

**Borough of Garwood Workshop Meeting of
The Mayor and Council
WORKSHOP
MINUTES
February 13, 2018**

Start Time: 7:00 p.m.

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Westfield Leader, advertised on January 4, 2018, 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).

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| Mayor Lombardo | P | | |
| Councilwoman Blumenstock | P | Councilman McCormack | P |
| Councilwoman Cuccaro | P | Councilman Sarno | P |
| Councilman Lazarow | P | Council President Todisco | P |

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

Mayor Lombardo made a presentation to the Garwood Mustangs

Borough Attorney Robert Renaud mentioned the Hartman Park project and the statute mentioned at the last meeting. He informed council that the statute requires Planning Board review in capital expenditures, but not all capital items. He explained in detail. He mentioned the regulations being reviewed by the Laws and Licenses Committee. He also mentioned an executive session is necessary, but no action will be taken.

Administrator/Clerk Christina M Ariemma – ***NO REPORT***

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Lombardo:

I have reached out to our RVSA representative, Steve Greet, and he has tentatively scheduled a representative of RVSA to come before us at our March 27th Council meeting to explain our 2018 increase. Pre-registration has started for Garwood's annual Town Wide Yard Sale. The sale will be held on Saturday, June 9, and Sunday, June 10, between the hours of 9 AM to 4 PM. No permits or fees are required but participants must pre-register to avoid paying permit charges.

Due to major conflicting events in Garwood on Saturday, March 17th, I will be moving the Mayor's Wellness Campaign's 3K Walk with the Mayor to the following Saturday, March 24th, to start at noon at Borough Hall. Mayor's Saturday will still be held on Saturday, March 17th, beginning at 11:00 AM at Borough Hall.

First I would like to thank the local resident for inquiring about the placing of a manger on town property. The Borough currently has two iconic and significant symbols displayed in December, which play a major part in celebrating our winter holiday season, a Christmas Tree and a Menorah. Nationally, these are the most frequently used symbols to celebrate Christmas and Hanukkah, and often they are considered secular holiday symbols more than religious symbols. The Menorah is a symbol of hope, recounting the miracle of one day of oil lasting for eight days, and the Christmas tree is evergreen, reminding us that after the hardships of winter, spring will bring forth new life. Although some may argue that the Menorah is promoting the Jewish faith, it is not the same as displaying a Torah or Star of David, which would be similar to displaying a Christmas manger scene, as they are deeply religious in nature.

Our county's highest court has provided guidelines for public decorations and observances that mark the holiday season, keeping the proper separation of Church and State. The United States Supreme Court has offered a three prong test as to whether any government action, including the act of decorating for the holiday, violates the Establishment Clause of the Constitution.

The action must have a secular purpose: its primary effect must not either advance or inhibit religion; and it must not result in excessive government entanglement with religion.

As such, a manger scene is one the most powerful and religious symbols of Christmas in the Christian world, and would appear to advance or promote Christianity as it celebrates one of the most important events in the Christian calendar.

I believe if we install a manger scene, we would be over-stepping our boundary of keeping the proper separation between Church and State, by promoting the Christian religion on Borough property. Manger scenes can be found at any one of our local churches during the Christmas Season, and any and all residents are free to visit them as they see fit.

Comments or matters for discussion from members of Council:

Council President Blumenstock commented on a matter concerning soccer balls entering yards next to the Sports Field. Councilman Lazarow commented.

Councilwoman Cuccaro commented on Mayor's statement concerning the placement of a manger on borough property.

Councilman Lazarow commented on proposal for projects from Girl Scouts. Brief discussion followed. Councilwoman Todisco commented on the bird feeders. It was clarified that they are bird houses, not bird feeders. She also commented on the buddy bench.

Council President Blumenstock commented on the location and provided further detail. Brief discussion followed.

Councilman Lazarow mentioned the batting cage matter. He provided more information.

Mr. Renaud suggested we ask Green Acres about the matter. Councilwoman Todisco commented.

Councilman McCormack asked Mayor Lombardo to re-read the message about the menorah. Brief comments were made.

Councilman Sarno mentioned the insurance matter in an effort to reduce costs. He asked council to direct the Administrator to acquire the claims information.

Brief discussion followed.

Ms. Ariemma was directed to obtain the claims data.

Councilwoman Todisco

1. Volunteer Reward Card - The volunteer reward program is underway and we are now up to 9 Garwood businesses participating in the program and I look forward to getting these cards in the hands of our volunteers in April.
2. Appreciation Breakfast - A few years ago, in 2015, I encouraged a crossing guard appreciation breakfast to be held and it was a nice event led by then Chief of Police, Bruce Underhill. I mentioned this at a Police Committee meeting, while I was on that committee, and I just wanted to voice public support for this taking place again. Our crossing guards provide an important service to Garwood's children and many may think it falls under the jurisdiction of the school, but it's actually of our Police Department. To take it a step further, I think we should consider doing more staff appreciation events or something of that nature. As the saying goes, a little goes along way, and I think we should come together as a Council to support this.
3. Council Meeting Presentations - Great having the water company at the last meeting, but I think it would be worthwhile to ask NJ American Water to come back to a Council meeting to speak about the progress and answer any resident questions, once we are in the midst of the work. Also, I would like to ask the RVSA to make a presentation to the Council and public at one of our upcoming meetings as they have done most years I have been on the Council to explain the flow, how the annual payment is determined, and what is new at the RVSA as well as to answer questions. I've already spoke to our representative to the RVSA, Steve Greet, and he said they would be happy to attend.
4. School safety - In light of the recent tragedy in Parkland, Florida, I know a number of parents want to make sure Lincoln School is as safe as possible for their children, and every resident of Garwood wants the same. I am confident that our Police Department and School Administration have worked together on safety measures and procedures. A couple years ago, the Council was invited to watch an active shooter training session for our local police officers, which I and others attended. I am also aware that Superintendent Quigley emailed information on school security to parents recently. To add to that, however, I think it is very important that our community feels secure and I would like to suggest a joint public meeting be held, led by our Police Chief, School Superintendent, and Mayor, to provide information and answer questions. I know that for security purposes, all details will not be able to be provided, but I believe it would help provide reassurance.

Councilman Lazarow commented on Councilwoman Todisco's statements. Mayor Lombardo commented as did Council President Blumenstock.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

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

Al DelConte, 545 Locust Avenue thanked Mayor and Council for presentation to the Mustangs. He commented on the turf field matter. He mentioned re-lining the field. He commented on the equipment for

field hockey. He commented on the vegetation spraying of the brook. Brief discussion followed. He asked about a street sweeper and bucket truck for the borough.

Council President Blumenstock commented.

Councilman Sarno also commented.

Bruce Paterson, 325 Willow Avenue commented on recreation matters. He asked about using the street sweeper. He commented on RVSA costs. He commented on other matters.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Councilwoman Cuccaro, Second by Council President Blumenstock to adjourn

Time: 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



CHRISTINA M. ARIEMMA, Municipal Clerk
Borough of Garwood