

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

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Welsh called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The flag salute and reading of the open public meetings statement and roll call was previously conducted at the Reorganization meeting held immediately prior to this Regular meeting.

RECOGNITION

Mayor Welsh presented former Mayor Karner with a distinguished service award in recognition of his continued service to the Borough of Far Hills and especially his tenure as mayor of Far Hills from July – December 2022.

Councilman Karner expressed his appreciation to the Mayor and Council for their support and recognition and stated it was his honor to serve as the mayor of Far Hills. The Mayor and Council, as well as members of the public, showed their appreciation to former Mayor Karner through a round of applause.

REPORTS

Councilman Karner – Roads

Councilman Karner provided an update on the Pennbrook Road Improvements project indicating the contractor would be conducting test pits to determine the depth and location of the existing gas utility in preparation for the precast storm drain structures.

Councilwoman Tweedie – Health/Sanitation

Councilwoman Tweedie provided a brief overview of the November 2022 monthly collection system report prepared by the Borough Environmental Engineer, Natural Systems Utilities. She indicated there was a decrease in the average flow based upon the three-month rolling average which was indicative of the effectiveness of the Borough's ongoing maintenance of the sewer system.

Council President Chimenti – Laws, Ordinances & Elections

Council President Chimenti apologized for not being able to attend the meeting in person and reported the purchase of a new laptop for the Court was planned and would better facilitate the sessions currently being held via Zoom.

Councilman Rinzler – Police and Fire, Water, Light, Buildings & Grounds

Councilman Rinzler reported he met with Chief DeCarolis and reviewed the 2022 Budget.

Chief DeCarolis

Chief DeCarolis offered his congratulations to Mayor Welsh. He informed the Borough Council of the partial closure of Peapack Road due to work by PSE&G for a gas line extension anticipated this week. Nixle alerts would also be sent out to those that have registered for the service.

Mayor Welsh

Mayor Welsh stated he was looking forward to meeting with each of the departments in preparation for the 2023 Budget.

REGULAR AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

12/27/22 Regular Meeting Minutes

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

12/27/22 – Executive Session Minutes

Motion by Councilman Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie, was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content only.

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCE – INTRODUCTION

ORDINANCE 2023-01 – AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE GRANT OF A NEW LEASE TO THE ATLANTIC VISITING NURSE FOR THE USE OF A PORTION OF THE J. MALCOLM BELCHER FAIRGROUNDS FOR USE IN CONNECTION WITH ITS CHARITABLE SALES.

Mayor Welsh provided a brief overview of the ordinance and the provisions of the new lease agreement. He acknowledged the efforts of Councilman Karner in the negotiation process with the Atlantic Visiting Nurse.

Mayor Welsh also reviewed the numerous improvements, being undertaken by the AVN on behalf of the Borough, to the barns at the fairgrounds. He indicated a plaque would be installed to commemorate this collaboration and partnership with the AVN.

Motion by Councilman Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie that Ordinance 2023-01 be introduced.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, Rinzler, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION

Resolution 23-040 – Payment of Bill List

Motion by Councilman Karner, seconded by Councilman Rinzler that Resolution 23-040 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Chimenti, Karner, Rinzler, Tweedie, Welsh

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.*

Councilman Karner stated it was his distinct pleasure to serve as the Mayor of Far Hills albeit for only six months and expressed his appreciation to the Borough Council for the service award.

Motion by Councilman Karner, seconded by Councilman Rinzler to open the meeting to public comment.

Charles Schwester, 410 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired if there were answers to the questions he asked at the December 27, 2022 Borough Council meeting.

Councilman Karner summarized the questions raised at the prior meeting which pertained to the new flood plain requirements and the impact on the affordable housing developments at 8 & 10 Peapack Road as well as potentially to the Errico Acres development. Mayor Welsh added there was also a question regarding the payments made to Mr. Hotz by the Borough for these affordable housing projects.

A brief discussion ensued with Mr. Sordillo responding that he was not in attendance at the December 27, 2022 meeting but would review the questions with his associate, Mr. Silbert and would have responses at the next Borough Council meeting. Mr. Schwester reiterated some of his questions regarding the wetland regulations and the payment schedule for the Hotz properties.

Mr. Sordillo responded the payment schedule was an affordable housing subsidy based upon a timeline set forth in the agreement. He also commented the Borough Engineer has previously determined that the new NJDEP requirements would have no impact on the Errico Acres development. With regard to the impact of the NJDEP regulations on the properties located at 8 & 10 Peapack Road a meeting was previously held with Mr. Hotz to review the progress of the development.

There were no further comments from the public.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION


Resolution 23-041 - Attorney-Client Privilege –Litigation – Affordable Housing

Motion by Councilman Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie, was unanimously carried to approve Resolution 23-041.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilman Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 1/23/23