

BOROUGH of GARWOOD

Workshop Session MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING **October 28, 2014**

Workshop session was opened by Mayor Quattrocchi at: 7:03 p.m.

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Westfield Leader, advertised on January 9, 2014, 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. Present:

Present: Mayor Quattrocchi (Not voting), Council President Tarantino, Councilman Mathieu, Councilman Nierstedt, Councilman Petruzzelli, Councilwoman Todisco.

Councilman Martin was absent.

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

Mayor Quattrocchi announced:

"It gives me great pleasure to announce tonight that we have been informed by Flanagan's that the complex will be completed by the end of November. I have more delightful information in announcing that I along with members of council will host the ribbon cutting ceremony on Sunday, December 14, 2014. Time will be announced soon. I encourage all residents to attend this important event in our borough's history."

"The Administrator/Clerk has several more changes to make on the draft Chapter 126, Parks, Facilities, Playgrounds and Recreation. The draft will in the November 7th mail packet. There will be a special meeting on Thursday, November 13, 2014 at 7:00 p.m., to discuss the draft. Introduction will take place on November 18th with adoption on December 9, 2014."

Borough Engineer Donald Guarriello reported he attended the DEP meeting in Trenton last week. He reported on the subject matter of the meeting. He commented that the DOT 2013 project is almost completed. Mayor Quattrocchi commented on the Cranford Brook matter. Councilwoman Todisco asked for further comment on wet lands related to the brook. Councilman Nierstedt asked how this affects the bridges and pipes on North Avenue. Mr. Guarriello responded and brief discussion followed.

Borough Attorney Robert Renaud no report.

Administrator/Clerk – Ms. Ariemma asked Council to confirm the CDBG submissions which will take place at the next meeting. She stated she will put in for the three, Senior Citizen Program, Senior Citizen Handyman Program and the Senior Citizen Transportation Program. She mentioned that she will put in for Redevelopment study again in 2015. All agreed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

NEW BUSINESS - NONE

Comments or matters for discussion from members of Council:

Council President Tarantino commented on the news the mayor announced today concerning the conclusion of the AFC project. She thanked Councilman Petruzzelli for the outstanding effort made to get the project completed. October 16th I went to the Union County Freeholder meeting where I was presented with two large checks, literally. Ms. Ariemma applied for Grants from the Open Space Trust Fund. We were awarded \$20,000 grant. Also we were awarded \$4,400 from Greening Union County. The \$4,400 is to be used for tree planting around the borough or the Garwood Rec Complex. These are both matching grants. Where the matching money is coming from is yet to be determined. The reason I say this is because normally what we would do is budget the \$20,000 and the \$4,400 in the 2015 operating budget. But there is a possibility that when this project wraps up and the funds gets settled, there may be money left in the project and we could allocate the \$20,000 and the \$4,400 to the project. The same goes for the \$20,000 that we budgeted for in 2014 for the cameras, but only if the funds are available at the end of the project. So if the funds are still in the project, all matching funds can come from the project and nothing would come out of operating budget even though we had to budget for it.

Councilman Mathieu asked for further explanation which Council President Tarantino provided.

The parking committee was established to resolve the parking issue stemming from commuter parking, lack of a residential parking on certain streets and various other situations. We've been looking into creative ways to provide

pockets of parking around town. One thing we were trying to do was contact owners of underused parking lots so we could share space. A few turned down our offer but we have had some positive feedback from some others. We are still in preliminary talks with these parking lot owners so there is not much I can share just yet. We also are looking into a few other ways to resolve the parking situation, but the committee is not ready at this time to make a recommendation to council. We will be meeting on Thursday evening to continue our discussion and findings.

Councilman Martin Absent.

Councilman Mathieu no report.

Councilman Nierstedt reported:

1. This past Saturday was Clean Communities Day. Boro Clerk Ariemma runs the program and does a wonderful event. Volunteers –including Councilman Petruzzelli and Councilwomen Todisco and Tarantino - cleaned up around Washington and Lincoln Schools, Boro Hall and the Fire House, the First Aid Squad and Hartman Park, and the area surrounding the Athletic Field improvements. Almost an equal number of bags – 10 each – of garbage and recyclables were picked up. We thank all the boy and girl scouts and everyone else who assisted. We thank the DPW for picking up the bags!
2. The Clerk and I walked the Athletic Field Site and selected sites for trees that the Boro is obtaining through the Greening of Union County Grant. These trees should be planted in November/December of this year.
3. Councilwoman Todisco and I attended last night's Raritan Valley Line meeting. I arrived late, so I will let the Councilwoman gave the full report. I was able, however to speak to NJT rep Paul Wyckoff about the fact that while Garwood strongly supports the one seat ride and wants it established, if they continue to simply make the connection without adding Garwood stops, it really does not do us any good. He did take notes. I was also able to plead our case on TV Cable 35 if anybody looks at the video.
4. I have taken note of the notices from Cranford and Westfield in the Council packet regarding proposed land use ordinance changes, and the clerk's office has supplied me with copies. I will review them and advise Council if there are any concerns. Westfield's notice speaks of changes to their Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, and that I will look specifically for any changes that may affect the approved project at Myrtle Avenue.

Councilman Petruzzelli no report.

Councilwoman Todisco reported:

Last night, I attended a meeting of the Raritan Valley Rail Coalition in Cranford. Councilman Nierstedt also attended. Many were in attendance. I saw a few familiar faces of Garwood residents in the audience along with many residents of other towns along the Raritan Valley rail line. In addition, there were many elected officials from council people to mayors to freeholders to Assemblywoman Stender and Senator Kean. Before the meeting opened up to a Q & A, a few presentations were made.

Paul Wyckoff from NJ Transit spoke about the recent application for federal transportation dollars, which is being finalized now and then will be sent off to the NJTPA (or North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority). This will enable direct service to NYC for 4 trains to run in and out of New York City between the hours of 8pm and midnight starting in January. This comes as good news after we recently learned that this phase originally planned to start in November was stopped. Important to note, Paul Wyckoff said if the grant money does not come in from the federal government in time, NJ Transit will make budget adjustments in order to stay on target to start the evening off-peak one-seat rides in January.

Tom Jardim, a member of the Coalition, spoke next about some other improvements made over the years from the good relationship between the Coalition and NJ Transit. He mentioned same platform transfer, Raritan Valley Line platforms being the first to have ticket machines, and better communication. He also spoke of the growing ridership along our line and that the Coalition is still pushing to reach the ultimate goal of 1-3 trains running direct during peak hours.

The Coalition asked for help from residents, both commuters and non-commuters alike. One-seat rides would not only benefit commuters, but also have a direct impact on property values. Look at the property values in places with direct service and you can see how "if you build it, they will come." That was actually a line said last night. I work in Chatham and see what direct service does for a community.

With that said, I would also like to encourage our residents to let their voices be heard to our legislators in the state and to NJ Transit. Here in Garwood, we especially need to make our voices heard, so NJ Transit doesn't forget about Garwood when they add direct service. You can use the Coalition's website to contact NJ Transit or your legislators. The website is www.raritanvalleyrail.com.

This is also why we need to come up with a real solution to the parking issue in town and look for spots in future redevelopment to ensure we have places for commuters to park away from our residential streets. I am happy the Parking Committee was set up and is working hard to come up with that solution.

Tonight, we have Resolution 14-272 on the Consent Agenda, which requests the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders to undertake a study on a possible merge of their Sheriff and Police Departments. I spoke about this in more detail at our last meeting and this issue has been raised at meetings prior to that one. As it is written now, it states most other counties do not have separate departments as we do in Union County. In doing my research, calling the other 20 counties, I found not many even have County Police departments. However, some have more State Police coverage. I support this Resolution because it is important to investigate this idea as a potential cost

savings to all the residents of Union County without loss of safety and security to residents. Also, if passed, it will be sent to the other 20 municipalities in Union County to consider adopting as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Scott Kessler of 436 Pine Avenue read a statement regarding volunteers, the Baseball League and the recent mentioning that volunteers can't maintain the Garwood Sports and Recreation Complex.

Richard King of 412 Hazel Avenue commented on volunteers including the fire department and first aid squad.

Joe Gola of 25 Second Avenue mentioned speeding on Second Avenue. He also mentioned the commuter parking problem on Second Avenue. He suggested permit parking on Second Avenue and Third Avenue. He commented on a house on 115 Anchor being an illegal three family. Councilman Nierstedt mentioned he would look into the housing matter. Council President Tarantino commented on the commuter parking matter.

Paulette Mathieu 324 Pine Avenue commented on the announcement of the park and ribbon cutting coming one week before election. She suggested it is damage control.

Tom Pedas of 101 Chestnut Court mentioned the parking and suggested we check with a church in Westfield. Council President Tarantino said she has spoken to the priest and he is not willing to lease spots to the borough because he wants spots for weekly funerals.

Scott Kessler said his statement is not damage control. As he returned to his seat he said "this is stupid".

Salvatore Piarulli of 55 Fourth Avenue said no one is doing damage control and to call someone stupid is not acceptable, suggesting Mr. Kessler was speaking to Mrs. Mathieu. Mr. Kessler said he wasn't speaking to the woman.

Bruce Paterson of 325 Willow Avenue thanked Councilwoman Todisco for the resolution to merge the departments in the County. He suggested more pressure and accountability be placed on the County. He mentioned the \$20,000 grant being matching and the operating fund paying the interest, etc. He commented on the AFC being completed.

Councilman Petruzzelli said he will be happy on December 15, 2014, however he has been asking for a year when they will be done. He said when asked today at the Construction meeting, Mr. Flanagan replied by the end of November. We were shocked and happy at the same time.

Richard King of 412 Hazel Avenue said we have no political agenda concerning the league it is simply for the children. He commented on what all volunteers have done for the community.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: 7:56 p.m. Workshop, **Action:** Adjourn, **Moved by** Councilman Nierstedt, **Seconded by** Councilwoman Todisco.

CHRISTINA M. ARIEMMA, Municipal Clerk
Borough of Garwood