

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Reorganization Meeting
MINUTES
January 3, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Clerk Hicks called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Far Hills Municipal Building and read the open public meetings statement in accordance with the law.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Clerk Hicks led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilwoman Mary Chimenti (via phone), Councilman David P. Karner, Councilman Rick Rinzler, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie, Councilman Kevin P. Welsh

Absent, as Excused: Councilman Joseph Carty

Absent:

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

REGULAR AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS

OATH OF OFFICE

Ms. Hicks administered the Oath of Office to Kevin P. Welsh as Mayor for a four year-term expiring December 31, 2026.

Ms. Hicks administered the Oath of Office to David P. Karner as member of the Borough Council for a three-year-term expiring December 31, 2025.

Ms. Hicks administered the Oath of Office to Richard L. Rinzler as member of the Borough Council for a three-year-term expiring December 31, 2025.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

NJ State Legislature, District 21, Assemblywomen Michele Matsikoudis and Nancy Munoz joined the meeting at this time.

ELECTION OF BOROUGH COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Motion by Councilman Rinzler, seconded by Councilman Karner to nominate Councilwoman Chimenti as Council President for a one-year term expiring December 31, 2023.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, Rinzler, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Council President Chimenti expressed her appreciation to the Borough Council for the nomination.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Dear Members of the Borough Council, Distinguished Guests, Friends, and Neighbors:

I am deeply honored, and it is my privilege to accept the responsibility of Mayor of Far Hills. It comes with substantial pride, to be called the Mayor of Far Hills. I appreciate all of the residents that came out to vote on my behalf.

I would like to thank my wife Ashley of 17 years. Ashley has supported me through all my aspirations. Without her support, this would not be possible. I would also like to thank my 3 children Kaley, Madison, and Brooklyn. We have always believed and encouraged supporting each other in whatever dreams we pursue. My family has supported me from the beginning, and I thank them all for that.

There have been so many distinguished mayors over the years. Each has had a positive impact on Far Hills. I have had the pleasure of working with both Mayor Vallone and Mayor Karner. Both men have taught me a lot and I want to thank both mayors for listening to my desires to bring community together. In collaboration myself, Mayor Vallone and our wives worked together to bring back the Recreation Committee under the leadership of the Vallones. I thank the Vallones for the opportunity to be the Borough Council representative. We accomplished a lot over the past year and a half, and I look forward to supporting the Recreation Committee for years to come.

Mayor Vallone also led us through a tough second round of affordable housing. He was always looking to protect the borough through the many, many years of meetings on this topic. Since Mayor Vallone stepped down, Mayor Karner has taken the bull by the horns. Collectively we have worked hard to renegotiate with the Atlantic Visiting Nurse (AVN) to improve the barns at the fairgrounds with painting and carpentry work. I am happy to say the newly renegotiated long-term lease will better support the needs of the AVN and at the same time, protect our financial interest for many years to come. I am delighted to say our strong partnership and the new lease will be the first ordinance that I will sign as mayor in 2023. Make no mistake this is a major enhancement to the current lease. I am proud to have played a major part in its renegotiations and I want to thank Mayor Karner for all his hard work on this very important project. The Borough Council is also actively finishing up a financial audit of the Errico Acres inclusionary affordable housing project. I am confident that the Borough Council and I will work through the finish line as we openly communicate and protect the best interest of Far Hills moving forward.

I would also like to thank my father, Peter Welsh. He has been a great example of how a man should lead with hard work, dedication, respect, honor, and diligence. Make no mistake, our fourth-generation business with over 114 years behind us comes out of many hours of hard work. The hours on the door do not represent the time it takes to be successful. Our efforts have to be above and beyond to stand out. I intend on handling my duties as mayor just as we run our business with respect, dedication, honor, hard work and diligence.

I started my public service on the Planning Board in 2013 and have since moved onto the Borough Council. I believe it is important to give back to the Borough and at the same time protect Far Hills from the pressures of overdevelopment.

In the years ahead we will face many obstacles such as finishing the second round of affordable housing with the third round of affordable housing just around the corner in 2025, the US Route 202 bridge replacement project, as well as the increasing costs across the board and many other unknowns

that may turn up over the years. I am confident our Borough Council is up to the challenges we will face.

It is evident I love Far Hills! I know it well, whether it be the Village, the Polo Club, or the Estate areas. Far Hills is so special and unique in its own way. Far Hills is a special gem. I will work hard to protect the bucolic nature of Far Hills. I will promote a community centered town, promote pedestrian safety, and will continue to promote the revitalization of the J. Malcolm Belcher fairgrounds. I live for events such as the tree lighting the Far Hills Recreation Committee put together this past December. Small town living with small town values.

My goals moving forward are to continue to improve our strong fiscal position and protect our low tax rate. I will support our community events such as the semi-annual AVN sale, the Memorial Day parade, the Far Hills Steeplechase, Veterans Day, Essex Horse Trials, holiday tree lighting event and beyond. I will support our wonderful police department. I will be open minded and transparent. I will fight to protect the heritage and way of life we all enjoy. I have and always put the Borough of Far Hills first and will continue to as mayor!

We are all in partnership together as we set forth on the next chapter. We have a great team. A great Borough Council, Planning Board, Board of Health, Board Professionals, Borough Clerk, CFO, and our Municipal Court. We are all ready to do the job. I once again thank you for the opportunity to lead our community as mayor.

God bless Far Hills and God bless America,

Kevin Welsh
Mayor of Far Hills 2023

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 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 Consent Agenda by Borough Council action and placed on the Regular Agenda under New Business.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolution 23-001 – Establishing Rules and Procedures for the Conduct of Business
at Borough Council Meetings
2. Resolution 23-002 – Establishing 2023 Borough Council Meeting Dates
3. Resolution 23-003 – Establishing Fee for Public Meeting Notice
4. Resolution 23-004 – Designation of Official Newspapers
5. Resolution 23-005 – Temporary Appropriations for Operating Purposes
6. Resolution 23-006 – Tax Grace & Interest on Delinquent Taxes
7. Resolution 23-007 – Designation of Depositories for Borough Funds
8. Resolution 23-008 – Designation of Signatories for Borough Accounts
9. Resolution 23-009 – Authorization of Payroll Signatures
10. Resolution 23-010 – Authorizing Opening of Petty Cash Account
11. Resolution 23-011 – Authorizing a Cash Management Plan
12. Resolution 23-012 – Authorizing Mileage Reimbursement

13. Resolution 23-013 – Authorizing Municipal Attorney to File Corrective Appeals with the Somerset County Board of Taxation
14. Resolution 23-014 – Adopting a Civil Rights Policy
15. Resolution 23-015 – Authorizing Mileage Stipend
16. Resolution 23-016 – Authorizing the CFO to Approve Payment of Bills
17. Resolution 23-017 – Authorizing Tax Collector to Cancel Tax Payments/Refunds
18. Resolution 23-018 – Appointment – Personnel
19. Resolution 23-019 – Appointment – Boards, Committees and Commissions
20. Resolution 23-020 – Appointment – Recommendations to the Somerset County Board of County Commissioners
21. Resolution 23-021 – Appointment – Somerset County Wastewater Management Planning Committee
22. Resolution 23-022 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Attorney
DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC
23. Resolution 23-023 – Professional Services Contract, Bond Counsel
Hawkins Delafield & Wood, LLP
24. Resolution 23-024 – Professional Services Contract, Certified Municipal Recycling Coordinator
Kevin Murray
25. Resolution 23-025 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Engineer
Ferriero Engineering
26. Resolution 23-026 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Labor Counsel
Trimboli & Prusinowski, LLC
27. Resolution 23-027 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Planner
Banisch Associates, Inc.
28. Resolution 23-028 – Professional Services Contract, Environmental Engineer
Natural Systems Utilities, Inc.
29. Resolution 23-029 – Professional Services Contract, Municipal Accountant/Auditor
Nisivoccia, LLP
30. Resolution 23-030 – Professional Services Contract, Municipal Prosecutor
DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC
31. Resolution 23-031 – Appointment, Alternate Municipal Prosecutor
DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC
32. Resolution 23-032 – Professional Services Contract, Municipal Public Defender
Mitzner & Mitzner, PA
33. Resolution 23-033 – Professional Services Contract, Alternate Municipal Public Defender
Kuchinsky and Rotunno, PC
34. Resolution 23-034 – Professional Services Contract, Reassessment Service Program
Reassessment Services, LLC
35. Resolution 23-035 – Professional Services Contract, Special Counsel – Affordable Housing
Surenian, Edwards & Nolan, LLC
36. Resolution 23-036 – Professional Services Contract, Special Counsel - Affordable Housing
Land Use
DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC
37. Resolution 23-037 – Professional Services Contract, HR Consultant
People Management, Inc.
38. Resolution 23-038 – Authorizing Contract – Public Health Nursing Services
Atlantic Visiting Nurse
39. Resolution 23-039 – Authorizing Shared Services Agreement – Recycling
County of Somerset

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie seconded by Councilman Rinzler that Resolutions 23-001 through 23-039 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, Rinzler, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION

Borough Council Committee Appointments for 2023

Mayor Welsh reviewed the Committee appointments for 2023 and it was the consensus of the Borough Council that the appointments be accepted.

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.

Jack McNamara, 247 Liberty Corner Road, Far Hills stated as Chairman of the Republican County Committee for Far Hills he would, in accordance with the Municipal Vacancy Law, provide a letter identifying three candidates for the Borough Council seat vacated by Mayor Welsh. Mr. McNamara also expressed his appreciation to the members of the Borough Council for their dedication in serving the residents of Far Hills.

Kathryn Mantel, Borough Auditor, Nisivoccia, LLP offered her congratulations to Mayor Welsh and Councilmen Karner and Rinzler and expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to work with the Borough of Far Hills again this year.

There were no further comments from the public.

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

ADJOURNMENT TO REGULAR MEETING

Motion by Councilman Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 1/23/23