

# **BOROUGH of GARWOOD**

## ***Workshop Session MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING*** **February 10, 2015**

Workshop session was opened by Mayor Lombard at: 7:01 p.m.

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Cranford Chronicle, advertised on January 16, 2015, notification was sent to the Star Ledger and prominently posted on the municipal public bulletin board and filed in the office of the municipal clerk informing the Public of the time and place according to the Provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975).

**Present:** Mayor Lombardo, Councilman Mathieu, Councilman Petruzzelli, Councilwoman Tarantino, Councilwoman Todisco and Council President Nierstedt.

**Also Present:** Borough Administrator/Clerk Christina M. Ariemma, Borough Attorney Robert Renaud and Borough Engineer Donald Guarriello.

Councilman Martin was absent.

Borough Engineer Donald Guarriello mentioned that the DOT plans and specifications for this year's projects have been sent for DOT approval. Councilman Mathieu asked about broken asphalt at the end of driveways and if they can be filled. Mr. Guarriello suggested they contact the street department. Mayor Lombardo suggested residents use the complaint form in the clerk's office.

Borough Attorney Robert Renaud mentioned the three ordinances for introduction this evening and explained them.

Administrator/Clerk Christina M Ariemma mentioned that Mr. Steve Rogut, Bond Counsel, Mr. Warren Korecky, Auditor and Mrs. Sandy Bruns, CFO/Treasurer will be at the February 24, 2015 council meeting to explain the bond process that will be taking place in March. The resolution will be presented to council for consideration at the meeting on March 10, 2015.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

Discussion regarding property encroachments at the Garwood Sports and Recreation Complex. Councilman Mathieu said he contacted the three residents and reported as follows. 119 Willow Avenue is asking that we notify her prior to taking down the fence. 116 Myrtle Avenue, Mrs. Spratt claims that she doesn't know where the property line is. 167 Myrtle Avenue, Mr. Higney objects and doesn't agree with the borough determination. Councilman Mathieu claimed Mr. Higney has threatened to sue the borough. Councilman Mathieu suggested this be settled. Brief discussion followed. Mr. Renaud suggested he review the code to determine if we need legislation concerning encroachments. He said he would report back at the next meeting. Discussion included the resident that complied, cost and legislation to allow the borough to place leans on the properties. More discussion included the property line at 116 Myrtle Avenue. Councilwoman Todisco asked Mr. Guarriello to visit 116 Myrtle Avenue to show the resident where the property line is located. All agreed to have Mr. Guarriello visit 116 Myrtle and for Mr. Renaud to review and provide information at the next meeting. Ms. Ariemma was not directed to notified residents at this time.

### NEW BUSINESS – none

#### Comments or matters for discussion from members of Council:

Councilman Martin absent

Councilman Mathieu no report

Councilman Petruzzelli no report

Councilwoman Tarantino reported:

Over the last few years residents have complained to me and a few other council people individually and maybe at council meeting about the speeding at 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. It has recently been a topic at the planning board meeting due to a certain application. Councilman Petruzzelli and I recently met with the Chief on this subject about what has been done and what could be done. The Chief informed me that he has gathered

plenty of data over several months/years. Speed feedback signs have been placed in attempts to slow cars down. Those also collect data for the police department to let them know how many cars have traveled at what speed. Then the signs are moved to a different location and an officer is placed at the location where the sign was to give out violations to speeders. This is done periodically. The police committee believes that this has not been as effective as we would like as resident complaints continue in this area.

We are looking into getting grants for permanent radar signs that show your speed. These would be put on a pole half way down the street on 4<sup>th</sup> before you reach the corner. This would be the 1<sup>st</sup> step of a progressive process. We also discussed speed bumps, but there is a reason those are not our first choice. We would rather not put physical objects in the streets if we didn't have to, you'd need to maintain the speed bumps and also think about the DPW in the snow. That doesn't mean we wouldn't go that route if the radar poles didn't work out. We are just beginning our research and deciding which way is the best way to go. Once the Chief looks into the grants and we look into it further the committee will get back to council with a recommendation. I just wanted to let council and the residents know that we are addressing this issue.

Mr. Renaud explained that he has been networking with businesses at the direction of Laws & License Committee to ascertain additional commuter parking. Agreements and details are forthcoming.

Councilwoman Todisco reported:

1. RVSA - I contacted our representative to the RVSA and he will be able to attend our next meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> to give us an update. They have installed a meter next to the current one and he is hoping they will have the data by our meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> and a possible answer as to whether our expected payment to the RVSA will change.
2. NJ Transit Shelter - I am happy to say I have really wonderful news to report on from NJ Transit about the shelter at our train stop. At our last council meeting, I reported that a resident reached out to me about the size of our existing shelter and I contacted the government and community relations representative at NJ Transit about this matter. He emailed me about a week ago to inform me that it is the intention of NJ Transit to replace our existing shelter with a larger one to accommodate more riders and they anticipate performing the work this spring. This is excellent news and it really shows how important it is for us to hear from residents. I know we often say that we will be better able to do our jobs as council members if we hear more from the residents. Well, it really is true and can prove to have results as it has in this case. I'm happy I was able to help in this situation.
3. Freeholder Reminder - Just wanted to remind everyone of the Freeholder rotating schedule. This month is Councilman Mathieu and next month will be Council President Nierstedt.
4. Matching Grant Issue - Also, I have not forgotten about our prior discussion of the matching grant requirement for open space trust fund money from the county. I contacted state representatives for Green Acres to see if there was some type of state mandate. There is not. However, I want to continue to look into how other counties administer open space as I was told that every county in NJ has one of these trust funds and many towns have their own as well. So far, some counties require matching and others include it as one of the considerations when distributing grant money to their municipalities. For instance, so far Atlantic and Passaic counties have it as a consideration, but not a requirement. I'd like to keep exploring this issue by researching all 20 other counties.

Council President Nierstedt

Thank you, Mayor

1. Last month I advised my colleagues of a letter that the mayor signed regarding the commencement of the Off-Peak Evening Direct "One Seat" Service to New York on the Raritan Valley Line and NJ Transit's apparent slight of Garwood. Since then, I have spoken to Colleen Maher who is on the Raritan Valley Line "One-Seat Ride' Working Group' who advised that they will invite a Garwood representative to their next meeting so that they can start get our concerns addressed.
2. I also advised of Garwood's first Martin Luther King IN Service project which was a "Soup and Cracker" food drive for those in need in Garwood. I would like to report that with the help of the Boro of Garwood Celebrations Committee, St. Anne's Parish, the Garwood Presbyterian Church, St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Grace Christian Fellowship Church, and New Communities churches as well as volunteers from the Knights of Columbus and Garwood Fire Division, and Shop Rite donations, we were able to collect over 450 soup cans and 75 boxes of crackers. Distribution is scheduled for February 18. I thank everyone who contributed. The groups plan on reconvening after the drive is completed so that we can get an early start on a bigger project for 2016.
3. I urge my colleagues to support Resolution 15-139, which opposes Senate Bill No. 2412, and Assembly Bill No 3628 entitled 'The Water Infrastructure Protection Act'. This action is in response to a request from the Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority (RVSA) due to their opinion that it would

negatively impact ratepayers. Further research has also shown me that the bill would strip away the ability of the Board of Public Utilities to review water sale prices, and one study found that such a deal could result in price spikes of 64% on average. Does anyone have any questions?

4. South Avenue In Need of Redevelopment Study - I have discussed the status of this project with the consultant. They have started moving forward with the background information necessary for the report. Preliminary environmental research is being conducted; exterior photos have been taken, and they will be contacting the clerk, Chiefs of Police & Fire, Zoning Officer and Tax Assessor for related background. They did not give me a date for report completion yet.
5. Housing Study – I have also spoken to the consultant. She has set up the state monitoring files to add the information required as redevelopment plans are finalized. She will be forwarding a copy of the Affordable Housing Ordinance to the board planner to reconcile outstanding density issues. She should have the majority of all outstanding items completed within one month and then be ready for Planning Board and Borough Council review.

Councilwoman Todisco thanked Councilman Nierstedt for running the soup drive. There was a discussion regarding the COAH Liaison and who would have this position.

Council President Nierstedt mentioned the letter received from a resident asking council to waive the fee for licensing her dog late. All agreed not to waive the fee. Ms. Ariemma was directed to send a letter to the resident.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Bruce Paterson of 325 Willow Avenue asked about the bond process and Councilman Mathieu answered.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion:** 7:47 p.m. Workshop, **Action:** Adjourn, **Moved by** Council President Nierstedt, **Seconded by** Councilwoman Todisco.