from First Energy regarding the replacement of telephone poles and lines and would provide the information to Ms. Hicks for posting on the Borough website.

REGULAR AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1/4/21 – Reorganization Meeting

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

1/4/21 - Regular Meeting

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

REGULAR AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES – INTRODUCTION

ORDINANCE 2021-01 - AN ORDINANCE UPDATING AND AMENDING SECTION 916 ENTITLED “STORMWATER MANAGEMENT” OF THE BOROUGH’S LAND MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE (REPEALING AND REPLACING ORDINANCE NO. 2006-06) PURSUANT TO THE NJDEP’S AMENDED STORMWATER MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS.

Mr. Sordillo provided a brief overview and indicated that the revisions were being mandated by the NJDEP. In collaboration with the Borough Engineer, Paul Ferriero, the Ordinance was prepared and incorporated the general provisions of the NJDEP model ordinance. He advised the Borough Council of the approval process per the Municipal Land Use Law as well as the additional requirement of obtaining approval of the Ordinance by the Somerset County Planning Board upon adoption by the Borough Council.

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Council President Karner that Ordinance 2021-01 be introduced.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

ORDINANCE 2021-02 - AN ORDINANCE UPDATING AND AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2020-07 TO ADDRESS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURT AND THE FINDINGS OF THE COURT’S SPECIAL MASTER IN CONNECTION WITH THE BOROUGH’S AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMPLIANCE APPROVAL.

Mr. Sordillo provided a brief overview and indicated that as directed by the Special Court Master and a condition of the Courts Judgment of Compliance and Repose revisions were required of the

Borough's general Affordable Housing Ordinance. He reviewed the revisions that were prepared by himself, Borough Planner, David Banisch and the Borough Special Council for Affordable Housing, Surenian, Edwards & Nolan.

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Council President Karner that Ordinance 2021-02 be introduced.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

ORDINANCE 2021-03 - ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS APPROPRIATING \$300,000.00 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND TO THE BOROUGH'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS.

Mr. Sordillo provided an overview of the Ordinance and explained the fund accounting for the subsidy payment and schedule for the Hotz Development.

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman McLean that Ordinance 2021-03 be introduced.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 21-044 – Authorizing First Amendment to Affordable Housing Agreement - The Matheny School and Hospital

Mr. Sordillo provided an overview of the amendment, which addresses the payment of the sewer connection fees for this development. He indicated the Matheny School and Hospital would pay the Borough of Far Hills fifty (50) percent of the cost for the sewer connection fees over a fifteen-year period.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman McLean that Resolution 21-044 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie

Nay:

Abstain:

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.

1. Resolution 21-045 – Authorizing Redemption of Tax Sale Lien – B13 L2
2. Resolution 21-046 – Authorizing Release of Performance Bond and Acceptance of Maintenance Bond - ADG Contracting Corporation
3. Resolution 21-047 – Authorizing Refund Planning Board Escrows – Various Accounts
4. Resolution 21-048 – Authorizing Adjustment to Sewer Charges – Various Accounts
5. Resolution 21-049 – Payment of Bill List

Councilman McLean requested that Resolution 21-048 be removed from the Consent Agenda to the Regular Agenda.

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Council President Karner that Resolutions 21-045-21-047, and 21-049 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

REGULAR AGENDA

RESOLUTIONS, continued

Resolution 21-048 – Authorizing Adjustment to Sewer Charges – Various Accounts

Mr. Sordillo informed the Borough Council that based upon the recent revisions to the Sewer Ordinance there were now provisions to address adjustments to sewer charges attributed to water leaks.

Councilman McLean inquired about the formula utilized to calculate the sewer adjustments. Mr. Sordillo responded that the ordinance detailed the formula as well as provided examples of sewer adjustment calculations.

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti that Resolutions 21-048 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, Tweedie, Vallone

Nay:

Abstain:

Recused: McLean

Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION

Moorland Farm Event – Skeet Flurry Shoot

Mr. Guy Torsielieri indicated that the Borough Council had previously approved a skeet-shooting event in the fall 2020, and was asking preliminary approval to hold a second skeet-shooting event on May 6, 2021 in order to adequately promote the event. Mr. Torsilieri was cognizant of required compliance of the COVID protocols regarding large gatherings. He estimated that there would be 200 in attendance and the event would be held from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Mr. Sordillo advised that based upon the presentation this evening, a memorializing resolution authorizing the event could be presented at the next Council meeting.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie that based upon the presentation this evening, a private, invitational clay-shooting competition event to be held at Moorland Farm on May 6, 2021 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

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 to open the meeting to public comment.

Rick Rinzler, 11 Hurlingham Club Road, Far Hills stated the Mayor's address to the residents as well as the Chief of Police's letter, both which were included in the recent Newsletter mailing, were uplifting and much appreciated in these difficult times.

Charles Schwester, 410 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired as to the total cost to the Borough for the Hotz Development affordable housing projects; the sewer connection fees for the Matheny Group home project and a status update on the Errico Acres development specifically regarding soil analysis and percolation testing. Mr. Schwester suggested that the Borough request accurate percolation testing for the development.

Mr. Sordillo responded that the subsidy payments to the Hotz Development totaled \$600,000.00. The value of the subdivided portion of the property at 46 Peapack Road donated to the Hotz Development was estimated at \$350,000.00. Mr. Sordillo indicated that the estimated cost to the sewer connection fee was \$200,000.00 and Matheny would be paying fifty percent of that cost.

Mr. Sordillo advised that the developer for the Errico Acres site had submitted an application to the NJDEP and clarified that the Borough would only be informed of the test results and would not be apprised of the type or timing of tests required by the NJDEP.

George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired as to requests for approval required by the Planning Board for the Errico Acres development.

Mr. Sordillo clarified that the Planning Board has not received an application for this development. The only application filed was submitted by the developer to the NJDEP for an onsite treatment plan.

Jack Koury, 11 Far Hills Avenue, Far Hills expressed that he was not in favor of the skeet shooting event due to the noise disturbance. He also inquired as to the start of construction for the Matheny Group home at the Peapack Road site, and if natural gas would be provided to the development. He offered his appreciation to the Council for their leadership and communication during the pandemic.

Mr. Sordillo commented that Matheny had received the necessary approvals to begin construction but opined that it may not start until this spring. Council President Karner responded that the extension of the natural gas line was previously looked into and recommended that a letter of interest from residents to PSE&G might be beneficial.

George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired as to the responsibility of the healthcare necessary to the residents of the Matheny Group home and inquired if there were any expectations that it would be provided by Far Hills. He inquired about the minutes of the Planning Board and the Borough Council meetings held on January 4, 2021.

Mayor Vallone responded the Matheny School & Hospital would be providing professional staffing who would be responsible for the care of their residents. Mr. Sordillo responded there were actually four separate meetings due to the Reorganization and Regular meetings for both the Borough Council and Planning Board.

Karen Reilly, 7 Fox Hunt Court, Far Hills commented that she had previously contacted PSE&G several year ago for natural gas connection on her street and was unsuccessful. She also informed the Council of a hole in the concrete structure along Route 202 north of the train tracks. She also noted that water collects on the southbound side near the culvert on Route 202. Lastly, she inquired as to the Borough's cyber security protocol and if there were any issues with ransom ware.

Mayor Vallone thanked Ms. Reilly for bringing these matters to the Council's attention and directed Chief DeCarolis to review each of the situations. He responded the Borough's IT consultant had implemented the appropriate cyber security measures and there have been no ransom ware issues.

There were no further comments from the public.

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Council President Karner 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 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED - 2/8/21