

BOROUGH of GARWOOD

Workshop Session MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING December 9, 2014

Workshop session was opened by Mayor Quattrocchi at 7:05 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: Mayor Quattrocchi (Not voting), Council President Tarantino, Councilman Martin, Councilman Mathieu, Councilman Nierstedt, Councilman Petruzzelli, Councilwoman Todisco.

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

Councilman Martin acknowledged Mayor Quattrocchi for her term as Mayor and for her dedicated service to the community.

Mayor Quattrocchi acknowledged Gazette editors Tracy Rolland and Karen Sullivan. The ladies were not present.

Borough Engineer Donald Guarriello mentioned that the DOT project is finishing up in the next week or so.

Borough Attorney Robert Renaud mentioned the ordinances on tonight's agenda and asked if anyone had any questions.

Administrator/Clerk – Ms. Ariemma mentioned that Mayor Elect Lombardo has requested the reorganization time be amended to 7:15 p.m. All agreed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The encroachment matter was discussed and included the fencing and other related matters. The list of communications sent and received was discussed. The specific encroachments were discussed. Mr. Guarriello was directed to obtain quotes for fencing. Ms. Ariemma was directed to send letters that encroachments must be removed within 60 days or the borough will remove them that a fence will be installed.

Councilman Petruzzelli said the gas company repaired an area and disrupted the pavers. Mr. Guarriello said he would check into this.

NEW BUSINESS - NONE

Comments or matters for discussion from members of Council:

Council President Tarantino updated council on the parking committee progress.

Councilman Martin no report.

Councilman Mathieu no report.

Councilman Nierstedt

1. Ordinance 14-13 Parks, Facilities, Playgrounds and Recreation – I draw my fellow council members attention to the letter to the editor that is included in my handout regarding the provision within this ordinance about snakes. If you recall, I brought this issue up at our special meeting, and asked for its removal. Based on this letter, I once again ask for some discussion on this issue and its removal from the ordinance as unnecessary and potentially fraught with unintended legal consequences.
2. I attended the 11/25 UC Freeholder meeting; there were three items that I consider of interest.
 - a. NJ Transit Raritan Valley Line Coalition-NJT has petitioned the federal government for funding for the implementation of the "One Seat Ride" off-peak evening hours program. NJT anticipates that the service will commence in January 2015.
 - b. Bruce asked why, if the UC Open Space fund dollars are raised through taxation, each municipality then has to provide additional match to get some of these dollars back through those grants. It means that municipalities have to raise taxes/increase their budgets just to get back their own original tax dollars. I thought that it was a good point that might lead to further discussion at our local level.
 - c. UC also adopted a resolution prohibiting fracking on any county owned land. While it might be kind-of-meaningless, I am considering asking for a similar adoption in Garwood.

3. I'm sure most of you are aware of the Pilgrim Pipeline that is proposed from Albany NY to Linden, NJ. While it would not traverse directly through Garwood, it would run through Cranford and Westfield. Two weeks ago a group in opposition to the pipeline asked Westfield to adopt a resolution opposing its construction. Westfield forwarded it to a committee for their review and deliberation at their next meeting. As you can see from tonight's handout, PSE&G recently denied Pilgrim access to their ROW. I advise my fellow council members that if Cranford and Westfield adopt resolutions opposed to the pipeline, I may bring a supporting resolution and an advocate to this council and would ask for your support.

Councilman Mathieu disagreed with Councilman Nierstedt stating that moving oil via pipeline is safer and more efficient than most other methods. Also that he believes that fracking is not dangerous. He said he would not support an opposing resolution. Mayor Quattrocchi commented that she opposes the pipeline and fracking.

Councilwoman Todisco stated that at our Council meeting on October 28th, we passed a resolution asking the County Freeholders to investigate merging their county sheriff department with their county police department. I have caught wind that some interpreted our resolution to mean we wanted them to investigate merging with the municipal police departments around Union County. This was by no means our intent. Councilman Nierstedt was able to attend the last Freeholder meeting and explained this to the Freeholders. I would like to suggest we direct the clerk to send a letter to clarify our intent to the Freeholders and 20 other municipalities in Union County, and any others we forwarded the resolution to. What does everyone else think? Brief discussion followed and Ms. Ariemma was directed to send a clarifying letter regarding the intent of the resolution. All agreed.

Software Vendor:

I wanted to update everyone about the software company issue I reported on at our last meeting. The reason it is not on our agenda tonight as we expected is that the vendor the Council directed the Borough Administrator to go with cannot get it done by January as we were looking to have happen so instead of voting on it now, we will wait until it gets closer to April when the vendor can get the service up and running.

Crossing Guard Plan:

As the Mayor and Council knows, the Borough has had an issue with how the crossing guards are paid, which started over 10 years ago, when the guards went from working 3 shifts (morning, lunch, and afternoon) to working only morning and afternoon when the school stopped open lunch. The guards continued to get paid for 4.5 hours when they really only worked 2.5. The Finance Committee has discussed this issue and has a unanimous recommendation for the Council. Essentially, this plan corrects this issue through attrition. In other words, this plan affects new full-time crossing guards and alternates and as our current guards are no longer working for us and get replaced, the issue will be resolved. Without hurting the current crossing guards who are accustomed to making what they have been making for years, the Borough will be able to really save money with this plan. From this point forward, as new guards are hired by resolution, the terms of their work will be in the resolution. It will state they are to work 2.5 hours per day at \$17 per hour, which is in line with what other towns in our area pay their new crossing guards. Also, since alternate crossing guards should not get paid more than a new hire, their pay structure needs to be changed. We recommend that effective at our re-organization meeting on 1/2/15, all alternates will be hired by resolution stating they will get paid \$17 per hour and work 2.5 hour days. The Borough will save \$3,133.87 per year for every new hire and will save at least \$850 per year for the change to the way alternates are paid. We have 10 crossing guards, so over time, we will save over \$30,000 by implementing this plan.

Councilman Mathieu expressed concern with the method by which crossing guards are paid with regard to unemployment reporting. Brief discussion followed and Councilwoman Todisco said she'd check with the CFO to determine how unemployment is reported for crossing guards.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Bruce Paterson of 325 Willow Avenue commented on the fence matter, Open Space Trust Fund matching grant program and opt out of medical benefits matter.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: 8:10 p.m. Workshop, **Action:** Adjourn, **Moved by** Council President Tarantino, **Seconded by** Councilwoman Todisco.

CHRISTINA M. ARIEMMA, Municipal Clerk
Borough of Garwood