

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD
MAYOR AND COUNCIL WORK SESSION
DECEMBER 1, 2020**

PRESENT: Mayor Arvin Amatorio and Council President Rafael Marte, Council members Thomas A. Lodato, Buddy Deauna, Ora Kornbluth, Hernando Rivera, and Marc Pascual

ABSENT: No one.

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Administrator Corey Gallo
Borough Attorney John Schettino
Borough Clerk Marie Quinones

Mayor Amatorio called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. with the reading of the Open Public Meetings Act Statement, "In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the notice requirements have been satisfied. Meeting dates for the year are confirmed at the Annual Meeting. The Annual Notice is sent to the Record, Star Ledger, Twin Boro News, and Cablevision, placed on two Municipal Bulletin Boards and is on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk."

The Salute to the Flag was led by Council President Marte.

AGENDA CHANGES

Motion made by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Council President Marte to add resolution 20-357 to the consent agenda and remove resolution 20-358.

PRESENTATIONS

A. Proclamations

Mayor Amatorio presented Ms. Ima Nair a proclamation in honor of her receiving the Supernova Award from the Boy Scouts of America. Mayor Amatorio read the proclamation into the record.

Ms. Nair's project mentor stated it is a great honor for Ima to receive this award. She worked hard and has encouraged other kids to take the same path to increase their knowledge in science and math.

B. Police Department Presentations

Police Chief Rabboh stated today is his first time in the capacity as Chief of Police that he gets to recognize a civilian for her community involvement and also recognize four officers for their heroic actions taken for what started as a medical assistance call to wrestling with an armed individual. Chief Rabboh thanked Mayor Amatorio, Borough Administrator Gallo, and the governing body for their support. He thanked everyone in attendance and for their support.

Chief Rabboh stated he would like to recognize Cynthia Sherman for suggestion that police officers take part in birthday drives for children in the community cheer up their spirits during the first wave of the COVID-19. Chief Rabboh stated it was a great idea to make sure the community was uplifted during the most difficult times. He thanked Ms. Sherman for all she has done and for her community involvement.

Mayor Amatorio presented Ms. Sherman with a citation and read it into the record.

Chief Rabboh recognized 4 police officers for searching and locating an emotionally disturbed and possibly suicidal male who had fled the hospital against medical advice. They searched various addresses the person was known to frequent throughout the night. Three hours later one of the

police officers located the man at the intersection of S. Washington Avenue and Carnation Street. Upon arrival, it was determined the man should be transported back to Englewood Medical Center. The police officers patiently tried to convince him to return to the hospital but instead the man attacked the police officers with the extended side of a nail clipper repeatedly, causing stab wounds to several of the officers' faces and heads. Two of the police officers immediately tried to subdue the male and remove the weapon from his hand. After a significant struggle, the weapon was recovered and the male was secured for his safety. Due to the unrelenting resistance, patience, and restraint, the male was located, disarmed, and transported to the hospital where he received the treatment he needed. Chief Rabboh stated he cannot commend the four police officers enough for doing their job in the manner they handled it. They displayed professionalism and empathy while dealing with a suicidal male. He is proud and honored to say these are the officers representing the department and the community and to give them the excellent merit citations. Chief Rabboh stated he wanted to also recognize every police officer standing in the back of the room as this year has been a tough year for everyone. Each police officer came in every single day and did their job professionally at all times. Chief Rabboh thanked them for their outstanding work.

1. Oath of Office to Police Officer James Jenkins
 - ❖ Biography of Officer James Jenkins

Chief Rabboh read Mr. Jenkin's biography into the record.

- ❖ **Resolution 20-345**/To Hire James Jenkins to the Rank of Police Officer in the Bergenfield Police Department.

Motion by Councilperson Rivera, second by Council President Marte, that Resolution #20-345 be approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Marte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

The Oath of Office was administered by Mayor Amatorio.

2. Oath of Office to Police Officer Shuhed Islam

- ❖ Biography of Officer Shuhed Islam

Chief Rabboh read the biography into the record.

- ❖ **Resolution 20-346**/To Hire Shuhed Islam to the Rank of Police Officer in the Bergenfield Police Department.

Motion by Councilperson Rivera, second by Councilperson Deauna, that Resolution #20-346 be approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Marte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

The Oath of Office was administered by Mayor Amatorio.

Councilperson Deauna congratulated Ima Nair for achieving something exemplary. He welcomed the two police officers. They have joined the finest and safest town in Bergen County. They are an added asset to the town. Councilperson Deauna thanked Cynthia Sherman for her service.

Council President Marte congratulated Ima and thanked Ms. Sherman for her contribution to the community. He thanked the four officers for their bravery and keeping everyone safe. Council President Marte thanked and welcomed officers Jenkins and Islam for choosing Bergenfield.

Councilperson Kornbluth congratulated Ima. It gives her great pleasure, as a mother of three female engineers, and proud to see another female excel in the stem sciences. She thanked the four officers that received citations and every officer in the back of the room for what they do for the residents of Bergenfield on a daily basis. She welcomed Officers Jenkins and Islam to a great town and a great department. Councilperson Kornbluth wished them both a long career.

Councilperson Pascual thanked the four officers for what they have done in keeping the town safe as well as the other officers standing in the back. He congratulated Ms. Nair for a job well done and for being a great student and daughter. He stated he is delighted the two new officers chose Bergenfield.

Councilperson Lodato congratulated the civilians recognized tonight and the four officers for their service. He welcomed the two officers who transferred from Paterson to Bergenfield. He wished them many years of safe and productive service to the Police Department and to the residents of Bergenfield.

Councilperson Rivera stated they are so proud of Ima. The future looks bright with people like her. He thanked Cynthia for her ideas. He wished officer Jenkins a Happy Birthday. Councilperson Rivera welcomed officer Jenkins and Islam to the Bergenfield family. They came to a friendly town and will be part of a town that has a lot of diversity and look for stability in the future. He congratulated them and their families for being their biggest support. He thanked the police officers standing in the back for always keeping the citizens of Bergenfield safe.

Mayor Amatorio congratulated Ima for her excellent performance. It is not just tonight based on receiving an award. You have been doing that for several years and that effort is commendable. Cynthia has made a tremendous effort in helping the police department and the chief during the pandemic so the community kids can have a joyful birthday despite the restrictions. He thanked the police officers that rendered the extra mile in doing their job that reflects the entire police department. He congratulated the entire police department and management for the bravery. He welcomed officers Jenkins and Islam and their families to Bergenfield. He wished them a long career and a safe journey. Bergenfield is a peaceful and diverse community.

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Rivera and all present voting in favor the meeting was recessed. The meeting returned to open at 8:46 pm.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/BOROUGH ENGINEER

A. Engineering & Inspection Status Report

Robert Klein, Borough Engineer, stated all of the roads, except for one, have been completed. The last one remaining is Melrose Avenue. The contractor has finished concrete work on that road and some utility work. Mr. Klein explained the contractor is still moving forward with the utility work and should go into next week. He is hopeful they will get in the milling and paving this year but need the weather to cooperate with them. The roads that have been done have been painted. There are some spots that need to be done. As long as they can get in the paving, they should be able to get in the line striping also. Mr. Klein stated once it gets to January, the asphalt lines close. There may not be asphalt available even if the weather is warm. They will monitor over the next week or so of how things are.

Councilperson Kornbluth inquired if they will be able to paint the roads before winter.

Council President Marte inquired if there is a deadline.

Councilperson Deauna inquired if the project will be done by Christmas.

Mr. Klein's response was yes, if the weather cooperates. Melrose Ave is the only road that has not been painted.

ORDINANCES

A. Adoption of Ordinances

The following ordinance published herewith was first read by title only on March 3, 2020 and posted on the bulletin board of the municipal center. **(TABLED 3-17-20)**

ORDINANCE 20-2561 – AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE SALARY RANGES OF EMPLOYEES NOT SUBJECTED TO UNIONIZED CONTRACTUAL UNITS OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD

No action taken.

B. Tabled Ordinance

ORDINANCE 20-2576 – AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED “COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL VEHICLE PARKING” OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD (TABLED 11-17-20)

No action taken.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Bergen County Municipal Joint Insurance Fund Lost Time Accident Frequency Report

Borough Administrator Gallo stated the numbers are trending lower than last year. However, there have been a couple of incidents. The incidents are less serious. There are still injuries the Borough has no control over.

B. Liquor License Transfer

1. Hearing on the Person to Person and Place to Place Transfer of Liquor License No. 0203-33-006-003; The Rodriguez JMKA LLC t/a Two Times – Dos Tiempos located at 81 West Main Street to 333 B&B LLC for premises located at 333 South Washington Avenue

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Deauna to open public comments on hearing on the Person to Person and Place to Place Transfer of Liquor License No. 0203-33-006-003. All present voting in favor, no one opposed.

Public Comments on liquor license transfer.

No one came forward.

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Deauna to close public comments on hearing on the Person to Person and Place to Place Transfer of Liquor License No. 0203-33-006-003. All present voting in favor, no one opposed.

2. **Resolution 20-347**/To Approve the Person to Person and Place to Place Transfer of Liquor License No. 0203-33-006-003; The Rodriguez JMKA LLC t/a Two Times – Dos Tiempos located at 81 West Main Street to 333 B&B LLC for premises located at 333 South Washington Avenue

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Council President Marte, that Resolution #20-347 be approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Marte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Borough Administrator Gallo stated the Borough received the Bergen County Open Space grant award for the renovation of Cooper's Pond. The money will go towards renovating the cement area, sod, and the sprinkler system. Mr. Gallo stated they received funding from the DOT grant for the resurfacing of Anderson Avenue, which will be done next year. Mr. Gallo stated they received \$237,450, but total cost for the work on the job will be \$450,000. He and the DPW started working on the list of roads to be worked on in 2021. Mr. Gallo stated this year they may need to focus on the sidewalks that are being raised because of borough trees. They will need resources for those needs. Mr. Gallo stated the numbers of the COVID-19 cases continue to rise. The recording of the day-to-day data has been lagging behind due to the time from it takes from the point the case is report to when it is inputted in the CDRSS system. There are 100 positive case reported. There were cases that came in from November 14, 2020. Mr. Gallo stated he received statistics on Wednesday for the State of New Jersey and the total was 341,910 positive cases. The total of tested year to date is 6,086,496 and there were significantly less numbers in March. People have to continue practicing social distancing. The report is being pulled daily. DPW has been working diligently. This week is the last week for picking up leaves at the curb and after this week residents will have to bag their leaves. The department has been posting on the borough website daily to notify residents the areas in town the DPW will be picking up leaves. DPW started decorating Washington Avenue with the lighting which will be completed in the next couple of days. Mr. Gallo stated that since Holiday in the Park was cancelled, there will be a virtual tree lighting at Cooper's Pond on Saturday at 5 p.m. He stated there will be singers and the event will be streamed on Facebook.

MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORT

Councilperson Deauna no report

Council President Marte no report

Councilperson Kornbluth stated the recreation department held a small ceremony at Memorial Park baseball field to acknowledge the completion of the renovation. The summer season was cancelled due to the coronavirus. When the governor relaxed their restrictions and Bergenfield's numbers seemed to stay down, three recreational baseball teams played an abbreviated fall season. Baseball season is now finished. The fall basketball season at Memorial Park is finished. Due to the increase in the virus numbers, Holiday in the Park will not be taking place. The recreation director has been in contact with the school's administrators and athletic director for months about gym and field usage. At this time, the gyms will remain closed until virus numbers show improvement. The ambulance BVAC has gone on total calls

of 1,938 calls to date. It is a decrease of 9% compared to the same time last year. They are well stocked with PPE and don't foresee any issues with running out. The OEM director is filing paperwork for FEMA and Cares reimbursement.

Councilperson Pascual

no report

Councilperson Lodato

stated the Planning Board did not meet in November since there were no pending applications. They will meet in December. The fire department has experienced a slight uptick in calls. They answered 10 calls on Thanksgiving Day alone. There is presently 1 member in quarantine. There are 9 members attending training. Training is taking longer than usual due to the COVID-19 restrictions. The fire department is looking forward to the holiday light parade. The Santa Fun fundraiser has been cancelled. The training center has hosted three hands on classes. The fire department is still looking to relocate the two pieces of apparatus.

Mr. Gallo stated he had spoken with the building department regarding the first ordinance that is tabled, and their recommendation is to keep the ordinance tabled and let it die at the end of the year. A new ordinance will be drafted for first reading in January. Mr. Gallo stated that part of the issue is the limitations of the size of the vehicle and height restrictions. The Building Department is looking into what other towns do. Mr. Gallo explained that the reason the resolution to approve Deputy Chief Massey's contract had to be removed is because there is an issue with the language in the version he had on record and apologized to Deputy Chief Massey and the council for having to take it off the agenda.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Smith, resident, stated a couple of years ago an ordinance was passed regarding basketball nets not being on the roads. He stated that there are basketball nets out on Van Valkenburg, Dudley, and Cameron Rd. and should not be allowed. Mr. Smith stated he had brought up the home on Wilbur Street at the last meeting, and was told the computers have to catch up and everything should be updated by October. He commented that it is December 1st and the house which is twice the original size since it was renovated is still being assessed at \$306,000. Mr. Smith inquired this has not been corrected, and expressed that this has been going on for two years. Mr. Smith stated that he hopes something can be done about the taxes, someone is not doing their job. He stated that it is December 1st and things are still not updated. Mr. Smith inquired if the veterans committee can have a presentation at the next meeting. Mr. Smith also stated individual went to the building department and was told he had to go before the zoning board for a 1-foot front yard setback variance. Mr. Smith thought it was ridiculous for someone to go to the zoning board for a 1-foot variance and for the person to put money up in escrow. He inquired if the building department can waive the 1 foot since the 1 foot is going to be granted or can do something where it is allowed.

Borough Attorney Schettino confirmed that the application will need to go to the Zoning Board. He stated that the Zoning Officer has authority only for a minor deviation from an approved plan, so that if a plan gets approved by the board, they might need 2-3 inches and he can approve it. Mr. Schettino stated the board can waive formal site plan requirements making it less expensive to present the application, but it will need to go to the board.

Diana Flagg, resident, inquired who planned the beautiful Christmas decorations on the avenue. She stated that it's like driving through a nightmare and looks horrendous. She expressed the LED lights look horrible. Ms. Flagg stated she never had to pay for holiday lighting on the avenue. She further stated that she never had to pay \$40,000 for a PR firm, this was never done before.

Mayor Amatorio stated there are a lot of people who are commended the borough for the lights.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS TO BE ACTED UPON:

A. CONSENT AGENDA

CONSENT RESOLUTION 20-348. All matters listed below are considered by the Governing Body to be routine in nature. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If any discussion is desired by the Governing Body, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

- a. **20-349/**To Pay Bills
- b. **20-350/**To Approve Tax Settlement – 47 Norfolk Street
- c. **20-351/**To Approve Tax Exemption Status – 31 Pine Drive
- d. **20-352/**To Approve Shared Services Agreement – Maintenance and Repair of Vehicles for 2021 – Borough of Paramus
- e. **20-353/**To Approve Mobile and Portable Equipment Service Agreement – Goosetown Communications
- f. **20-354/**To Approve Fixed Equipment Service Agreement – Goosetown Communications
- g. **20-355/**To Approve Change Order No. 2 – FY'2019 NJDOT North Prospect Avenue Improvements – AJM Contractor
- h. **20-356/**To Approve Pay Certificate No. 2 – FY'2019 NJDOT North Prospect Avenue Improvements – AJM Contractors

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Rivera, to approve the Consent Resolution.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Marte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

B. Resolutions

20-357/To Hire Part-Time DPW Laborer – Gordon Rich

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Deauna, that Resolution 20-357 be approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Marte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

20-358/To Approve Deputy Chief Agreement

COUNCIL COMMENTS

The Mayor and council thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and wished everyone a good night.

CLOSED SESSION

RESOLUTION **20-358**/Authorizing the Governing Body to Enter into Closed Executive Session to discuss:

A. Contracts/Agreements

1. PBA Local 309 Contract Update

Minutes will be taken of the meeting and released to the public at the time that the matter is resolved. After Closed Executive Session, the Mayor and Council will reconvene in the Executive Chambers to adjourn this public meeting.

On a motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Deauna and all present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned to the Closed Session in the Executive Chambers at 9:27 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilperson Rivera, second by Council President Marte and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Quinones
Borough Clerk