

**OFFICIAL MINUTES  
BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD  
MAYOR AND COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
MAY 4, 2021**

PRESENT: Mayor Arvin Amatorio, Council members Thomas A. Lodato, Buddy Deauna, Rafael Marte (arrived at 8:08 pm), Ora Kornbluth, Hernando Rivera, and Marc Pascual

ABSENT: Council President Hernando Rivera

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

Mayor Amatorio called the meeting to order at 8:07 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 Councilperson Lodato.

**AGENDA CHANGES**

Councilperson Kornbluth requested that Resolutions #21-182 and #21-183 be added to the Consent Agenda, and that board and committee appointment be added after Council reports. Councilperson Lodato motioned to add the items to the agenda. Councilperson Pascual seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

**PRESENTATIONS**

**21-158**/To Appoint Qualified Purchasing Agent- Kent Christner

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Lodato that Resolution #21-158 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>	Council President Rivera:	<i>absent</i>
Councilperson Marte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/BOROUGH ENGINEER**

**A. Engineering & Inspection Status Report**

Borough Engineer Klein stated that the work on Anderson Ave is progressing nicely. The contractor needs to video one section of the sewers. The Borough is currently surveying the roads for the 2021 road program, which includes S. Railroad Ave, Davis Drive, Merritt Ave, Spring Ave, and Beverly Place. Mr. Klein stated he and Mr. Gallo met with the residents of Marcotte Lane this evening to discuss improvements that will be made to Marcotte Lane next year. He will complete the survey and provide the concept plan to the residents. It will be the construction project for 2022.

Borough Administrator Gallo explained that there is a lot of sewer and utilities work that needs to be done at Marcotte Lane. He stated that it is a unique situation because there are islands in the middle of the road and there are curves. The borough wants to ensure the work is done properly, since it is not the normal and standard mill and pave situation.

Mayor Amatorio stated he has received emails from the residents in that area with regards to the same. He informed them that it is within the borough's plans, but cannot confirm whether the work will be done this year or the next. Mayor Amatorio commented that the work on Melrose Avenue has been lingering and requested a status.

Mr. Klein stated that the work on Melrose Ave will start tomorrow. He explained that the top layer will be concrete, but resurfaced with asphalt. Mr. Klein stated it will be paved by next week. Mr. Klein stated that the contractors are on schedule with the sewer rehabilitation and lining.

Councilperson Pascual inquired if the double lines are only supposed to be for the intersection on Clinton Avenue.

Mr. Klein stated it was restored to what it was prior to the resurfacing. He commented that he had a conversation with a resident who stated it was double lined a long time ago. The second line can be added if needed.

ORDINANCES

A. Tabled Ordinance

The following ordinance published herewith was first read by title only on March 16, 2021 and posted on the bulletin board of the municipal center.

**ORDINANCE 21-2576 – AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED “COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARKING” THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD (TABLED 4-6-21)**

No action taken.

B. Adoption of Ordinances

The following ordinance published herewith was first read by title on April 20, 2021 and posted on the bulletin board of the municipal center.

**ORDINANCE 21-2581 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 186 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD, ENTITLED “LAND DEVELOPMENT”**

Public Comments on Ordinances #21-2581.

No one came forward.

Motion by Councilperson Marte, second by Councilperson Deauna, to pass Ordinance 21-2581 on second and final reading and is hereby adopted and notice of same shall be published according to law as amended.

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>	Council President Rivera:	<i>absent</i>
Councilperson Marte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

## ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Borough Administrator Gallo stated he has been dealing with the preparation of the pre-construction for the road program. He has been coordinating with Suez, in communication with PSE&G and reviewing their work. The parks project was approved. DPW met with the park staff and coordinated efforts to decide what needs to be removed for new equipment to be installed. The Twin Boro fields project is moving along. There are many projects going on in town. The vaccination program has been successful with the Board of Health and New Bridge Medical.

## MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORT

Councilperson Deauna

stated he was at the vaccination program the Board of Health held. He spent two hours at the senior housing project covering for Councilman Rivera in serving the seniors with free food at the senior housing. They have an appointment with them tomorrow. Councilman Pascual and Marte will accompany him.

Councilperson Marte

stated there were 4 applications presented at the zoning board meeting. Two residential applications were approved. The application for 145 W. Main Street was adjourned based on a request by the attorney. There will be a special hearing on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The application for 83 Hickory Ave was heard. Former Chief Naylis made some recommendations regarding fire safety, sprinklers, and fire hydrants. The application will continue to be heard on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Also, there was a question whether an application should be heard if an escrow account is low. He was asked to bring it to the administrator and the council. He stated they walked with the Mayor last weekend. It was a successful event and we are beginning to see the town come together on daily basis if there is an event. There was a new "Welcome to Bergenfield" sign installed on the corner of Washington Ave by Foster Village over the weekend.

Councilperson Lodato

stated the Planning Board met on April 19, 2021. There were no applications. The board reviewed and commented on a ordinance that was sent by the board to review. The Board of Fire Officers met the same night. He wasn't able to attend due to the scheduling conflict with the Planning Board. The library is making preparations to open to the public on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. The Friends of the Bergenfield Library is planning a town-wide garage sale on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.

Councilperson Kornbluth

stated OEM is maintaining the vaccine registry. They have been assisting with the

vaccine clinics in Bergenfield. They helped with responding to the fire on Washington Avenue and continue to work on documentation for FEMA reimbursements for pandemic and storm issues. The BVAC is still continuing all COVID-19 precautions with PPE, etc. despite lower numbers in town. They held a blood drive. Their calls year to date are 613. Little League baseball and softball are playing. PAL basketball is playing at the courts at Memorial Park. Bergenfield men's softball league is now playing. The Mayors Wellness Campaign is up and running. There is Zumba at Memorial Park on Monday and Tuesday at 6:30 pm, Wednesday is yoga at 6:30 pm, Thursday is line dancing, Friday is walk with the Mayor, and Sunday there is a bike ride.

Councilperson Pascual

stated on Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup> the borough commemorated earth day and arbor day by holding a volunteer litter clean up at Cooper's Pond and handed free tree seedlings to residents. About 30 people picked up free tree seedlings. The tree seedlings were provided by the New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign which is an ongoing public effort between the New Jersey Tree Service, NJ State Nursery, and the non-profit Arbor Day Foundation. The new Shade Tree member, Steven Perroni was welcomed last month. In-person Shade Tree committee meetings resumed May 3, 2021. They are held the first Monday of each month at 7:30 pm unless they are noted otherwise. The Shade Tree meeting minutes will be posted very soon on the borough website on the Shade Tree page. All members of the community are encouraged to reach out to the shade tree committee with any requests or concerns related to borough owned trees. The contact information for the Shade Tree is found on the borough website on the Shade Tree committee page. He welcomed the residents to Mayors Wellness Campaign. There are a lot of residents coming out. Everyone should come out for fresh air and be fit.

Councilperson Marte stated there was a fundraiser yesterday at the BP gas station for veterans. A percentage of every gallon of gas pumped will go to the veterans for thirty days.

Mayor Amatorio

stated the second dose of the vaccination was given to those who received the first dose a month ago. There was also a walk-up clinic on Friday by the department of health. There were 50 people already on line by the time the clinic opened. The walk-up clinic was more effective than registering ahead of time. He

spoke with New Bridge Medical center to see if they can open up vaccinations for high school students if the Pfizer vaccine is available. They are finalizing the contract for Conlon Hall between borough hall and the Diocese of Newark. The facility will be under the responsibility of the borough and will share the hall for sports and recreation programs. Conlon hall will be the responsibility of the borough starting May 15, 2021. They will be able to hold more indoor activities at Conlon Hall. The wellness program is doing very well. They have gotten a good response from the residents. He thanked the participation of the council members and the community. He gave a shout out to the wellness champion, Priscilla Pascual and Mrs. Amatorio. He thanked New Bridge BP for donating 2 cents per gallon to the veterans. The library will have their annual staff appreciation breakfast tomorrow. Mrs. Anna Ramirez was selected for the Lucille Tendler award. Last week, they joined the Challenger program at the high school and conversed with the organizers of the program in helping the kids integrate into the sports program. They celebrated earth day by distributing tree seedlings and cleaned litter at Cooper's Pond. There was a good turnout, including commissioner Tracy Zur. She offered assistance if the county would be able to alleviate the problem of dredging the pond. They coordinated with the DPW superintendent to see whether the county has the ability to help Bergenfield clean the pond. He commended DPW for removing the dangerous trees at Marchbank. They will plank the wood from the trees removed. They are pursuing grants to improve Cooper's Pond. He stated they are discussing the Memorial Day parade and family fun day with the easing of restrictions. There are no final plans now.

Stigma Free Committee Appointment:

Mayor Amatorio recommended and nominated Alison Berrios-Murray to serve on the Stigma Free Committee for a one-year term, term expiring December 31, 2021.

Motion by Councilperson Pascual, second by Councilperson Kornbluth, that the nomination be confirmed.

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>	Council President Rivera:	<i>absent</i>
Councilperson Marte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

CORRESPONDENCE

- a.) Berkowitz/Republican Club **RE:** Request to Reserve Coopers Pond Clubhouse/First Wednesday of Each Month in 2021/7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- b.) Ballo/Friends of the Bergenfield Public Library **RE:** Requesting Approval for a Town-Wide Garage Sale/October 2, 2021 to October 3, 2021/9:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m.

Motion by Councilperson Pascual, second by Councilperson Deauna, and all members present voting in favor, to approve Correspondence Items A and B with condition that CDC guidelines are followed. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Smith, resident, stated there is a problem with kids riding their bikes and doing wheelies in the middle of the street with no helmets on. He commented that the Police Department should take the bikes away from kids riding a bike without a helmet, and then the parents should pick them up from the department. Mr. Smith stated that the Borough Attorney provided guidance on how the escrow accounts should be handled. He commented that the problem is that when the applicant is running low on funds, someone from purchasing should notify them. Mr. Smith also commented with regards to the tax information that appears on applications before the Zoning Board of Adjustment and the Planning Board. He stated that the information is in the Cox book, but the Borough should pass an ordinance making the information a requirement. Mr. Smith invited everyone to the VFW's Installation Dinner on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 2:00 p.m., at which the officers will be sworn-in and awards will be given to BVAC and Police Officers. He also commented that the Assistant Fire Chief Naylis provided a fantastic presentation at the Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting.

Assim Dean, resident, expressed his concern over an auto dealer repair shop on the north east corner of Carnation Street. He stated that the is on the end of Carnation Street, and the owner empties the lot and parks about 9 cars on Carnation Street between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. He commented that some of the vehicles have temporary plates. Mr. Dean requested that the matter be looked into and respectfully requested a limited time for vehicles to be parked on the street.

Borough Administrator Gallo requested that Deputy Police Chief have officers look into the issue.

Mayor Amatorio stated that he believes Code Enforcement has been looking into the matter as well. has been trying to address the issue also. He commented that Code Enforcement and the Police Department should work together to try and resolve the issue.

Barry Doll, resident, congratulated the Mayor and Council for moving forward with Conlon Hall. He commented that the space is a great location in the center of town with parking. Mr. Doll stated he was pained to see the trees removed at the Marchbank property, but he understands it needs to be done and was told the trees will be replaced. Mr. Doll commented that it is the developer's responsibility to replenish the escrow account. He also questioned the black poster project, and inquired if the event will be held by a qualified organization.

Councilperson Kornbluth stated the event is about drug awareness and is sponsored by the Police Department.

Mayor Amatorio stated that the Black Poster Project is an event held by an organization that promotes awareness against the use of drugs. The organization places the posters in front of borough hall and displays the exhibit to bring awareness. He commented that the event is not related to Black Lives Matter or a political group. It is a group of parents who lost their children because of a drug overdose. He commented that the event was held last year, and it was disheartening to see the kids that took their lives due to overdose.

Sergeant Major Williams, resident, stated the governor announced there will be less restrictions as of May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and as such, the Memorial Day Parade can take place. He also stated that the governor appointed an Admiral General, who is now the first female to serve in the position in the State. Sergeant Williams inquired if Melrose Avenue will be paved in its entirety. He thanked Councilperson Pascual for his campaign to support the Veterans.

Mayor Amatorio explained that the area inside the park cannot be repairs because there are restrictions, and prior approval is required from the NJDEP.

Mike Shanahan, resident, stated that he is happy to see that the ladder truck and fire engine that were parked outside of Alert Firehouse are now gone.

Joel Berkowitz, resident, stated that in the Mahwah patch, he read that the incidents of COVID-19, hospitalizations or contact cases in Bergen County were the highest in the state. He commented that Bergenfield is 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> in the with the highest number of cases in the County. Mr. Berkowitz cautioned everyone that this is not over yet as restrictions are being eased.

Motion by Councilperson Deauna, second by Councilperson Marte to close public comments. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS TO BE ACTED UPON:

A. CONSENT AGENDA

**CONSENT RESOLUTION 21-159.** 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. **21-160**/To Pay Bills
- b. **21-161**/To Approve Tax Refund for Veterans Tax Exemption – 43 Sussex Road
- c. **21-162**/To Approve Tax Refund – 37-39 S. Washington Avenue
- d. **21-163**/To Approve Tax Court Judgement – 107 East Main Street LLC
- e. **21-164**/To Approve Tax Court Judgement – 65 Whiteman Street
- f. **21-165**/To Approve Municipal Alliance Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Fiscal Grant Cycle July 2020 – June 2025
- g. **21-166**/To Approve Insertion of Special Item of Revenue in the 2021 Budget (Chapter 159) – Recycling Tonnage Grant
- h. **21-167**/To Approve Insertion of Special Item of Revenue in the 2021 Budget (Chapter 159) – Distracted Driving Crackdown U Drive. U Text. U Pay Grant
- i. **21-168**/To Approve Insertion of Special Item of Revenue in the 2021 Budget (Chapter 159) – Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund Grant for Cooper’s Pond
- j. **21-169**/To Approve Insertion of Special Item of Revenue in the 2021 Budget (Chapter 159) – Recycling Partnership Grant
- k. **21-170**/To Approve Insertion of Special Item of Revenue in the 2021 Budget (Chapter 159) – NJDCA Legislative Grant for Pedestrian Safety Improvements
- l. **21-171**/To Approve Insertion of Special Item of Revenue in the 2021 Budget (Chapter 159) – Municipal Alliance Grant
- m. **21-172**/To Approve Dedication by Rider of Revenue – Mayor’s Wellness Campaign Donations
- n. **21-173**/To Approve Additional LOSAP Payments
- o. **21-174**/To Authorize Participation in the 2021 BCCPS Natural Gas Bid – County of Bergen
- p. **21-175**/To Authorize Application – New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Grant for Pickleball and Tennis Courts
- q. **21-176**/To Authorize Participation and Approve Agreement – Solid Waste Cooperative Marking Program – Bergen County Utilities Authority
- r. **21-177**/To Approve ADA Coop Curb Ramp Agreement – County of Bergen

- s. **21-178**/To Approve Road Resurfacing Shared Services Agreement – County of Bergen
- t. **21-179**/To Approve Tax Refund for Veterans Tax Exemption – 34 Walters Street
- u. **21-180**/To Authorize ReBid – New Municipal Building
- v. **21-181**/To Approve Hold Harmless Agreement – Black Poster Project
- w. **21-182**/To Approve Lease Agreement – Conlon Hall – St. John the Evangelical Church
- x. **21-183**/To Award and Approve Contract – Anderson Avenue Sanitary Cleaning & Video Inspection – National Water Main Cleaning

Motion by Councilperson Marte, second by Councilperson Deauna, 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>	Council President Rivera:	<i>absent</i>
Councilperson Marte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilperson Deauna stated he had forgotten to commend the Mayor’s Wellness program. It has positive effects among the residents and there is a variety of programs.

Councilperson Marte stated they are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Residents still need to be careful and follow protocols. He commented that children are beginning to go back to school every day, which is helping families.

Councilperson Lodato thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Councilperson Kornbluth acknowledged the passing of a Bergenfield resident and the tragedy in Israel this past week. She commented that there were 45 young men who passed away, including a 19 year old from Bergenfield. She thanked the community of Bergenfield on behalf of the orthodox community and synagogue for reaching out and expressing their condolences to the whole community and the family for the loss of Donny Morris.

Councilperson Pascual thanked the Bergenfield Dominos Club for the addition of the Welcome to Bergenfield sign on the corner of S. Washington Ave and Liberty Rd. He offered his condolences to the family and the community for the 19-year-old resident, Donny Morris, who passed away.

Mayor Amatorio thanked the Dominos Club for their great contribution of the sign at the entrance of Bergenfield. He thanked DPW for initiating the litter cleanup, celebrating earth day, and giving out the tree seedlings, as well as the library who joined the DPW. He expressed his condolences and sympathies to the family of Donny Morris and to the orthodox community. The whole community is mourning the passing of a young man. Mayor commented that it is not a time to be wreck less and neglectful when restrictions are easing. He stated that if anyone needs to get a vaccine, they can call the health department or register on the borough website. There are many places offering walk-in appointments at many different sites. He stated that New Bridge Medical, in partnership with Rutgers University, will officially open their clinic at the medical plaza in Bergenfield.

**CLOSED SESSION**

**RESOLUTION 21-184**/Authorizing the Governing Body to Enter into Closed Executive Session to discuss:

- A. Contracts/Agreements
  - 1. Contract Negotiations 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 Marte, second by Councilperson Deauna and all present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned to the Closed Session in the Executive Chambers at 9:22 p.m.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilperson Marte, second by Councilperson Kornbluth and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Quinones  
Borough Clerk