

BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD
MAYOR & COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
February 15, 2022
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
8:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Arvin Amatorio and Council President Buddy Deauna, Council members Thomas Lodato, Rafael Marte (8:35 p.m.), 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 8:03 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. Notice of this meeting via the February 10, 2022 Sunshine Notice was sent to the Record, Star Ledger, Twin Boro News, and Cablevision, place 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 Rivera.

AGENDA CHANGES

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth to add Resolution #22-083 hiring full-time laborer Dennis Dysangco to Presentations, and Resolution #22-094 approving Remington & Vernick Engineers engineering proposal for the Marcotte Lane Road Improvements to the Consent Agenda. Council President Deauna seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Council President Deauna to approve minutes of the January 18, 2022 Regular Meeting, the January 18, 2022 Closed Session Meeting (not to be released), February 1, 2022 Work Session Meeting and the February 1, 2022 Closed Session Meeting (not to be released). Councilperson Pascual 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.

No one came forward.

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

PRESENTATIONS

A. Administrative Hirings and Appointments

22-078/To Hire Part-Time Laborer – Aaron Guzman

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Council President Deauna, that Resolution #22-078 be approved.

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

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

22-079/To Hire Part-Time Code Enforcement Inspector – Dennis Parente

Motion by Councilperson Lodato, second by Councilperson Rivera, that Resolution #22-079 be approved.

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

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

22-080/To Hire Part-Time Public Health Nurse – Christine Flanagan

Motion by Council President Deauna, second by Councilperson Pascual, that Resolution #22-080 be approved.

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

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

22-081/To Appoint OEM Coordinator – Ryan Shell

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Rivera, that Resolution #22-081 be approved.

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

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

22-082/To Approve Promotion – Account Clerk II – Alex Cacciatore

Motion by Councilperson Pascual, second by Council President Deauna, that Resolution #22-082 be approved.

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

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

22-083/To Hire Full-Time Laborer – Dennis Dysangco

Motion by Councilperson Deauna, second by Councilperson Rivera, that Resolution #22-083 be approved.

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

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

CORRESPONDENCE

- | | |
|---|---|
| a). O'Malley/Council of Irish Associations of Bergen County | RE: Request for Street Closure for the Annual Bergen County St. Patrick's Day Parade/Sunday, March 13, 2022/ 1:00 p.m. |
| b). Alfano/Mayor's Advisory Senior's Committee | RE: Request to Reserve Memorial Park for the Annual Picnic/Thursday, June 16, 2022/ 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. |

Motion by Councilperson Pascual to accept Correspondence. Councilperson Kornbluth seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

A. CONSENT AGENDA

CONSENT RESOLUTION 22-084. 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. **22-085**/To Approve Bill List
- b. **22-086**/To Approve Veteran's Tax Exemption – 246 W. Main Street
- c. **22-087**/To Approve Tax Refund – 184 Maiden Lane
- d. **22-088**/To Approve Tax Refund – 37 Cooper Street
- e. **22-089**/To Approve Tax Refund – 332 S. Prospect Avenue
- f. **22-090**/To Authorize Bid – Twin Boro Park Improvements Phase I
- g. **22-091**/To Approve Contract – Borough's WAN Services & Internal Network – AMHI Technology Holdings LLC, dba Educational Technology Integrators
- h. **22-092**/To Approve Transfer of Appropriation Reserves
- i. **22-093**/To Approve Temporary Emergency Appropriation
- j. **22-094**/To Approve Proposal – Engineering Services and Concept Plan Development for the Marcotte Lane Road Improvements – Remington & Vernick Engineers

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth to approve the Consent Resolution. Councilperson Rivera 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>aye</i>
Council President Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Marte:	<i>absent</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

Committee/Department Reports

Motion offered by Council President Deauna that the Committee/Department Reports be spread upon the minutes in full and filed. Councilperson Lodato 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.

Bochy Lora, resident, stated that when the Dominoes Club donated the welcome sign, conversation was held on the lighting for the sign. He understands the materials were ordered, but inquired about the status.

Angel Valerio, resident, commented that he lives on New York Avenue, and when he comes in from Knickerbocker Road or travels on Shelby Street, he notices the potholes on the roads. He inquired if the borough will do anything about these roads.

John Smith, resident, inquired what the part-time code enforcement officer's hours will be. He also inquired about the status of parking restrictions updates for new housing apartments being built.

Barry Doll, resident, questioned the status of Ordinance 22-2591, amending chapter 186 to permit a marijuana cultivator and manufacturer license.

Pedro Martinez, resident, inquired about the status of the batting cages at Memorial Field. He understands the fences have been ordered, but the installation has been pending for two years. He also requested clarification on the no-left-hand turn at the intersection of Central Avenue and S. Prospect Avenue. Mr. Martinez stated that the no left hand turn makes it difficult for traffic flow, because people travel onto other roads to make turns. He stated that it makes no sense and requested clarification.

Bill Slossar, resident, stated that he is speaking as representative of the Bergenfield Elks Lodge, local No. 1477. Mr. Slossar stated that the current municipal building used to be the Elks Lodge, chartered in November 1923. The Elks Lodge was made into the Borough Hall in 1924. At the top of the stairs leading to the front entrance of the borough hall, behind the black Bergenfield Borough Hall plate, there is a stone sign that reads Bergenfield Lodge 1477 BPOE. Mr. Slossar respectfully requested that any items that represent the occupation of the lodge be preserved and given to the Elks Lodge to be displayed in front of their current building. He stated that Bergenfield Elks donates more than 5.2 million dollars to the community. The Elks will be celebrating their 100th anniversary next year. He thanked the governing body for consideration of his request.

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

Borough Administrator Gallo stated that he will look into the lighting for the welcome sign on Washington Avenue. He stated that when PSE&G installed the lighting for the flag poles on New Bridge Rd., the lights on the welcome sign should have been done at the same time. Mr. Gallo stated that with regards to the paving projects, he will have someone inspect Shelby Street. He explained that each year, the borough works with the Department of Public Works, the Police Department Traffic Division, and the Engineers to prepare a list of roads for repairs. He further stated that since he has been in office, the borough has spent two to four million dollars trying to catch up and complete road work projects on an annual basis. The borough has paved over one

hundred and fifteen roads. Mr. Gallo also stated that in terms of the Code Enforcement Official, the hours will vary, but will be under twenty-nine hours a week. He will look into hiring more officials to work nights and weekends to ensure more enforcement and compliance. Mr. Gallo stated that with regards to the fences for the batting cages, an engineer needs to be hired to install the four poles. He commented that unfortunately, the project is more complicated than it seems, because it involves a lot of digging and cement work, and will cost roughly \$45,000 to \$50,000. The borough will ensure the fields are prepared before the baseball season. Mr. Gallo asked that Mr. Slossar show him where the stone is, and he will look into his request. Mr. Gallo stated that the borough will look to salvage historic monuments and preserve any important pieces. He referenced that we are 18 months away from that point, but will work with the BPOE.

Mayor Amatorio stated that with regards to the no left hand turn signs, the signs were installed as a result of several accidents that occurred on Central Avenue. The signs were installed as a result of study that was done because of the accidents that had taken place due to the left-hand turn. He explained that unfortunately, a dog perished and the owner was injured. He stated that there was an article in the Bergen Record recently, stating that many residents are not following the restriction and continuously make the left-hand turn. Mayor Amatorio stated that some residents submitted a petition to remove the signs. The Police Department stated they would reconsider, and then another accident happened.

Mr. Gallo stated that he recently held a meeting with the Traffic Division and Department of Public Works Superintendent, and the issue may be addressed with the installation of speed humps. He commented that once the speed humps are installed, the matter will be reassessed. Mr. Gallo also stated that pertaining to the ordinance, no action was taken at this meeting, because the ordinance will be heard at the next meeting. The ordinance was also forwarded to the Planning Board for review. Mr. Gallo reiterated that these are the preliminary stages. He stated there are only 37 licenses, and several towns have applications put forward. He explained that this is a revenue stream in an industrial area in the outside of the borough, that will create about sixty jobs. He further explained this will allow Bergenfield to generate revenue. However, the vendor has to be awarded and it is a very complicated process. Mr. Gallo stated that 65% of residents voted in support of it, but the borough does not want to be a point of sale.

Councilperson Marte stated that he believes the borough will benefit from the revenue, as well as the contributions that will be made to the community with parks and streets that should be attached to it.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilperson Lodato stated that with respect to the Police Department's decision on Central Avenue, he lived nearby and made that left hand turn many times, and never had an issue. He understands that the level of accidents has increased, but asked that the Police Department look into it further. He also stated that most of Shelby Street is in Dumont. Bergenfield does own a section of the road, but most of it belongs to Dumont. He stated that if the road is to be paved, perhaps the borough should coordinate efforts with Dumont, to ensure its all done at the same time. In terms of the parking restrictions, the changes were recommended because the number of bedrooms should be required to have more parking. He reminded everyone that the Fire Department is having a beefsteak this upcoming Saturday night on February 19th.

Councilperson Marte stated that part of Shelby Street is in Bergenfield and should be addressed with Dumont. He hopes that the speed humps will address many issues in town.

Councilperson Pascual thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and reminded everyone that we are celebrating Black History Month. He thanked all the black men and women that helped shape America.

Councilperson Rivera thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and hopes to see everyone soon at an in-person meeting.

Councilperson Kornbluth thanked everyone for joining the meeting and to have a good night.

Mayor Amatorio thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and stated that hopefully we can return to in-person as the State continues to ease restrictions. Mayor Amatorio reminded everyone to remember their brothers and sisters from the African American community in celebration of Black History Month and their contributions to America. He wished all a good night.

CLOSED SESSION

RESOLUTION **22-095**/Authorizing the Governing Body to Enter into Closed Executive Session to discuss:

- A. Attorney-Client Privilege
 - 1. 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 Pascual, second by Councilperson Kornbluth, and all present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned to the Closed Session in the Executive Chambers at 8:51 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Council President Deauna, second by Councilperson Lodato, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Quinones
Borough Clerk