

**Borough of Garwood Workshop Meeting of
The Mayor and Council**

WORKSHOP

MINUTES

July 26, 2016

Start Time: 7:00 p.m.

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Westfield Leader, and UC Local Source, advertised on January 7, 2016, 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).

ROLL CALL:

Mayor Lombardo	P		
Councilwoman Cuccaro	P	Councilman Sarno	P
Councilman Martin	P	Councilwoman Todisco	P
Councilman Mathieu	P	Council President Petruzzelli	P

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

Presentation: Mayor's Acknowledgement to Liquid Church for the 2016 Summer Outreach Program.

Borough Engineer Donald Guarriello reported that the sidewalk project is underway and that the 2015DOT remains on hold.

Borough Attorney Robert mentioned the redevelopment ordinance is on the agenda for introduction. He mentioned he reviewed the Center Street project bids and they are in order to award.

Councilman Mathieu mentioned he does not want to cancel the August 9th meeting and also suggested the redevelopment ordinance be adopted after Labor Day. Councilwoman Cuccaro agreed. Brief discussion followed.

Administrator/Clerk Christina M Ariemma mentioned scheduling for the public hearing for the redevelopment ordinance. Brief discussion followed and Ms. Ariemma was directed to prepare the meeting for September 13, 2016 at Lincoln School.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS - None

Comments or matters for discussion from members of Council:

Councilwoman Cuccaro read the following statement:

I went to the UC freeholders meeting last week, as it was my turn on the rotation for council members. Thank you to councilwoman Todisco for setting this schedule up. You may want to rethink this especially with someone like me that has such a low opinion of the heavy hand of county government. I of course am a little biased going to these things. But I like to be a good little soldier and do my duty as your councilwoman. You can rest assured that my opinion has not changed, as they seem to do nothing much except pick our pockets and spend our money.

This meeting however was a little different as our freeholders implemented a great program called the seniors in Motion, and it would give me a chance to speak on behalf of Garwood seniors. I would like everyone to rest easy as I was on my best behavior, I was polite, very professional, put my pantyhose and dress on, I smiled throughout as I spoke, and ready to do battle on behalf of Garwood senior citizens. The "seniors in motion program" was going to supply vans to multiple towns for transportation for our seniors. Unfortunately, these vans for whatever reason, and trust me do not want to speculate on who received the contract to supply the vans that we ultimately pay for, have no lift for the elderly, the disabled and the like. As we discussed at the last meeting we were going to try and see if we could get a monetary stipend in lieu of the vans as Garwood already has a very nice van with a lift. Not to look a gift horse in the mouth I assume most towns were taking the van, only Westfield wanted a deviation that was for a smaller one, I will find out if they were able to have that addressed.

The Mayor sent a great letter to the freeholders asking for the money instead of the van, so this meeting was a great time for me to see if I could further our cause.

When I introduced myself, and started to speak I noticed lights on the ceiling, I thought oh great, a meat hook without the hook, red, green, and yellow. I better talk fast.

The honorable Mr. Bergen said they already received the letter from our town and would take it under advisement, I thought ok I know what that means. I replied I did understand, but thought it best to be there in person to give them a face with a name in representing our town and seniors. I stated our case very eloquently and let the chips fall where they may. He directed my inquiries to Frank Guzzo, the director of department of Human affairs. I only had a few questions. The cost of the vans that we ultimately pay for anyway? How long do we have to keep the vans before they can be sold, figuring that would be a good way to get the money, get the van, then sell it to use for the seniors for years to come.

However, I am still waiting for that question to be answered, as I assume in all things government, that the wheels will have to be falling off and rusted and worthless by the time that condition has been met. But I tried...once I asked the van questions, I figured since I was there already; I mentioned the matching grants issue. I stated my case again very pleasantly. Everyone knows how I feel about matching anything, no need to go into it again. I did say we did not use our recreation grant this year, as we did not want to spend the taxpayer's money in matching the funds.

I looked at the red, green and yellow lights and said yippee I did not exceed my time, so no hook for me on this day. So I sat back down.

Frank Guzzo, who I must say was very pleasant, he came up to me directly after the meeting, I asked for his card and he ran down to his office to get one, we had a 10 minute conversation. He understood our plight, but ultimately they are not going to substitute money, but I did leave there with some hope.

As we left him, I said how could we get some republicans up there. He just smiled, and I still heard chuckling as the elevator door closed. Freeholder Hudak, not as pleasant, although he spoke about my matching grants abhorrence, and pretty much said he thinks they are just wonderful.

As we were walking out to the parking lot, Freeholder Granados came up and introduced himself to me and said he thought what I had to say was a very reasonable request, he would see if anything could be done, I asked for his card, shook his hand and thanked him. As we walked away all I heard was Bruce saying sucking up to the freeholders already huh. I of course, said not a chance. But I would certainly walk around with a joker face on if it meant helping our fellow residents. I however draw the line at selling my soul to the devil to do it.

I did learn one other thing as we left that meeting, that when Freeholder Hudak responded that he loved matching grants, I raised my hand to counter what he said and Mr. Bergin shook his head, NO .. So next time, I will have all my questions prepared and some rebuttals and take another bite from the proverbial freeholder apple so to speak.

Councilman Martin – NONE

Councilman Mathieu – mentioned street sweeping for the 200 block of Third Avenue. Council President Petruzzelli said he will make sure it gets on the schedule. He mentioned a vacant home on Locust and Ms. Ariemma said she'd provide copies of the letters concerning that address.

Councilman Sarno – mentioned The Liquid Church project, he thanked the volunteers and the Mayor for their hard work.

Councilwoman Todisco – NONE

Council President Petruzzelli – mentioned the email from the owner of 609 East Street. He asked Mr. Guarriello for his opinion. Mr. Guarriello explained that the property cannot be squared off and that he does not recommend vacating the street option. He stated the resident has been using and maintaining the property for 50 plus years and he doesn't that will change.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Is there anyone in the audience that wishes to address the mayor and council please step to the microphone, sign in, state your full name and address. Please limit your comments to three minutes.

Jenn Blumenstock, 315 Spruce Avenue mentioned she supports delaying the adoption of the redevelopment ordinance until after labor and suggested council use the month to educate the public on the matter.

Keith Lock, 609 East Street clarified that a young couple want to buy their home and fence in the lot. Mr. Guarriello said fencing was discussed at the last meeting in which Mr. Lock did not attend. He said he believes the new owner could continue to use the lot and the governing could authorize them to install a fence in the right of way. Mr. Lock commented on the role of council and asked for compassion in the matter.

Jean McComb, 119 Willow Avenue asked about the paving work being done on Willow Avenue. Mr. Guarriello explained the project that was done by NJ American Water. Mayor Lombardo suggested the road be considered for 2017 DOT application. Council President Petruzzelli asked about repairs.

Bruce Paterson, 325 Willow Avenue mentioned the water project and asked if DOT funds are still suspended. He asked Mr. Renaud to explain the procedure for the redevelopment process. He suggested the ordinance not be adopted the same night as the public hearing.

Mr. Renaud explained the South Avenue redevelopment process from the beginning to present. He mentioned two issues that are intertwined with the redevelopment. He explained the borough's obligation to provide affordable housing. He stated if the municipality does not allow affordable housing, it subjects itself to a builders remedy lawsuit. He explained some of the issues and cannot disclose too much because of potential litigation. He explained there is more at stake than just the "plan".

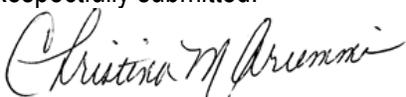
Andy Blumenstock, 315 Spruce Avenue mentioned this is an election topic and it should be discussed however, it should not be made into a referendum.

Councilwoman Todisco thanked Mr. Lock for attending the meeting. She said she would come by and take a look. She asked for input on the matter. Ms. Ariemma explained the process on how it may come to a vote before council in the future.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:49 p.m., a motion to adjourn the workshop session was made by Council President Petruzzelli, followed by a second from Councilwoman Todisco.

Respectfully submitted:



CHRISTINA M. ARIEMMA, Municipal Clerk
Borough of Garwood