

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD
MAYOR AND COUNCIL WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 7, 2023**

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

ABSENT: Councilperson Buddy Deauna

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Administrator Corey Gallo
Borough Attorney John Schettino
Borough Clerk Marie Quiñones-Wilson

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."

The Salute to the Flag was led by Councilperson Marte.

AGENDA CHANGES

Mayor Amatorio stated that he would like to add members to the Stigma Free Committee under New Business. Councilperson Kornbluth motioned to add the nominations to the agenda. Councilperson Marte seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/BOROUGH ENGINEER

A. Engineering & Inspection Status Report

Robert Klein, Borough Engineer from Remington & Vernick Engineers, stated that all road work from last year is complete, there are just some minor punch list items left. He noted that the engineers are getting a head start with the road program for this year. He stated that the borough received a big package for two funded roads, Roosevelt Avenue which is NJDOT funded, and N. Taylor Avenue is CDBG funded. The survey is complete and they are in the process of getting the plans reviewed to start the projects. Mr. Klein stated the other project is the sidewalk replacement where trees have uprooted the sidewalks. The project is on the agenda to be awarded tonight. The intent of the project is to allow residents, if they choose, to have their sidewalk replaced, by having the contractor do it for the same amount as the borough bid prices.

Borough Administrator Gallo stated it will help residents receive a better price.

Councilperson Kornbluth inquired how this will be advertised.

Mr. Gallo stated that the information will be on the borough website and social media.

ORDINANCES

A. Introduction of Ordinances

Motion by Councilperson Marte that the following ordinance be introduced and passed on first reading and setting March 21, 2023 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 Rivera seconded the motion.

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

ORDINANCE 23-2611 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 186 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD, ENTITLED "LAND DEVELOPMENT"

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

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Amatorio nominated the following to serve on the Stigma Free committee for a one-year term, term expiring December 31, 2023.

Julissa Acevedo
 Kelle Garcia Supan
 Niharika Nath

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

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Borough Administrator Gallo stated that the borough is extremely busy with the two construction projects going on in town, including the Twin Boro Field project and the new borough hall building project. At the next meeting, we will be going out to bid for furniture. Mr. Gallo stated he had a meeting today regarding the keys and key fobs for the building. He further stated that the Annual Financial Statement is currently being worked on with the CFO. As previously mentioned, the borough is also starting to formulate plans for the road programs. The borough is also in the grant application process for improvements to the parks, including Thomas Roos Park.

MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORT

Councilperson Lodato

stated the Planning Board met on January 30, 2023. There was a presentation by Neglia Group for areas in need of redevelopment study done on W. Church Street. The Stigma Free

committee met on February 1, 2023 and will meet again March 1, 2023. They will participate in community events. The fire department responded to a partial building collapse on W. Main Street and provided mutual aid to Teaneck.

Councilperson Marte

stated the Veterans Advisory Committee met January 21, 2023 and discussed petitions and the next parade on May 21, 2023. They also discussed the pins that will be distributed on April 22nd at the ceremony at the VFW Post. They will have a dance on March 3, 2023 and are helping out veterans fill out forms for their benefits, which is helping residents very much. Sergeant Major and John Smith are conducting that. The Zoning Board of Adjustment met yesterday. There were two applications heard. The first one was for 145 W. Main Street for three two-family homes. The resolution was approved. There was one new application for a one-family home requesting to put in a pool. It was recommended the size of the pool be reduced. The application was passed with conditions.

Councilperson Kornbluth

stated the recreation committee held their reorganization meeting. There were a lot of new members and they discussed past accomplishments. The winter sports are going well. The spring season is around the corner and are working on Rutgers coaching classes. They are starting to prepare for the Easter Egg Hunt. BVAC has gone on 248 calls year to date. It is comparable to same time as last year. OEM also responded to the building collapse and the car crash on Main Street.

Councilperson Pascual

stated the Board of Education had a meeting on January 30, 2023. It was a productive meeting. Dr. Tully is working with the Bergenfield police department to hire per diem crossing guards for heavy traffic intersections. If interested, please contact the Bergenfield police department. The high school juniors and seniors are having various fundraisers for their student

congress. The rent leveling board is looking for a secretary.

Mayor Amatorio

reminded everyone about the Mayor's Wellness Campaign and encouraged everyone to participate. They are trying to improve and expand the recreational sports department at Conlon Hall. They are using the hall for pickleball, wrestling, and some other activities. They are trying to improve the facility for better use. The library board had a meeting via zoom due to renovations at the library. The agenda is full with nominations for the Lucille Tendler award. There are a lot of infrastructure activities and are doing their best to move along with the schedule. There will probably be more sidewalk repairs this year than road programs.

CORRESPONDENCE

a). Naylis/Board of Fire Officers

RE: Personnel Action Letter dated January 26, 2023

b). O'Malley/The Council of Irish

RE: The 41st Annual Bergen County St. Patrick's Day Parade on Sunday, March 12, 2023/Flag Raising at 1:00 p.m. at 130 S. Washington Avenue/Parade at 2:00 p.m. from S. Washington Avenue on West Englewood Avenue, proceeding north along Washington Avenue to St. John's Roman Catholic Church (line-up at 1:30 p.m.)

c). Alfano/Mayor's Senior Citizens Committee

RE: Request to Reserve Memorial Park Pavilion for the Annual Senior Day Picnic/Thursday, June 15, 2023/12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Motion by Councilperson Lodato, seconded by Councilperson Marte, to accept Correspondence Items A through C. All members present voting in favor, none opposed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Barry Doll, resident, stated that he will contact Dr. Tully and volunteer his time. He will contribute whatever pay is involved, to programs in town, such as the food pantry, athletics, or wherever there is a need. Mr. Doll stated he doesn't think the Mayor and Council should be supporting any organization that is pro-abortion, even if it was pro-life, where there is controversy. He inquired if the organization is a 501C3 and if it is registered as a charitable organization. He stated that prior to supporting organizations, some checks should be done on what they are doing and the legality of the laws. Mr. Doll stated there was a breakdown in the policy of the laws developed for property development in town and the execution of those laws by the Zoning Board. He stated that the board violated many of the policies. He explained that he had sent the council a memorandum explaining why residents in town are opposed to the development. He welcomed the opportunity to appeal the decision made in the Supreme Court. He stated that the board approved the application

to put three two-family homes on a plot that is 5,000 sq. ft. each on W. Main Street. The requirement is 10,000 sq. ft. according to Schedule B. He stated that it's also on a county road and the county hasn't been informed. Lastly, taxes have to be paid before a proposal is submitted and taxes weren't paid. He further stated that the first payment to the property owner made was in 2021 and has been in arrears in taxes. The response from the Zoning Board was that they put it in the resolution and they have to pay it. He commented that the way they treated the situation is wrong. He had suggested the board table the application, but they went ahead and approved the resolution.

Borough Attorney Schettino stated its common practice and part of the application. If that part is not filled out and taxes are not current, they cannot hear the application. The application is not deemed complete.

Mayor Amatorio stated the court will take jurisdiction of the appeal and will see it through. The Mayor and Council doesn't have the jurisdiction to hear the appeal.

Mr. Schettino stated the Mayor and Council cannot correct something after the fact. They can prevent something from happening moving forward.

Sergeant Major Williams, resident, stated that a police officer was shot and killed over the weekend in New York. He stated that there should have been a moment of silence for the officer. They are putting together the Vietnam War pinning ceremony which will be held on April 22, 2023. Veterans should complete the form and submit it to the VFW. The USO auxiliary dance will be March 10, 2023. He stated he would like to see local veterans attend. They have been helping vets and their spouses file their claims. Many veterans are unaware of their benefits. Sergeant Major Williams stated the Memorial Day Parade will be on May 29, 2023 and inquired if the Police Department will serve as the honor guard. He currently has two requests being processed with the County and State National Guard. He inquired if the zoning board application packets go to the building department for review. There needs to be a quality control system. Colonel Thompson was registered on January 26, 2023 with the National Purple Heart Museum.

Mr. Gallo stated the packets go to the zoning officer for review.

John Smith, resident, stated item #14 in the zoning application packet asks if taxes are current and the last page of the packet has to be completed and signed by the tax collector. If the zoning officer sends the application without that information, the zoning clerk is under the assumption that the application is complete. The building department should check that part to ensure it is complete. Mr. Smith inquired how many engineers does the borough have. He inquired about the PAL lighting and the Green Acres grant. He inquired about resolution 23-061. He inquired if there will be less green by the monuments. Mr. Smith stated the veterans have requested creating a memorial walk at Memorial Park for the monuments.

Mayor Amatorio stated that the engineering firms do different jobs.

Borough Administrator Gallo stated each engineer has different specializations. Mr. Gallo stated the veteran monuments will be moved west to be closer to the new municipal building. There will be no parking behind the monuments. The re-design parking lot plan in the resolution is to expand and maximize the side lot. There are ceremonies that take place in front of borough hall. Mr. Gallo explained they need to create an area in front of borough hall.

Mary Sullivan, resident, stated it is virtually impossible to hear the audio recording of the meetings. She stated the recordings should be uploaded onto the website. She inquired about a purchase made in the amount of \$4,359.29 for an item on page 28 of the bill list. She suggested the first meeting in February be moved to Thursday as the State of the Union address is the same night as Mayor and Council meeting. She stated that on the Zoning Board application, the applicant had

stated that W. Main Street was not on a county road and that a traffic study was not required, which both are lies.

Mr. Gallo stated brine for the road was purchased in anticipation of the cold weather.

Avinash Melkote, Dumont resident, requested putting on the next agenda the quiet zone project with Dumont. He inquired if the council could solicit RFQ's from engineering firms to determine cost estimates for how much the project would cost.

Mr. Gallo stated he cannot get CSX to fix the wood on Main Street, much less have CSX spend millions to create quiet zones. He cannot mandate them to be quiet. Mr. Gallo stated he will speak with the Administrator in Dumont.

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, 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 23-050. 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. **23-051/**To Pay Bills
- b. **23-052/**To Support Senate Bill S-3213 Creating the Issuance of Registered Nurse License Plates
- c. **23-053/**To Promote the Importance of the National Council of Jewish Women in Bergen County New Jersey
- d. **23-054/**To Approve Raffle Application RA 1388, 1389 and 1390
- e. **23-055/**To Authorize Tax Refund – 115 Maiden Lane
- f. **23-056/**To Approve Veteran's Tax Exemption – 31 Gordon Road
- g. **23-057/**To Approve Veteran's Tax Exemption – 101 Merritt Avenue
- h. **23-058/**To Approve Agreement – Phoenix Advisors for Continuing Disclosure and Independent Registered Municipal Advisor
- i. **23-059/**To Approve Proposal – PAL Field Lighting Grant Application – T&M Associates (*Borough Administrator*)
- j. **23-060/**To Approve Grant Agreement – 2022 Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund Municipal Program for Thomas Roos Park; Tennis Court Resurfacing and Pickleball Court Installation – Contract #2200341 – County of Bergen (*Borough Administrator*)
- k. **23-061/**To Approve Proposal – Municipal Building Parking Lot Redesign - T&M Associates
- l. **23-062/**To Approve Proposal – 2023 Road Improvement Program Phase 1 – Remington & Vernick Engineers
- m. **23-063/**To Approve Agreement – Public Health and Education Services – Health Awareness Regional Program and Hackensack Meridian Health
- n. **23-064/**To Approve 2022 LOSAP List
- o. **23-065/**To Award Bid and Approve Contract – 2023 Sidewalk Improvement Project - Vektor Corporation
- p. **23-066/**To Approve Professional Service Agreement – Municipal Court Judge
- q. **23-067/**To Approve Agreement - Local Public Health Services – Mid-Bergen Regional Health Commission
- r. **23-068/**To Approve Rental Agreement – Mobile Communications Services and Equipment– Goosetown Communications

- s. **23-069**/To Approve Service Agreement – Annual Maintenance for Fixed Network Equipment – Goosetown Communications
- t. **23-070**/To Approve Agreement – Animal Control Services – TYCO Municipal Animal Control Services LLC
- u. **23-071**/To Approve Renewal Agreement – Annual Managed Services Support for WAN Services and Internal Network - Educational Technology Integrators

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

B. Resolutions

23-072/To Approve Promotion to Keyboard Clerk II – Grisel Almonte

Motion by Councilperson Marte, seconded by Councilperson Rivera, to approve Resolution #23-072.

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

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

23-073/To Hire Part-Time Laborer – Dwayne Innis

Motion by Councilperson Pascual, seconded by Councilperson Kornbluth, to approve Resolution #23-073.

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

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

23-074/To Hire Part-Time Laborer – Cordial Venezia

Motion by Councilperson Pascual, seconded by Councilperson Rivera, to approve Resolution #23-074.

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

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

COUNCIL COMMENTS

The Mayor and Council thanked all for coming and wished everyone a good night. A moment of silence was held for Officer Baez. They asked everyone to keep the safety of the Bergenfield police

officers and the untimely passing of people from the earthquake in Turkey and Syria in their prayers and thoughts.

CLOSED SESSION

RESOLUTION **23-075**/Authorizing the Governing Body to Enter into Closed Executive Session to discuss:

A. Personnel

1. Administrative Personnel Matters
2. Fire Department Personnel Matters

B. Attorney-Client Privilege

1. F.M.B.A. Local 65 Grievance
2. Police Department 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 Rivera, and all present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned to the Closed Session in the Executive Chambers at 9:08 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilperson Pascual, second by Councilperson Rivera and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Marie Quiñones-Wilson
Borough Clerk