



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

Carie A. Crone, RMC
Municipal Clerk

CITY COUNCIL

JUNE 4, 2020

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

THIS MEETING WAS HELD AS A ZOOM MEETING.

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Keith Bennett at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

ABSENT: none

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

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON THE SUNSHINE LAW

NOTIFICATION THAT THIS MEETING IS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED

PRESENTATION – Jim Eberwine – Emergency Management

Jim – we are into day 88 now and the last two weeks have settled down a bit. He touched a little bit on the storms we just had and what was going to happen tonight. He thanked the Mayor and Council for being able to him. There has been some increase in COVID cases and we will be watching to see if numbers go up as restrictions ease up. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is planning on opening up June 13th. He spoke with the County on Tuesday and they weren't overly concerned about anything increasing too dramatically. He ordered some more PPE and everyone should be fine for now. He thanked everyone for being supportive of them.

Mayor – stated some numbers for Atlantic County. Numbers are going up still and the website is being updated with counts.

Chief Laughlin – he thanked Jim and Tony Giardina for all their work. We are in good hands with them. People don't see the behind the scenes work that they do. Jim is on it every day. As far as the numbers, and most of the deaths that have occurred have been from the nursing home. He gets notified of any case and last week was busy, but it's starting to get light.

Hopefully people are getting better and we get through this. He thinks the light at the end of the tunnel will be when a vaccine is found. He then spoke on the protests that are taking place. We all need to come together to get through this troubled times. Everyone's well-being matters. There are many peaceful demonstrations, but only the troubled ones are being shown. He said people can contact his office with any questions or concerns.

Bennett – thanked him for what he said so correctly. We are all praying for this department and its safety as well as other departments. These are difficult times and you never know what is going to happen.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA

- 71** Consenting to the appointment of Captain to the City of Absecon Police Department, namely Christian Stoll.

Keith – with J.R. getting promoted, this position was left vacant and needs to be filled. He has known Chris for a long time and knows he will do a good job.

Kim – the pyramid needs to be filled, so the duties for that position can get done.

- 72** Authorizing the submission of an application for grant funding and the execution of a grant contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the reconstruction of Woodcrest Avenue and Hobart Avenue (Priority 1).

- 73** Authorizing the submission of an application for grant funding and the execution of a grant contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the reconstruction of Coolidge Avenue (Priority 2)

- 74** Authorizing the submission of an application for grant funding and the execution of a grant contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the Central Business District Streetscape – Phase 4.

Eddie – explained these resolutions are annual DOT grant applications. Two are for the road program and he explained where the streets are. The last one is to continue the street scape down past Rt. 9 up to Michigan Avenue.

- 75** Authorizing the Tax Collector to cancel taxes for 2020 Final/2021 Preliminary and to refund the overpayment of taxes for the 2nd quarter of 2020 on the property located at 48 W. Delray Lane (Block 258, Lot 1.07).

PUBLIC PORTION (Agenda Items only)

Motion to open to the public – Councilman Light – second – Councilwoman Howell
All were in favor.

Greg Seher – asked if council could discuss the lawsuit that was done at the end of the last meeting

Fred Scerni – in terms of the substance of litigation, he wouldn't advise it right now because it has not been totally resolved. Once litigation is resolved, it can be discussed fully. Council did engage a potential settlement strategy, but as of now, that has not been fully executed.

Greg Seher – thanked him for the update.

E. Conklin – asked how Absecon can be more connected with the African American community
Bennett – we've had discussions about this, so asked the police chief to speak about diversification
Chief Laughlin – he would like to see more of that here. In order to get more connected with the residents, we need more community engagement through different kinds of events. Since he took over as chief, his ideas had to slow down because of the virus.

Greg Seher – asked for an update of the firehouse construction
Eddie – all trades are on site now. We are awaiting an updated schedule from the contractor. They are a bit behind, but nothing catastrophic. That is due to the last couple of months and deliveries being stalled. They are moving on all cylinders now.

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

Keith read the Consent Agenda Resolutions again.
Motion to approve Consent Agenda – Councilman Light – second – Councilman Phillips
ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Phillips, yes;
Bennett, yes

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST – \$381,999.98

Motion to approve – Councilman Cavileer – second – Councilwoman Cain
ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, yes; Phillips, yes;
Bennett, yes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes – 5/21/2020
Closed Session as to form and content only – 5/21/20
Motion to approve – Councilman Burroughs – second – Councilman Cavileer
ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Light, abstain; Phillips, abstain;
Bennett, yes

REPORTS

Edward Dennis – we will get an update on the road program from Mr. Burroughs next. The sidewalk around the school is out to bid and hopefully work will be done in July. The wall project at City Hall is getting ready to go out to bid. The next phase of Bayview Drive is in design, which will be a summer project. The redevelopment project on Memorial Field will be starting up again soon. The DOT permit was the hold up. We are finishing up review and coordination with the gas company on a project that they will be doing around town. They will have to repair our roads to the condition that we had them.

Bennet – loves the striping on Highland Blvd. It actually slowed him down. The four way stop is fantastic and it's really helping out.

Ed Dennis – agrees with him. It should have an impact on speed.

Burroughs – Lloyd is continuing with routine maintenance throughout the town. At the boat ramp, new signs are being installed and a fresh coat of clam shells. Highland Blvd. is completed and the parking lot on Pitney Road was repaved. Work near Spruce and Oakhurst will be done next week.

Light – mentioned the lights at Turner Cove that are out; boat ramp pilings need some minor repair with the bumpers; asked about the corner of Connecticut Avenue and a depression and how that will be handled; and the Morton Avenue crosswalk looks great but he feels it's dark and maybe the lights could be changed.

Ed Dennis– he sent something for extra lighting at Morton Avenue and will follow up with the electric company. At Connecticut and Pitney Road there are a couple of spots where the ground is low, so we have included in our bid for some fill.

Frank – isn't there money in an account for the boat ramp?

Jessica – yes we do. That's where the money for the boat ramp permits goes to.

Ed – he will forward some lighting options to him for Highland Avenue and he will be following up on the lights at Turner Cove.

Mayor – thanked Charlie Rosenbaum for the Memorial Day remembrance as well as Adam and Evan Monteith for their video. Mrs. Lorraine Hurd, a long time resident asked her to thank the dispatch center and police department for looking out for her every day. She appreciates it very much. This is a program open to any senior residents who need it. She will be participating in the 8th grade graduation next week. She mentioned that the school lost \$356,247 in funding for next year. She also thanked our emergency management team who are doing so much during this time. She thanked the Police Chief and the department for their willingness to go the extra mile with our young residents. We need positive relationships with everyone and everyone should feel safe.

Phillips – he is still getting requests about our meeting times and the possibility of making them 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC PORTION

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

Greg Seher – feels one hour is a big deal at this time of day for people who work until 5:00 p.m. Absecon is in the minority in the County having meetings at this time.

Bennett – he's gotten a few calls on it as well and he is okay with any time. When we changed it we said we would try it out and if it didn't work, we could change it. Maybe we could do one meeting at 5:00 p.m. and one at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor – different times for each meeting might be confusing.

Bennett – when the pandemic clears and we can have meetings in person, we can address the issue again

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

Chief Laughlin - congratulated the 2020 HSHS graduates and he knows it's a peculiar time, but we have the honor of helping out with the drive up graduation this weekend.

Bennett – congratulated all the graduates of Absecon and also thanked everyone who reached out to him for his tough week. It meant a lot.

Light – acknowledged the losses of Keith’s Mom and Tony Glass, another resident of our community. Congratulated Chris Stoll on his promotion.

Howell – St. Elizabeth will still be live streaming mass on Sunday

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,


Carie A. Crone, City Clerk

Approved: 6-18-2020