

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Regular Meeting
MINUTES
February 28, 2022
Via Remote Meeting Access Only

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vallone called the remote 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 Ted McLean, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie, Councilman Kevin Welsh, Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD

Absent, as Excused: Councilman Joseph Carty, Councilwoman Mary Chimenti, Council President David Karner

Absent:

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

REPORTS

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

Councilman Welsh reported he would be reviewing the track at the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds as there were some reports of damage sustained during the winter storms.

He informed the Borough Council that the Recreation Committee met over the weekend and discussed the potential for a Community Cleanup Day in the spring. He also noted that the Committee suggested additional signage at the fairgrounds as there were concerns regarding dogs running off leash as well as owners not cleaning up after their pets.

Councilwoman Tweedie – Health/Sanitation

Councilwoman Tweedie reported the Sanitary Transmission Advisory Board (STAB) approved the 2022 Budget at its meeting on February 16, 2022. She expressed her appreciation to the Borough Council for their support of the necessary increases in the budget for capital and operational improvements. She noted that the budget would also need to be approved by each of the member municipalities: Bedminster Township, Borough of Far Hills, and the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone. The increases in both the capital and operating budgets would provide the necessary improvements and routine maintenance of the pumping station facility located in Bedminster Township. Councilwoman Tweedie noted that due to the Borough's ongoing maintenance to reduce Inflow and Infiltration (I&I), the Borough's portion of the STAB budget costs would be less than 10%. She stated STAB would continue to meet quarterly, with the next meeting planned for April 13, 2022.

Lastly, she reported she would be meeting with Borough CFO, Debra Stern in March to review the Borough's Sewer Budget.

Councilman McLean – Roads

Councilman McLean expressed his appreciation to Councilwoman Tweedie for her keen attention to the sewer facilities for the Borough of Far Hills. With regard to the roads, he reported the Bedminster DPW was contacted to remediate potholes along Douglas Road.

Chief DeCarolis – Police

Chief DeCarolis reported the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) would be sponsoring the annual Drug Take Back Day in April 2022.

Councilman McLean inquired as to process to dispose of various medications.

Chief DeCarolis provided a brief overview of the DEA program and indicated that the Borough also has a secure drop-off container located at Police Headquarters which is available 24/7. He continued to briefly describe methods for the proper disposal of both pill and liquid medications.

Councilwoman Tweedie added that medications should never be flushed down the toilet as doing so could adversely affect the water supply and environment.

Mayor Vallone

Mayor Vallone reported he would be meeting with the Borough CFO, Debra Stern on March 1, 2022 to review the 2022 Budget.

He stated that he, Councilman Welsh, Chief DeCarolis and Ms. Hicks attended the presale meeting with representatives from the Atlantic Visiting Nurse Association on February 17, 2022. Preparations were underway for the Spring 2022 Rummage Sale to be held at the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds.

He informed the Borough Council that Judge Mark S. Adler would be retiring and has tendered his resignation. Mayor Vallone expressed his appreciation to Judge Adler who has served the Borough of Far Hills with the utmost professionalism and decorum.

REGULAR AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

02/14/22 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Councilman Welsh, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie, was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content and release.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 22-052 – Appointment of Municipal Court Judge

Mayor Vallone stated he, Councilwoman Chimenti and Chief DeCarolis met with Ms. Katty C. Wong-Taylor and were confident that she would be a welcomed addition to the Far Hills Municipal Court.

Motion by Councilman Welsh, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie that Resolution 22-052 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: McLean, Tweedie, Welsh, Vallone

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Resolution 22-053 – Authorizing an Amendment to the Affordable Housing Spending Plan

Mr. Sordillo informed the Borough Council that the Special Court Master had requested some amendments to the verbiage in the Spending Plan, noting that there were no financial changes.

He also advised the Borough Council that a conference call was scheduled on March 4, 2022 with Judge Miller, Special Court Master and the attorneys for the Borough of Far Hills and Fair Share Housing. Mr. Sordillo anticipated that the Borough would receive a decision regarding the final judgement in early March.

Motion by Councilman McLean, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie that Resolution 22-053 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: McLean, Tweedie, Welsh, Vallone

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Resolution 22-054 – Payment of Bill List

Motion by Councilman McLean, seconded by Councilman Welsh that Resolution 22-054 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: McLean, Tweedie, Welsh, Vallone

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION

Moorland Farm – Skeet Flurry Event – Mr. Guy Torsilieri

This discussion item was tabled until the next Borough Council 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.*

Motion by Councilman Welsh, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie to open the meeting to public comment.

Charles Schwester, 410 Lake Road, Far Hills stated he continued to be discouraged that a full financial impact statement was not conducted regarding the Pulte/Residences at Overleigh development. He expressed his concern regarding the next round for affordable housing which would begin in 2025 and the manner in which this new obligation would be satisfied. He also questioned who on the Borough Council would be the first to relocate due to this development and the resulting increase in population and stated this development was going to have a lasting detrimental effect upon the Borough of Far Hills as we currently know it. Lastly, he inquired if Mayor Vallone was still in Florida and stated that there was a 180-day limit before a change in residency was necessary.

Mayor Vallone thanked Mr. Schwester for his comments and responded that he had no intention of leaving Far Hills.

Councilman McLean commented upon Mr. Schwester's continual protestations to the Pulte/Residences at Overleigh development after the project had already received approval from the Far Hills Planning Board.

Charles Schwester, 410 Lake Road, Far Hills responded that he has attended nearly every Borough Council meeting and with regard to the affordable housing developments has offered several recommendations and considered himself an advisor to the Borough Council.

There were no further comments from the public.

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Welsh to close the meeting to public comment.

Mayor Vallone expressed his appreciation to the Borough Council for their efforts to satisfy the Borough's court mandated affordable housing obligations.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilman McLean, seconded by Councilman Welsh was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 03/14/22