



**CITY OF ABSECON**  
**Municipal Complex**  
**500 Mill Road**  
**Absecon, New Jersey 08201**

**Carie A. Crone, RMC**  
**Municipal Clerk**

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**CITY COUNCIL**

**MAY 7, 2020**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**THIS MEETING WAS HELD AS A ZOOM MEETING.**

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Keith Bennett at 5:20 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Butch Burroughs, Sandy Cain, Caleb Cavileer, Betty Howell, Steve Light, Keith Bennett

**ABSENT:** Frank Phillips

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mayor Horton, Fred Scerni, Jessica Thompson, Carie Crone, Eddie Dennis

**PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON THE SUNSHINE LAW  
NOTIFICATION THAT THIS MEETING IS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED**

**Keith** – read a letter regarding taxes and thanking the governing body and CFO for protecting our surplus fund because of the negative effect the Covid-19 pandemic will have on the city's anticipated revenues. He also thanked the solicitor for providing a legally sound resolution to dealing with the seasonal and transient tenants in the motels along Route 30.

**Chief J.R. Laughlin** – thanked Mayor, Council and residents for all their support during this unprecedented time. As to the homeless situation, we worked many hours trying to get them the proper care and help. We had no idea how many we had and it put a restrain on our first responders and our community. It also makes us go through our PPE quicker. They have been moved now into places where they can get the kind of help they need. He asked people to stop posting false facts on social media and to keep social distancing. We should look out for everyone at this time. He asked everyone to also refrain from having drive-up parades, gatherings, etc. We can all get through this as a community if we work at it.

**Keith** – commented that not having parades was sad and unfortunate and thanked him and the emergency management team for the work they are doing during the pandemic.

**PRESENTATION** – Jim Eberwine – Emergency Management Coordinator  
Spoke on everything they have been doing since day one. March 8<sup>th</sup> was the first notice from the County and he thanked the Mayor for having weekly meetings to review things. Our first concern is

our first responders because they have to go out to the unknown when they get a call. We also called the nursing home in Absecon and he's been in contact with them almost every day. We've given them PPE and have tried to help them out as much as we can. When the homeless situation happened, our first concern was for safety of them and the people who came in contact. They had to have the right PPE, which they didn't have at first. We were able to get more supplies sent to us and he feels we are going to need a lot more. He thanked Betty for getting us 1200 masks a couple of weeks ago. He applauds everyone who is helping out and working hard. Even Lloyd, supervisor of Public Works had N95 masks that he gave us.

## REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

### 2020 ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION

- 04** Bond Ordinance providing for the 2020 Road Improvement Program, by and in the City of Absecon, in the County of Atlantic, State of New Jersey; appropriating \$133,000 therefore and authorizing the issuance of \$126,350 Bonds or Notes of the city to finance part of the cost thereof.

Motion to move – Councilman Burroughs – second – Councilman Cavileer  
Jessica – this is to fund the balance of Bayview Drive that is not covered under the DOT grant we received. It needs to be done so we can move forward with that road.

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Bennett, yes

- 05** Providing for a Supplemental Appropriation of \$278,000 for the acquisition of Block 220, Lots 12 and 13 on the tax map of the City of Absecon, in the County of Atlantic, New Jersey and the construction of a new Firehouse of in and by the City, authorizing the issuance of \$278,000 Bonds or Notes to finance the cost thereof.

Motion to move – Councilwoman Cain – second – Councilwoman Howell  
Eddie – this is simply the 2020 portion of the overall firehouse budget. This is not an increase, it's the final piece of the budget that was laid out in October 2019.

Jessica – she clarified some facts regarding the structure of the taxes on the property sold and the new construction to be done

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Bennett, yes

- 06** Re-appropriating \$353,000.00 proceeds of obligations not needed for their original purposes to provide for Road Improvements.

Motion to move – Councilwoman Cain – second – Councilman Burroughs  
Jessica – these are taken from different ordinances where the funds were not used and using them instead of borrowing and explaining where the funds came from.

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Bennett, yes

- 07** Amending Chapter 330 to designate a multi-way stop intersection at Highland Blvd., Morton Ave., Tenth Ave. and Ritz Dr.

Motion to move – Councilwoman Howell – second – Councilman Burroughs  
Eddie – Highland Blvd. will be getting micro-surfaced on Monday and striped and a 4 way stop installed at Highland and Tenth Avenues. New signage will be put up as well to notify the public of a new traffic situation. There will be bike lanes on Highland Blvd similar to ones on Lisbon Ave.

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Bennett, yes

## CONSENT AGENDA

- 60** Authorizing Change Order No. 1 for the Construction of the New Fire Department Facility.

Eddie – explained this is an increase the bid allowance or contract allowance of \$25,000, since the first one was kept low. They are usually around 5%, but we included a minimal amount of 2%. It's a common industry practice and this is also included in the firehouse budget and not an additional cost.

- 61** Authorizing Remington & Vernick, City Engineers, to administer the bidding and construction services for the City Hall Retaining Wall Replacement in the City of Absecon.

Eddie - we are getting ready to go out to bid and are finishing up the design phase now. Hopefully May we can go out to bid.

- 62** Authorizing the City Engineer, Remington & Vernick, to design and coordinate bids for the reconstruction of Bayview Drive – Phase 2.

Eddie - we discussed this already and it's the only road we will be doing this year

- 63** Authorizing Remington & Vernick, City Engineers, to administer the bidding and construction services for the Pitney Road Pedestrian Safety Improvements in the City of Absecon.

Eddie – this is the sidewalks on Connecticut Avenue and the County is contributing \$45,000. Hopes to go out to bid in May and approve it at the second meeting in June and work could start in July.

- 64** Authorizing Change Order No. 4-Final for the New Jersey Ave. and Highland Blvd. Drainage Improvements.

Eddie - this is final one for this project. It's due to increase costs of the project

Steve – asked about the lighting at the retaining wall and at the school

- 65** Authorizing an extension of the grace period for the payment of property taxes for the 2nd quarter of 2020.

Keith – the governor has allowed us to extend it and he feels it's the right thing to do and asks Council to approve the extension until May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Jessica – this grace period will be until May 22<sup>nd</sup> and after that interest will be charged back to May 1<sup>st</sup>. We will be falling short in a lot of fees we usually receive in 2020 and explained why it's wise to be ready for situations that could affect our cash flow.

Betty – would agree to extend the grace period to May 22

Motion to open to the public for comment on the consent agenda items – Councilman Cavileer – second – Councilman Light

All were in favor.

No questions were typed in at the chat feature

Motion to close public portion – Councilman Burroughs – second – Councilwoman Howell

All were in favor.

Keith read the Consent Agenda Resolutions again.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda – Councilwoman Cain – second – Councilman Cavileer

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Bennett, yes

**APPROVAL OF BILL LIST – \$1,629,759.81 (4/16/2020)**  
**\$1,352,194.80 (5/7/2020)**

Motion to approve – Councilman Cavileer – second – Councilwoman Howell

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Bennett, yes

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Regular Meeting Minutes – 3/19/2020

Regular Meeting Minutes – 4/2/2020

Special Emergency Meeting Minutes – 4/17/2020 (will be on next agenda due to it being a closed session)

Motion to approve – Councilman Cavileer – second – Councilman Burroughs

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, abstain on 3/19 and yes on 4/2; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Bennett, yes

## **REPORTS**

**Jessica** – shredding should be rescheduled possibly in the fall. She thanked Barry Hackett and the Field of Dreams for donating water to the emergency personnel. Reminded everyone that the Census needs to be completed. Our website is being updated continuously.

**Eddie** – the firehouse project is moving along and it's nice to see structure going up. Micro-surfacing is being done and the 2019 road program is being finished on Meadowview and Oakhurst Avenue. The gas company doing an expansive project that will touch a lot of streets. Once he has more information he will let us know.

**Betty** – asked Eddie to look into Stone Circle where a utility company did some work and there are some holes in the street in front of 1, 3 & 4.

**Kim Horton** – she hopes all our residents are healthy and safe and hopefully everyone is checking on their neighbors. We are having daily conversations about what is going on and putting any information on our website that we get. She thanked our solicitors for preparing our resolution that dealt with the homeless people situation in our community. She also thanked our Emergency Management members Jim and Tony who have worked tirelessly during this situation and making sure we have everything we need. They are constantly reaching out to the County and State for PPE and communicate with me and the police chief often to give us updates. There will be a meeting next week to discuss the opening of our county. Suggestions will be given and a plan formulated to give to the State. She has also been in touch with the School Superintendent who has said that virtual learning is going well and the teachers are communicating with the students. Our eligible students are still getting their five meals on a once a week delivery. The PTO is having a food drive on May 15<sup>th</sup> and bins will be placed in front of the school from 8:30 to 12:30 to support the food bank. Seniors are also able to get meals delivered from the County if needed.

**Steve** – acknowledged and commended everyone for going the extra mile during this time. He is proud of the job that everyone is doing and what we've accomplished.

## **PUBLIC PORTION**

Motion to open to the public was made by Councilman Burroughs – second – Councilman Cavileer  
All were in favor.

Keith read the questions from the chat room:

Louis – Have the Transient Residents been removed from the Hotel?

Chief Laughlin – County has relocated them, but that's not to say their all gone. Asked residents to call in if they see something. The new Class II officers will be starting work shortly as well. He asked parents to remind the kids of social distancing and not to get upset if we stop the kids from what they are doing. He is going to get better clarification from the State regarding the drive ups and any type of parades, so residents will have to stop it at this time.

Keith – Also feel free to reach out to Council Members.

G.S. – Thanked Councilwoman Howell for insight into taxpayer situation. Does the City have estimated percentage of property tax revenue at risk of not being paid to due pandemic?

Jessica – 10-15%

G.S. – Royal Farms PILOT Revenues?

Jessica – No exact information on Royal Farms too early to say, need sizing information to get assessed value. Royal Farms and Firestone will bring in about 60% to offset the Firehouse.

John – What PILOT proceeds are estimated to be on an annual basis?

Jessica – Before any money is borrowed the \$1.675 million from redeveloper will be taken off first. We've received 2/3 of that already and final payment will be received once Firehouse is empty.

Motion to close public – Councilwoman Howell – second – Councilwoman Cain  
All were in favor.

Betty – announced that Norma Jean Whitaker and Norman Draper have passed away

Steve – thanked the Carpenter's Union for their continuing work on the ramp at the Legion. John Farinelli who is doing the electric work. Having this ramp, will really help the Legion out.

Don – said Lloyd and his crew are doing a nice job around town and everything looks great. They had the ceiling tiles replaced in City Hall since it has been closed.

Caleb – he's impressed with the businesses in town and what they have done to try to keep things going. They are even donating many meals to organizations. It's Teacher's Appreciation Week, so he wished his colleagues and all teachers a big thank you for all they do. Absecon Nursery School will be closing unfortunately after 51 years.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn – Councilman Cavileer– second – Councilman Light  
All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



Carie A. Crone, City Clerk

Approved: 5-21-2020