

BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD
MAYOR & COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
8:00 p.m.
June 15, 2021

PRESENT: Mayor Arvin Amatorio and Council President Hernando Rivera (8:15 p.m.), Council members Thomas Lodato, Buddy Deauna, Rafael Marte, Ora Kornbluth (8:20 p.m.), 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 Councilperson Lodato.

AGENDA CHANGES

Councilperson Marte motioned to add Resolution #21-231 to approve sale of surplus property on Govdeals, Resolution #21-232 to approve sale of the library's surplus property on Govdeals, and Resolution #21-233 to appoint members to the Veteran's Advisory Committee. Councilperson Lodato seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilperson Pascual motioned to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2021 Regular Public Meeting and the May 18, 2021 Closed Session Meeting (not to be released). Councilperson Marte seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS I

Mayor Amatorio opened the meeting and invited the public for comments on agenda items only, limited to five minutes per speaker.

John Smith, resident, inquired if the cost to purchase the tub grinder will be shared by the municipalities, and whether the Borough will be reimbursed for their share of the costs.

Borough Administrator Gallo stated that Teaneck will pay their share in 2021, and then Tenafly is expected to follow in 2022.

There being no one else who wishes to be heard, Mayor Amatorio closed Verbal Communications I.

PRESENTATIONS

A. Administrative Appointments and Hires

21-205/To Promote to Full-Time Laborer – Chris Brown

DRAFT MINUTES – SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Motion by Councilperson Marte, second by Councilperson Deauna, that Resolution #21-205 be approved.

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

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

21-206/To Hire Part-Time Summer Laborers

Motion by Councilperson Marte, second by Councilperson Deauna, that Resolution #21-206 be approved.

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

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

21-207/To Hire Full-Time Police Department Telecommunicator – Yazeed Abdelaziz

Motion by Councilperson Marte, second by Councilperson Deauna, that Resolution #21- 207 be approved.

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

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

CORRESPONDENCE

- a) Rainey/Bergenfield Clean Communities **RE:** Request to Reserve Memorial Park for Litter Cleanup with Cub Scout Pack 95/Friday, July 2, 2021/10:00 a.m.

Motion by Councilperson Marte to accept Correspondence Item A. Councilperson Deauna seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

ORDINANCES

A. Adoption of Ordinance

Mayor Amatorio read into the record:

The following ordinance published herewith was re-introduced by title only on May 18, 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

Public Comments on Ordinance #21-2576.

Mayor Amatorio stated that the ordinance has been re-introduced and published for the public hearing. The ordinance has been shared with the Planning Board for their review. The ordinance will be further considered for a vote at the next meeting.

Mary Sullivan, resident, expressed that she is in favor of the ordinance. She explained that one of her neighbors is running a business out of their property and the vehicles are all parked outside while they do the work. Ms. Sullivan stated that she pays higher taxes to be in a residential zone, and commented that businesses should be in a business district.

Councilperson Pascual motioned to close public comments. Councilperson Deauna seconded the motion.

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

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

B. Introduction of Ordinances

Motion by Councilperson Deauna that the following ordinances be introduced and passed on first reading and setting Tuesday, July 20, 2021 at 8:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard as the date and time and the Council Chambers of the Bergenfield Borough Hall as the place for a hearing on said ordinance. Councilperson Pascual seconded the motion.

Mayor Amatorio read the title of the ordinance into the record:

ORDINANCE 21-2582 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING STORM WATER CONTROL IN THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD

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

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

A. CONSENT AGENDA

CONSENT RESOLUTION 21-208. 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. **21-209**/To Approve Bill List
- b. **21-210**/To Approve Carnival Application – St. John the Evangelist Church – September 21, 2021 to September 25, 2021
- c. **21-211**/To Approve Raffle Applications – RA 1368 and RA 1369
- d. **21-212**/To Approve Liquor License Renewals for 2021-2022 License Term
- e. **21-213**/To Hire Part-time Summer Interns
- f. **21-214**/To Accept Resignation – Tax Clerk
- g. **21-215**/To Authorize Estimated Tax Bills
- h. **21-216**/To Approve Cancellation of Capital Balances
- i. **21-217**/To Approve Tax Refund – 35 Sussex Road
- j. **21-218**/To Approve Tax Refund – 230 Merritt Avenue
- k. **21-219**/To Approve Insertion of Special Item of Revenue in the 2021 Budget (Chapter 159) – SFY'21 Body Worn Camera Grant
- l. **21-220**/To Approve Insertion of Special Item of Revenue in the 2021 Budget (Chapter 159) – Clean Communities Grant

DRAFT MINUTES – SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

- m. **21-221**/To Approve Grant Cancellation – 2019 Pedestrian Safety Grant
- n. **21-222**/To Approve Capital Purchase – New Toro Mower/Power Trac Snow Cat – Storr Tractor Company
- o. **21-223**/To Approve Purchase – Tub Grinder – Deacon Equipment Company, Inc.
- p. **21-224**/To Approve Capital Purchase – Two (2) 2022 Ford F-350 4X4 Trucks – United Ford LLC
- q. **21-225**/To Authorize Capital Purchase – Two (2) 2021 Utility Interceptor Vehicles – Chas S. Winner/TJH Chevrolet
- r. **21-226**/To Reject Bid and Authorize Rebid – Lease of Real Property – Tennis Courts
- s. **21-227**/To Approve Amendment 1 to Professional Services Agreement - 2020 Road Program – Remington & Vernick Engineers
- t. **21-228**/To Renew Agreement – Elevator Inspector
- u. **21-229**/To Authorize Bid – 2021 Roads Program
- v. **21-230**/To Authorize Bid – Anderson Avenue
- w. **21-231**/To Approve GovDeal Sale of Surplus Property – Borough Vehicles
- x. **21-232**/To Approve GovDeal Sale of Surplus Property – Office Equipment
- y. **21-233**/To Approve Appointments to Veteran’s Advisory Committee

Motion by Councilperson Pascual to approve the Consent Resolution as amended. Councilperson Deauna seconded the motion.

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

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Donation of Fire Trucks

Mayor Amatorio stated that we have received several donation requests for the ladder and pumper fire trucks. He explained that a community in the Dominican Republic requested the ladder truck, and a municipality in the Philippines requested the pumper. Mayor Amatorio stated that the requests have been shared with the Council for their review and consideration. The resolution has been drafted and will be considered at the next meeting.

B. Public Hearing on Grant Application

- ❖ 2021 New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Grants Program Application

1. Public Comments on the Grant Application

John Smith, resident, inquired if the funding will be available for all the parks and noted that under Green Acres, the museum is considered separate from Cooper’s Pond.

Borough Administrator Gallo stated that the funding is for the park, not the Marchbank property.

2. **Resolution 21-234**/To Authorize Submission of a 2021 NJDEP Green Acres Grant Application for Park Developments

Motion by Councilperson Pascual, second by Councilperson Marte, that Resolution #21-234 be approved.

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

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
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DRAFT MINUTES – SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Councilperson Deauna: *aye*
Councilperson Marte: *aye*

Council President Rivera: *aye*
Councilperson Pascual: *aye*

Committee/Department Reports

Motion offered by Council President Rivera that the Committee/Department Reports be spread upon the minutes in full and filed. Councilperson Kornbluth seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed.

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS II

Mayor Amatorio opened the meeting to Verbal Communications II and invited the public to comment on any subject, limited to five minutes per speaker.

Fred Sahlberg, resident, stated that he read the article regarding the Police Officer who is a Veteran. He hopes the accusations are not true. He stated that back in 1994 when he was in the force, officers were entitled to their compensation and benefits during their time of service. He commented that lawsuits fall on the Mayor and Council, and therefore the governing body should help veterans that put their lives on the line, and deserve a pat in the back.

Mayor Amatorio stated that this is a court related matter, and therefore the governing body cannot provide any comments.

John Smith, resident, asked what happened to the crossing signs that were on Washington Avenue. He stated that there are no signs between Roy W. Brown Middle School and New Bridge Road. Mr. Smith stated that no one stops for pedestrians in the crosswalks. He further stated that the children riding their bikes and scooters around town without helmet should be given warnings because it is a safety concern. Mr. Smith stated that he received positive feedback on the Memorial Day Parade, as the residents and participants enjoyed the route and expressed it was a good parade. He stated that the negative feedback was based on the reporters' focus on politics. Mr. Smith commented that the governing body should have released a statement expressing the parade is for the Veterans.

Sergeant Major Williams, resident, inquired what is the current curfew in the park. He commented that last Thursday, there was a group of people playing basketball after midnight, and had a dozen vehicles parked with headlights lighting the park.

Borough Administrator Gallo stated that if there are no activities in the park, the hours are dawn to dusk. He noted that if the lights are off, there should be no one in the park. He advised that in the future, the resident should call the Police Department to report the activity.

Mary Sullivan, resident, stated that the Memorial Day Parade was a great success and she enjoyed it very much. Ms. Sullivan suggested that the parade be broken up and take breaks between groups. She commented the parade was moving too fast and the residents missed the Mayor and Council.

Diana Flagg, resident, inquired why members recused themselves at the last Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting. She commented that members never recused themselves at previous meetings, and inquired whether this was legal. She also stated that she made numerous calls and made complaints of signs that were in the Borough right of way. Ms. Flagg stated that since the signs were never removed, she removed them herself and threw them out. Ms. Flagg stated the borough should pass an ordinance to fine the individuals placing the signs in town. She also noted that the sign for donations for Veterans at the Councilman's gasoline station should be removed. Ms. Flagg also inquired when did the Borough vote on flying the flags at Borough Hall.

There being no one else who wishes to be heard, Mayor Amatorio closed Verbal Communications II.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation – Proclamation in Honor of Gershon Distenfeld

Bergenfield resident Gershon Distenfeld is a recreation poker player who placed 8th in the World Series of Poker. He donated 100% of his poker winnings to various charities, including the Bergenfield Food Pantry. The governing body presented Mr. Distenfeld a proclamation in appreciation of his generous donation to the food pantry. Mayor Amatorio read the proclamation into the record.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilperson Lodato noted the passing of former Mayor Kevin Clancy. He stated that Mr. Clancy was a Bergenfield resident since 1975, started as member of the Planning Board, was elected twice as Councilman, and then was elected Mayor. He was a member of the Veterans Committee for many years. When he first met Mr. Clancy in 1991, he learned that he was a Veteran, and he was very proud of that fact. Councilperson Lodato expressed his condolences to the Clancy family.

Councilperson Deauna stated that about 90% of residents over the age of 65 have been vaccinated in Bergenfield, and that about 65% of young adults aged 18 and older have been vaccinated. Councilperson Deauna noted that Bergenfield has been very successful with their vaccination programs in hopes to reach herd immunity. He also advised everyone to be careful and continue to practice safety protocols because of the new variants.

Councilperson Marte noted that he has known Kevin Clancy since 2009, when he started to be involved in the Borough. He was a true friend and great contributor in town, and a friend to our community. Councilperson Marte expressed his condolences to the Clancy family. He wished everyone a good night and thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Councilperson Kornbluth expressed her sincere condolences to the Clancy family. She also expressed congratulations to Gershon Distenfeld for his winnings in poker. She stated that his name is known all throughout the state for his charitable donations from his winnings. Councilperson Kornbluth thanked Mr. Distenfeld for his generosity.

Council President Rivera thanked Gershon Distenfeld for his generosity, and expressed his sincere condolences to the Clancy family. Council President Rivera thanked everyone for coming and wished all a good night.

Councilperson Pascual reported that the eight-week Mayor's Wellness Challenge was a great success. He stated that the program ran from April 13th to June 13th. The program carried on rain or shine because when there was inclement weather, the Zumba and Yoga classes were held indoors. He stated that many residents joined in when they heard the Zumba music playing at Memorial Field. On May 31st, the Memorial Day ceremonies were also a great success, he noted that the weather was perfect. He stated that the Volunteer Fire Department held a wonderful ceremony for fallen heroes, and recognized members from each house that dedicated years of service ensuring our safety in this community. During the ceremony, it was brought to the governing body's attention that Fire House No. 2 will need a pumper in the future. The Borough should consider applying for grants for this truck. Later in the morning, a flag raising was held in honor of the fallen soldiers and the men and women that served in the armed forces.

Councilperson Pascual expressed that the ceremony was very emotional. He thanked the service men and women that sacrificed their time away from their families to protect us. The Memorial Day parade was a great success and he thanked the Borough Administrator and John Smith for coordinating the parade and organizing all the groups. He also thanked all the elected officials that attended and supported the parade including Governor Murphy and First Lady Tammy Murphy, Congressman Gottheimer, County Clerk John Hogan, County Commissioners Tom Sullivan, Tracey Zur, Sheriff Anthony Cureton, and Assemblymembers Chris Tully and Lisa Swain. He stated that

DRAFT MINUTES – SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

on June 12th there was a “Back in Business” block party on Washington Avenue that was a great success. Councilperson Pascual thanked and applauded all the businesses that participated in the event. He stated that gift certificates were raffled for different businesses in town, which were donated by the businesses. On Sunday he attended a ceremony at the VFW, in which they recognized emergency personnel and teachers for their services to the community. He congratulated Officer Robert Mader, Fire Chief Chris Naylis, and OEM Coordinator Ryan Shell for their awards. Councilperson Pascual stated that although he did not know Kevin Clancy very well, he knew that he was a Veteran and served the community in many different capacities and was saddened by his loss. He was also saddened by the loss of TJ Lee, who was very involved in Church, coordinating the bingos and the carnivals. He expressed his condolences to the families and expressed that may they rest in peace. They will be missed. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and advised them to be safe and enjoy the summer months.

Mayor Amatorio stated that he joins the community in the mourning of former Mayor Kevin Clancy. He expressed his condolences to the family and stated he will be missed. Mayor Amatorio also thanked all the volunteers of the Mayor’s Wellness Challenge. He stated that program was a great success due to the support of the volunteers and sponsors. Mayor Amatorio stated that the “Back in Business” Block Party was a great success and two more will be held at different locations. He congratulated the officers of VFW Post 6467 and Bergenfield Auxiliary Committee. He also congratulated Gershon Distenfeld for his winnings and thanked him once again for his donations. Mayor Amatorio also commended the Fire Department for all their efforts containing the fire on Clinton Avenue. He stated that mutual aid attended from neighboring communities, and thanked everyone for all their work, including the Police Department and Volunteer Ambulance Corp. for being on the scene, evacuating the community, and attending to the residents’ needs. He commented that the torch run to fund raise for the special Olympics had to be moved to another route due to the fire, but it was held that day as well. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and wished all a good night.

CLOSED SESSION

RESOLUTION **21-235**/Authorizing the Governing Body to Enter into Closed Executive Session to discuss:

- A. Attorney-Client Privilege
 - 1. PBA Local 309 Update
 - 2. Personnel Matters

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 Pascual, and all present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned to the Closed Session in the Executive Chambers at 8:56 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Marte, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Quinones
Borough Clerk