

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Regular Meeting
MINUTES
May 9, 2022
Via Remote Meeting Access Only

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vallone called the remote meeting to order at 7:08 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, Council President David Karner, Councilman Kevin Welsh, Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD
Absent, as Excused: Councilman Ted McLean, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie
Absent:
Also Present: Borough Clerk Dorothy S. Hicks, Borough Attorney Joseph Sordillo, Chief of Police Michael DeCarolis, Borough CFO Debra Stern, Borough Auditor, Kathryn Mantell, Nisivoccia, LLP

REPORTS

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

Councilman Welsh reported the track and the fields at the J. Malcolm Belcher were in poor condition after the Atlantic Visiting Nurse (AVN) Rummage Sale and plans were underway to remediate the facilities.

The Recreation Committee was organizing a Community Clean-up Day on Sunday, May 22, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. and encouraged residents to volunteer. Information would be posted on the Borough website and sent to residents via Nixle.

Councilman Carty – Insurance

No report.

Councilwoman Chimenti – Laws, Ordinances & Elections

Councilwoman Chimenti reported everything went well as Judge Wong-Taylor presided over her first Municipal Court session on April 26, 2022.

Council President Karner – Police

Council President Karner reported due to the inclement weather the AVN Rummage Sale had to be cancelled on Saturday, May 7, 2022.

He acknowledged the extraordinary efforts of Officer Patrick Minardi as expressed through a letter of appreciation from Mike and Grace Crowley of Peapack Road.

Chief DeCarolis

Chief DeCarolis reported the DEA Drug Take Back event held on April 29, 2022, collected over eight pounds of medications. He reported that due to the closure of the Rummage Sale on May 7, 2022, the hours for May 8, 2022, with the agreement from Monsignor Puleo of St. Elizabeth's Church, were extended slightly to accommodate participants. Lastly, Chief DeCarolis provided a brief report of a few incidents that occurred during the Rummage Sale.

Mayor Vallone

Mayor Vallone expressed his appreciation to the Chief and Police Department for a well-organized AVN Rummage Sale.

Mayor Vallone advised the Borough Council and residents of two public meetings scheduled this week.

The first pertained to the NJDOT US Route 202 over the North Branch of the Raritan River Bridge Replacement Project. Representatives from the NJDOT would be holding a Public Information Center (PIC) on Tuesday, May 10, 2022, from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the Bedminster Township municipal building.

The second pertained to the NJDEP Solid Waste Facility Permit – Old Quarry Road Associates, LLC., a public hearing on the permit application would be held on Thursday, May 12, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Bernards High School Performing Arts Center.

Council President Karner inquired about the notification sent to the local businesses regarding the NJDOT Bridge Project. A brief discussion ensued regarding the notifications which were sent by the NJDOT resulting in a suggestion that a Nixle also be sent to inform residents and business owners.

REGULAR AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

04/25/22 Regular Meeting Minutes

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

BUDGET 2022 – Mayor's Statement

Mayor Vallone provided an overview of the 2022 Budget and expressed his appreciation to everyone who worked so conscientiously to develop a budget that not only serves our residents but is also fiscally responsible. He reviewed several of the capital projects and services included in this year's budget.

Borough Auditor, Kathryn Mantell of Nisivoccia, LLP concurred with the budget statements made by Mayor Vallone. She advised the Borough Council that every three years a review of the municipal budget is required by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and this year the Borough was reviewed. She indicated that the review identified that a Dedication by Rider for the collection of certain fees was necessary and would require authorization via a resolution by the Borough Council at a subsequent meeting.

She briefly reviewed the projections for this year's current fund, anticipated surplus and the sewer utility budget and commented that the Borough was on solid financial ground.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 22-072 – Budget by Title

Motion by Councilman Carty, seconded by Council President Karner that Resolution 22-072 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Resolution 22-073 – Public Hearing and Adoption of 2022 Budget

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Carty to open the public hearing.

George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired if the donation of 46 Peapack Road to Mr. Hotz of the Raritan Valley Development Corporation had an impact on the 2022 Budget. He also asked about the status of the request from Mr. Hotz to remove the Reverter Clause from the Deed.

Mayor Vallone responded the donation of the property had no impact upon the 2022 Budget.

Mr. Sordillo responded the Borough had denied the request to remove the Reverter Clause from the Deed.

There were no further comments from the public.

Motion by Councilman Carty, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti to close the public hearing.

Motion by Councilman Carty, seconded by Council President Karner that Resolution 22-073 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, Welsh, Vallone

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Mss. Stern and Mantell left the meeting at this time.

ORDINANCES

INTRODUCTION

ORDINANCE 2022-06 - AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS TO TRANSFER AND DONATE THE REAL PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS BLOCK 8, LOT 1, BEING THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 46 PEAPACK ROAD, TO RARITAN VALLEY DEVELOPMENT CORP. FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AS A MUNICIPALLY SPONSORED AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. Sordillo provided a brief overview of the Ordinance.

Motion by Councilman Welsh, seconded by Council President Karner that Ordinance 2022-06 be introduced.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, Welsh

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; 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.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolution 22-074 – Authorizing Alcohol at Fairgrounds – AVN Spring 2022
2. Resolution 22-075 – Authorizing Waiver Temporary Sign Permit – Bedminster Township
3. Resolution 22-076 – Acceptance of Resignation and Appointment
Clarence Dillon Library Board
4. Resolution 22-077 - Payment of Bill List

Motion by Councilman Carty, seconded by Council President Karner that Resolutions 22-074 through 22-077 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION

NJDEP Solid Waste Facility Permit - Old Quarry Road Associates, LLC

Mr. Sordillo provided a brief history of the facility located in the Borough of Bernardsville. He and Mayor Vallone reviewed the actions taken by the Borough of Far Hills objecting to the proposed truck routes to and from the facility which would traverse Route 202 on route to US Route 287. Mr. Sordillo noted that the permit limited the days and hours for trucks to enter and leave the facility. A general discussion ensued resulting in Mayor Vallone encouraging residents to attend the NJDEP Public Hearing regarding the permit to be held on May 12, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Bernards High School Performing Arts Center. Mr. Sordillo noted that a representative from his office would also be attending in his absence. The notice and draft permit application was posted on the Borough website and a Nixle announcement would be sent.

NJDOT US Route 202 over North Branch of Raritan River Bridge Replacement

Mayor Vallone provided an overview of the NJDOT project to replace the nearly 100-year-old bridge and noted the project was originally presented at the September 1, 2015, Borough Council meeting. He indicated construction was planned to commence in the Summer 2024 and would result in a full closure to vehicular traffic for approximately six months. He apprised residents that the NJDOT was

holding a Public Information Center (PIC) on May 10, 2022, from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the Bedminster Township municipal building. The PIC notice was posted on the Borough website and a Nixle announcement would also be sent. A brief discussion ensued regarding the trucks traversing to and from the solid waste facility and the impact upon the current bridge as well as the potential impact to the local roadways to be utilized for the detour during construction. Residents were also encouraged to attend this information 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 Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti to open the meeting to public comment.

Charles Schwester, 410 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired who owned the solid waste facility.

Mr. Sordillo responded the permit application indicated Mr. Peter Rubinetti as the owner of the facility.

Don Hewitt, 23 Dumont Road, Far Hills inquired as to the number of trucks that utilized the facility when it was functioning as a quarry vs the number of trucks proposed for the solid waste facility. A brief discussion ensued regarding tandem vs double trailer style trucks.

Mr. Sordillo responded he recollected five trucks per day had utilized the quarry.

George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired as to the monitoring of the truck traffic and the impact upon the construction of the Errico Acres (Residences at Overleigh) development. He also expressed his concern as to the lack of opposition from the residents of Far Hills to the solid waste facility truck route. Lastly, he asked about the aesthetics planned for the Route 202 Bridge and hoped that it would be a stone faced and not a solely concrete façade.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the aesthetics for the finished bridge which is owned by the State of NJ. Mayor Vallone agreed that the finished product should be aesthetically pleasing as it serves as an entry point into the Borough of Far Hills as well as Bedminster Township and again encouraged residents to attend the meeting on May 10, 2022.

Don Hewitt, 23 Dumont Road, Far Hills indicated that he did not receive notification from the NJDOT regarding the bridge project.

Charles Schwester, 410 Lake Road, Far Hills suggested that Mr. Sordillo send a letter to the NJDOT requesting a review of the architectural plans and the façade planned for the bridge.

Mayor Vallone agreed and suggested that the Borough request a copy of the architectural plans for the project.

The details for both the NJDEP and NJDOT meetings were reiterated for members of the public.


There were no further comments from the public.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 5/23/22