

STRATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
AGENDA MEETING/REDEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP MINUTES
THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2024
6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Borough Clerk Bill Bray called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Keenan led the Pledge and said an opening prayer.

ROLL CALL:

MAYOR LINDA HALL – PRESENT
COUNCIL PRESIDENT MICHAEL TOLOMEO – PRESENT
COUNCILMAN PATRICK GILLIGAN – PRESENT
COUNCILWOMAN TINA LOMANNO – PRESENT
COUNCILWOMAN DAWN MARTIN – PRESENT
COUNCILMAN STEPHEN GANDY – PRESENT
COUNCILMAN JIM KELLY – PRESENT
STUART PLATT, BOROUGH SOLICITOR – PRESENT
CRAIG REILLY, BOROUGH ENGINEER
RON MORELLO, POLICE CHIEF - PRESENT
JOHN D. KEENAN JR, BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – PRESENT

STATEMENT OF ADVERTISEMENT: The Borough Clerk read the following statement:

Notice of this meeting has been provided to the Courier Post and The Retrospect and is posted on the Borough Hall Bulletin Board stating the time and the place of the meeting.

PUBLIC PORTION FOR AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:

Councilman Gilligan motioned to open the public portion on agenda items only. Councilman Tolomeo seconded the motion, which passed with all members present voting in favor in a voice vote.

There were no comments.

Councilman Kelly motioned to close the public portion for agenda items. Councilwoman Tolomeo seconded the motion, which passed with all members present voting in favor in a voice vote.

POLICE/OEM REPORT: Ron Morello provided the following report of the Stratford Borough Police Department Activities for February 2024.

Feb. 2 – Vehicle on the White Horse Pike were damaged after a large pipe wrench fell out of a vehicle.

Feb. 4 – A sneak thief stole various personal items from the staff at Jefferson Hospital that were left unattended or secured in rooms and offices in the facility. The suspect then used Uber to travel to Laurel Manor and stole more items. Police obtained the Uber license plate number and identified the suspect as its 60-year-old passenger from West Orange NJ.

Feb. 9 – A 35-year-old Glassboro man assaulted two nurses and a security guard at Jefferson Hospital Emergency Room. The suspect was charged with aggravated assault and related offenses.

Feb. 11 – A sudden death occurred on Saratoga Road with the overnight passing of a 90-year-old person from natural causes.

Feb. 13 – Police charged a 29-year-old Atco woman with reckless driving after she lost control of her speeding vehicle and struck a utility pole near the former Friendly's.

Feb. 14 – Police attempted to stop a stolen Kia on the White Horse Pike. The pursuit was terminated and the suspected thieves are part of a crime spree in Media, PA.

Feb. 15 – A ford pick-up was stolen from TMF Motors on Berlin Road. The vehicle has not yet been recovered.

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Feb. 19 – Police observed a man using an ax to break through the door of the old cabinet store on the White Horse Pike. The suspect is a 56-year-old homeless man who is charged with attempted burglary, criminal mischief and related crimes. The suspect was lodged in the Camden County Jail.

Feb. 21 – Police charged a 30-year-old man from Unity Estates with aggravated assault after he allegedly struck his girlfriend with a folding table.

Feb. 21 – On two occasions fires have been started in a homeless encampment that have required a police fire department response to extinguish them. Ordinance violations were filed for both incidences.

Feb. 25 – Police spotted a suspicious man at Tim Hortons who they determined to be wanted in Camden for a recent shooting and possession of CDS with intent to distribute. The suspect was arrested without incident and remanded to the Camden Metro PD.

Chief Morello stated the Borough is going to receive \$30,000 in traffic enforcement grants from the state due to the number of fatal accidents recently along the White Horse Pike. The program will run through Oct. 1, 2024. The Prosecutor’s Office is arranging a press conference to announce the multi-jurisdictional enforcement effort here in Stratford later in March.

FIRE REPORT: Deputy Chief Jeff Riebel presented the Fire Report for February 2024.

Deputy Chief Riebel stated the department participate in a joint training exercise at Sterling High School that was led by former NYFD officers and Camden City Fire Department. Deputy Chief Riebel stated the Department was recently awarded at \$70,000 grant to purchase protective gear. Chief Michael Lemmerman stated the grant was written by former Deputy Chief Michael Lewitt.

ENGINEER REPORT:

Mr. Reilly stated the written report was submitted to Council. Mr. Reilly stated a 2024 CDBG grant application was submitted to improve drainage and ADA crosswalks in the areas between Laureba and Wellington Avenues. Mr. Reilly stated the CDBG repaving project is expected to be completed this month. There were no questions from Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

FEB. 8, 2024 AGENDA MEETING

FEB. 8 2024 EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING

FEB. 13, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

Mr. Bray stated he removed two paragraphs that were left over from the prior meetings minutes and do not materially change the minutes. Mr. Bray stated he received no other questions or comments on the minuets.

A motion was made by Councilman Gandy, seconded by Councilwoman Lomanno with all members present voting aye by roll call vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

REPORT #1 UPCOMING PUBLIC HEARINGS OF ORDINANCES

ORD. 24:02 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 2.12.150 RATES OF COMPENSATION

Mr. Bray stated the public hearing is Tuesday. Mr. Bray stated the proposed ordinance sets the rates of pay for police extra duty assignments paid by third party entities.

ORD. 24:03 AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING 2024 SALARIES AND SALARY RANGES

Mr. Bray stated the public hearing is Tuesday. Mr. Bray stated the ordinance sets the pay and salaries of Borough Employees.

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NEW BUSINESS:

REPORT #2 UPCOMING INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

ORD. 24:04 TREE REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT

Mr. Bray stated the ordinance is a requirement from the NJDEP under the Borough's Stormwater Discharge Permit.

RESOLUTIONS:

Mr. Bray reviewed the proposed resolutions. No one from Council removed or added to the consent agenda. Resolutions 24:44 through 24:49 were approved as a consent agenda.

RES. 24:44 AMEND 2024 TEMPORARY BUDGET

RES. 24:45 APPOINT DUTY CREW MEMBERS

RES. 24:46 AUTHORIZE OPENING AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND ACCOUNT

RES. 24:47 APPROVE CHANGE ORDER #3 – VARIOUS ADA IMPROVEMENTS

RES. 24:48 APPOINT CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

RES. 24:49 APPOINT CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS

Motion was made by Councilman Kelly, seconded by Councilman Tolomeo with all members present voting aye by roll call vote.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilman Tolomeo – Nothing at this time.

Councilman Gilligan – Councilman Gilligan thanks Mike Lewitt for his work to secure the grant for the fire department.

Councilwoman Lomanno – Nothing at this time.

Councilwoman Martin – Councilwoman Martin state flyers for the Egg Hunt. Miss Stratford and Little Miss Stratford have been widely distributed and posted online and via Channel 17. Councilwoman Martin thanks Miss Stratford and Little Miss Stratford for their assistance filling the eggs with candy. Councilwoman Martin stated the Egg Hunt will be held March 30 and Miss Stratford and Little Miss Stratford will be held April 26. Councilwoman Martin thanked Nutriserve, the schools food vendor, for providing lunch for the egg hunters and their families. Mayor Hall stated Council could recognize Nutriserve's generosity with a proclamation in May. Councilwoman Martin stated letters soliciting donations for Miss Stratford and Little Miss Stratford pageants have been sent to area businesses.

Councilman Gandy – Councilman Gandy thanks Mike Lewitt for his efforts to write grants for the department. Councilman Gandy welcomed the code enforcement officer and the new duty crew members.

Councilman Kelly – Councilman Kelly thanks the Borough's police, fire, ems and dpw workers for their efforts to help residents. Councilman Kelly stated the

Mayor Hall – Mayor Hall stated Laurel Manor will receive proclamation in April for their efforts to support programs for Seniors. Mayor Hall stated they do a lot for the Borough.

GOOD AND WELFARE:

Motion was made by Councilman Gandy, seconded by Councilman Gilligan to open the meeting to the public for Good and Welfare with all Council voting aye.

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John Gentless – 110 Union Avenue – Mr. Gentless asked about rumors he’s heard about projects in the Borough. Mr. Gentless stated Camden County is kind of sort of interested in buying the Quaker Store is the Borough would take ownership of it. Mr. Gentless asked if the Buddhist Temple is tax exempt. Mr. Gentless stated the new Buddhist Temple removed trees and wanted to know if they are putting anything back. Mr. Gentless stated the Borough should have a public meeting to discuss the Laurel Road Redevelopment area which was recommended by the Joint Land Use Board at its public meeting earlier in March.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilwoman Lomanno to close the public portion with all Council voting aye.

FIRE BUDGET PRESENTATION:

Chief Lemmerman presented the department’s request for operating and capital 2024 budgets. Chief Lemmerman stated there is an increase in both. Council asked questions of the chief related to training, equipment and fire gear took place. Council’s Finance Committee will review the request along with all departments before adopting the 2024 municipal budget.

ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Councilman Tolomeo, seconded by Councilman Kelly with all Council voting aye to adjourn at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Bill Bray, Borough Clerk