

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

April 24, 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).

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 Catherine DeAppolonio, Esq.

Borough Attorney Robert was absent. Catherine DeAppolonio was present - ***NO REPORT***.

Administrator/Clerk Christina M Ariemma mentioned the Students in Government. All agreed to hold SIG on May 15th at 6:00 p.m. She also mentioned the Memorial Day Parade. Ms. Ariemma was directed to respond that Garwood Council will attend the parade.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Lombardo:

I am in receipt of an email from Mr. Chris Minks, representing Russo Development. Through my many conversations with him, in conjunction with Chief Wright, he is thrilled to tell us that his construction department will be able to relocate and move the fencing installed in the lot next to the Firehouse. That will open up many more parking spaces for senior club, fire and police departments, having direct access through the first parking entrance.

I have also formed a committee of myself and Mr. Lazarow to coordinate a ribbon cutting ceremony at the soon to be renovated Hartman Park on Second Avenue. This committee will be supported by the Borough's Celebrations Committee in organizing this event. More details will be announced as soon as they are available.

As previously mentioned, the Liquid Church will again be conducting a free Senior Outreach Program for light yard work and planting. This will take place on Saturday, May 12th from 9 AM to noon, with a rain date of May 19th. Their representative will join me at the next Senior Club meeting to explain the details. Sign-up sheets for seniors will be available at the meeting.

Just a reminder: This Saturday, April 28th, I will again take Mayor's Saturday "on the road". This time it will be held at Escapology on South Avenue, from 11:00 AM to noon. I have invited Councilman Joe Sarno to join me. Please stop by to chat or express your concerns. Immediately following Mayor's Saturday, I will resume the Mayor's Wellness Campaign with our 3K walk, beginning at Borough Hall at approximately 12:15. This is open to all residents, regardless of ability, as it is "a walk", not a competition.

Comments or matters for discussion from members of Council:

Council President Blumenstock: Thank you, Mayor. First, I want to just give my thanks to the DPW. I know Councilman Lazarow will discuss it further in his report, but the DPW has done a terrific job helping us with the demo work at Hartman Park, a project that is obviously very important to me. I've been liaising with the Department throughout this last week to just oversee the work, and they've been very helpful so I just wanted to extend my appreciation.

I also want to thank the Garwood Fire Department for inviting us to attend their drills this past week. I was able to spend a couple of hours watching the firefighters use the house that will soon be razed on Russo 2 to simulate fire and rescue scenarios. It really is something to see them in action first-hand. I got to ask many questions and learned a lot about their operations. Thank you to Chief Tweedle and his whole department.

Also, I wanted to announce that on May 1st, the Board of Education will be holding an important safety forum at 7pm before their budget meeting. This forum will allow the public an opportunity to

ask the Superintendent questions and offer their suggestions about school safety. In the aftermath of all these school shootings, I know I felt it was important that we always continue to re-examine Lincoln School's safety measures and hear from our school authorities about all they do to protect our children and teachers. So I am extremely happy to have this opportunity and encourage everyone, not just parents of school children, but all residents to attend.
Thank you, Mayor.

Councilwoman Cuccaro

We as elected members of council have an obligation to make sure the safety of our residents and the safety of those that put their lives on the line everyday takes precedence over everything.

This of course includes the safety of all those that volunteer for our Fire Department. Unfortunately I was not a part of the finance committee over the past few year so I was not privy to the mistakes of the past regarding funding, we put our trust to those that made the decisions and move on.

Also unfortunate has been the politicization of the decisions of this year's finance committee of which I have the honor of sitting on.

The spins and fabrications coming out by those with an agenda have been outright disgusting. That said we need to make a decision, we need to decide what is truly important so I am asking my colleagues up here to make a tough but obvious decision.

It is obvious now that decisions on spending for projects that are nice to have should have been looked at more closely against things that we need to have, like safety equipment for the Fire Department.

I am asking that this council reconsider the full funding of Hartman Park and re-allocate those funds to ensure the safety of the men and women that risk their lives running into burning and houses.

We should not punish the Fire Department because of poor decisions like the design of the Garwood Athletic field which is setting the tax payers back about \$150,000.

We need to learn from the mistakes of the past and make decisions based on needs over wants. We already spent \$3.2 million on an athletic field that includes a park. As I said, lets please revisit the funding of Hartman Park, scale it down over 2 years and take care of the safety of our Fire Department.

Councilman Lazarow commented on Councilwoman Cuccaro's statement.

Councilman McCormack commented on comments made at the last council meeting, including apologizing to Councilman Lazarow for accusations made at the last meeting.

Councilman Sarno: On Monday April 16th Councilwomen Todisco, Blumenstock, and I headed over to Roselle Park to discuss the premise and potential of having shared services with the DPW of their borough. We were joined by their Acting Superintendent, Borough Clerk, Municipal Engineer, and their municipal shared services committee, which consists of 3 committee members. In our meeting, we found that they are actively pursuing a full-time Superintendent and are in the beginning stages of reaching out to neighboring towns to see if there's an opportunity to share various services including but not limited Superintendent and scheduled street sweeping. We shared information regarding our current arrangement with Fanwood and what the current make-up of our DPW staff and inventory is today. We spoke about potential needs, wants, and most of all established a foundation so future communication can easily be achieved between our two boroughs.

Our committee agrees, that there isn't the potential at this moment to go into a shared service, however the door is open should the situation present itself in the future. Thank you.

Councilwoman Todisco thanked the Police Department for giving a tour to homeschooled children today and found out they give frequent tours like this one. She also thanked the Fire Dept. for inviting the Council members to attend the drills it held this past week and was able to make two of the three drills and it was very eye-opening.

She encouraged the Council and Mayor to make sure Russo Development holds a town hall style meeting about what measures they are taking to ensure safety during demolition. Residents around that area need to be reassured that everything is safe. Russo already agreed to hold the meeting. It's just now a matter of setting a date. She commented on Councilwoman Cuccaro's report saying she frankly felt blindsided by her comments on the budget as she has spoken with

her multiple times since the last Council meeting and thought they were standing by the Finance Committee's recommendation of a \$7,000 increase for the Fire Dept. operating expenses. She wished Councilwoman Cuccaro brought this up sooner as a member of the committee so they could potentially come up with an alternative plan to present tonight. Councilwoman Todisco said am open-minded and am willing to listen to any suggestions the Council has about the budget later in the regular meeting.

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.

Bruce Paterson, 325 Willow Avenue asked about Haz-mat plan. He commented that the asbestos is already almost removed. He commented on other matters.

Al Del Conte, 545 Locust Avenue commented on the Elizabethtown Gas project. Mayor Lombardo said he would contact the Borough Engineer.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Councilman Sarno, Second by Councilwoman Todisco to adjourn
Time: 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



CHRISTINA M. ARIEMMA, Municipal Clerk
Borough of Garwood