

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Regular Meeting
MINUTES
March 28, 2022
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, Councilman Kevin Welsh, Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD

Absent, as Excused: Councilman Joseph Carty

Absent:

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

REPORTS

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

Councilman Welsh provided an update on the improvement projects at the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds.

He informed the Borough Council the tents for the Atlantic Visiting Nurse Association Spring Rummage Sale were being installed this week and donations will take place from April 6-26, 2022. He also reported the Bedminster/Far Hills Easter Egg Hunt was returning this year and would take place on April 16, 2022, at the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds.

Council President Karner stated that one of the fairground signs along the fence needed to be resecured; Councilman Welsh agreed to take care of securing the sign.

Councilwoman Tweedie – Health/Sanitation

Councilwoman Tweedie reported she reviewed the Borough of Far Hills 2022 Sewer Budget with CFO, Debra Stern and confirmed there was adequate funding to complete the planned maintenance items which includes the sealing of three manhole covers, smoke testing of the sewer main and laterals in the Village area and along Peapack Road, as well as the jetting and video inspection of the sewer main along Peapack Road. These maintenance items help to reduce the inflow and infiltration into the sewer system. She added that the epoxy lining of the system was last replaced in 2000 and was performing satisfactorily but would need to be redone in the future and opined it would be an expensive undertaking.

Councilman McLean – Roads

Councilman McLean reported that a section of the sidewalk along Route 202 near the Far Hills/NJ Transit train station is a potential drainage issue as standing water has collected and frozen on several occasions. Mr. Sordillo advised that US Route 202 was a state highway and recommended reviewing with the Borough Engineer to ascertain the NJDOT right-of-way. Ms. Hicks was asked to provide the Borough Engineer's contact information to Councilman McLean.

Councilwoman Chimenti – Laws, Ordinances & Elections

Councilwoman Chimenti reported Municipal Court receipts for the month of February 2022 were \$3,087.16. She informed the Council that Judge Adler's last court date would be April 12, 2022, and she would work with Ms. Hicks to plan a celebration in honor of his retirement.

Council President Karner – Police

Council President Karner reviewed the February 2022 Police Report.

Chief Michael DeCarolis

Chief DeCarolis welcomed Mr. Brian Testa to the Far Hills Police Department and stated Officer Testa is a retired Sergeant of the Bernardsville Police Department and has twenty-five years of experience in law enforcement.

Mayor Vallone

Mayor Vallone reviewed the upcoming events that were planned to take place in the Borough and asked Ms. Hicks to add this information to the website. He stated a meeting was planned with the Borough CFO, Debra Stern later this week to finalize the 2022 Budget and anticipated it would be introduced at the next Borough Council meeting.

He expressed his appreciation to Judge Mark Adler and looked forward to welcoming Judge Katty Wong-Taylor.

REGULAR AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

03/14/22 Regular Meeting Minutes

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

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES

INTRODUCTION

ORDINANCE 2022-04 – AN ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti that Ordinance 2022-04 be introduced.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 22-059 – Appointment – Class II Officer

Council President Karner provided additional details of Mr. Brian Testa's qualifications and noted that his years of experience would serve as a mentorship to the younger officers.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman McLean that Resolution 22-059 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

OATH OF OFFICE

Ms. Hicks administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Brian Testa as Special Officer – Class II.

Officer Testa expressed his appreciation to the Mayor and Council for this opportunity and looked forward to becoming a member of the Far Hills Family.

CONSENT AGENDA

The items listed within the Consent Agenda portion of the meeting have been referred to the Borough Council for reading and study; a copy placed on the table in the meeting room and is considered routine and will be enacted with one motion 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.

Council President Karner stated that a few residents expressed concerns regarding the Skeet Flurry Event. A brief discussion ensued with Mayor Vallone suggesting that Council President Karner reach out to Mr. Guy Torsilieri regarding these concerns.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolution 22-060 – Authorizing Special Use Permit – Skeet Flurry Event - Moorland Farm
2. Resolution 22-061 – Authorizing Waiver Sign Permit – Atlantic Visiting Nurse
3. Resolution 22-062 – Certification of Compliance with EEOC Enforcement Guidance
4. Resolution 22-063 – Payment of Bill List

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Welsh that Resolutions 22-060 through 22-063 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Council President Karner indicated that the 2022 budget for the police department was being finalized and would reach out to Mayor Vallone later this week.

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.

Charles Schwester, 410 Lake Road, Far Hills commended the appointment of the new police officer. He also expressed that the objections to the skeet flurry event were displaced when considering the rural nature of Far Hills. Lastly, he expressed his concern regarding the oversight of the Pulte/Residences at Overleigh affordable housing development considering Mayor Vallone’s decision not to seek re-election.

George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired as to the Developer’s Agreement for the Pulte/Residences at Overleigh affordable housing development and commented that there was a lack of transparency or opportunity for the public to comment on the variances approved by the Planning Board.

Mr. Sordillo responded that a draft of the Developer’s Agreement was currently being reviewed by the respective legal representatives and anticipated it would take several weeks to be completed. He explained that the Developer’s Agreement was one of several conditions of approval set forth by the Planning Board. Mr. Sordillo further stated that members of the public have had an opportunity for public comment at each Planning Board meeting.

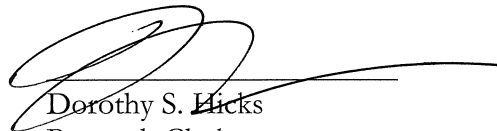
There were no further comments from the public.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman McLean to close the meeting to public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman McLean was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 4/11/22