

Borough of Palmyra
Council Caucus Meeting Minutes, 7:00 PM
Monday December 4th, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

The Caucus Meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Palmyra was called to order by Mayor Michelle Arnold at 7:03 pm

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Michelle Arnold, Mrs. Bernadette Russell, Mrs. Gina Tait, Ms. Mindie Weiner, Mr. Lewis Yetter

Absent: President Timothy Howard, Brandon Allmond

Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT

Public Notice of this meeting pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act has been given

By the Municipal Clerk in the following manner:

- A. Posting written notice on the official bulletin board at the Palmyra Borough Hall on January 10, 2017 and October 19th, 2017
- B. Mailing written notice to the Burlington County Times, and the Courier Post Newspaper on January 10, 2017 and October 19th, 2017
- C. Notice to All Council Members.

INVOCATION

Prayer was given by Reverend Jimmy Lindsay Associate Minister of Evergreen Baptist Church of Palmyra, New Jersey.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Arnold requested a motion for approval of the October 16th, 2017 regular Council Meeting Minutes.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular council meeting of October 16th, 2017. Mr. Yetter second the motion.

At the call of the roll.

AYES. Mrs. Russell, Mrs. Tait, Ms. Weiner, Mr. Yetter

NAYES. None

Mayor Arnold requested a motion for approval of the November 20th, 2017 regular Council Meeting Minutes.

Mayor Arnold wished to add the following comments to the minutes of November 20th, 2017 : Mayor Arnold indicated that during the discussion regarding filling the vacancy on Borough Council there was quite a discussion and she felt her comments regarding past practices and how things were done in the past, and the fact that the three candidates for that vacancy were not present, did not submit anything to council and council did not have an opportunity to discuss their desires to serve on council should be noted. Additionally Mayor Arnold noted when Mr. Casparro commented during the public portion regarding the Winter Night Market, her comments, "Were all of the businesses contacted regarding the Winter Night Market?" were not noted.

Mr. Yetter made a motion to approve the minutes as presented for the regular council meeting of November 20th, 2017. Ms. Weiner second the motion.

At the call of the roll.

AYES. Mrs. Russell, Mrs. Tait, Ms. Weiner, Mr. Yetter

NAYES. None

Mayor Arnold acknowledged receipt of an email from Mrs. Veitenheimer thanking the public works employees for the job they did picking up the leaves and cleaning Rowland Street.

Mayor Arnold asked for a motion to open the public portion.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to open the public portion, Mrs. Tait second the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion

Mr. Rader – Harbour Dr. – Mr. Rader inquired why the names and addresses for Resolution 2017-238 thru 2017-249 are not listed on resolutions. Mr. Gural stated, all that we are required to do is to identify the Block and Lot and that is the official way that properties are identified. We could add names and address however out of respect to the property owners we generally don't. Mr. Rader stated that some of

these properties may be vacant and would be of interest to investors to fix up and get back on the tax books.

No one else from the public wishing to be heard, Mrs. Russell made a motion to close the public portion. Mr. Yetter seconded the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion.

ORDINANCE ON SECOND READING – the public hearing for Ordinance 2017-12 held on November 20th, 2017 was continued to December 4th, 2017

ORDINANCE 2017-12, an Ordinance Amending Chapter 121 of the Code of the Borough of Palmyra Governing “Fire Prevention” to Include Key Lock Box Installation

Mrs. Russell made a motion to open the public hearing of Ordinance 2017-12, Mr. Yetter second the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion

No one else from the public wishing to be heard, Mrs. Russell made a motion to close the public hearing of Ordinance 2017-12. Mr. Yetter second the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. Yetter made a motion to approve Ordinance 2017-12 as previously read. Mrs. Russell second the motion.

At the call of the roll.

AYES: Mrs. Russell, Mrs. Tait, Ms. Weiner, Mr. Yetter

NAYES: None

RESOLUTIONS Consent Agenda

Resolution 2017-232 to Resolution 2017-249 will be enacted as a single motion, if any resolution needs additional discussion it will be removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately.

- **Resolution 2017-232**, Resolution Authorizing the Chief Financial Officer to Make Budget Transfers to the 2017 Budget
- **Resolution 2017-233**, Resolution To Cancel \$90,000.00 From the Unemployment Trust Fund
- **Resolution 2017-234**, Resolution Approving Teresa Bankowski as an Active Member of the Palmyra Fire Department

- **Resolution 2017-235**, Resolution Authorizing the Finance Officer To Pay Vendor Bills During the Month of December 2017
- **Resolution 2017-236**, Resolution Authorizing the CFO to Cancel Unexpended Capital Balances
- **Resolution 2017-237**, Resolution Authorizing Refund of Tax Overpayment on Block 153.17 Lot 3037 in the amount of \$2,199.39
- **Resolution 2017-238**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 107 Lot 22 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations
- **Resolution 2017-239**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 125 Lot 3 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations
- **Resolution 2017-240**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 130 Lot 12 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations
- **Resolution 2017-241**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 26 Lot 13.01 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations
- **Resolution 2017-242**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 122 Lot 12 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations
- **Resolution 2017-243**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 81 Lot 13.01 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations
- **Resolution 2017-244**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 53 Lot 18 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations
- **Resolution 2017-245**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 130 Lot 12 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations
- **Resolution 2017-246**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 149 Lot 9 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations
- **Resolution 2017-247**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 48 Lot 12.05 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations
- **Resolution 2017-248**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be laced on Blk 130 Lot 8 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations

- **Resolution 2017-249**, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington Authorizing a Lien be placed on Blk 3 Lot 11 for Failure to Comply with Obnoxious Growth and Property Maintenance Violations

Ms. Weiner requested Resolution 2017-238 thru Resolution 2017-243, be removed from the consent agenda for additional discussion.

A motion was made by Mrs. Russell to approve Resolution 2017-232 thru Resolution 2017-237 and resolution 2017-244 thru Resolution 2017-249. Mr. Yetter second the motion.

At the call of the roll, the vote was.

AYES: Mrs. Russell, Mrs. Tait, Ms. Weiner, Mr. Yetter

NAYES: None

Mayor Arnold returned to Resolution 2017-238 thru Resolution 2017-243 for additional discussion.

Ms. Weiner inquired about the dates of those resolutions and were they correct. Ms. Jackson replied the dates are correct. Ms. Weiner voiced concern about the change in property ownership during that time which could cause a problem for potential new buyers when old owners were not timely billed. Mr. Gural indicated that could be a problem. Mayor Arnold asked if there was a specified time frame from lawn cut to billing to lien. Mr. Gural indicated there was not a time frame. Mr. Gural noted property owners are notified in advance that we are going to cut the grass, etc. if they don't and the cost to do the maintenance for the property will be billed to them and may become a lien on the property if not paid.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-238 thru Resolution 2017-243. Mr. Yetter second the motion.

At the call of the roll.

AYES: Mrs. Russell, Mrs. Tait, Ms. Weiner, Mr. Yetter

NAYES: None

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Mayor Arnold stated that Santa would be coming to town on December 8th, 2017 at 7:00 pm, he will begin his ride at the fire house and wind up at the Bandshell to light the holiday tree, where the high school band will be playing and immediately following the tree lighting all are invited to the community center to talk, take pictures with Santa and play games.

Mrs. Tait reminded everyone that the Holiday Decorating contest is under way and all participants must be registered by December 18th, 2017, the judging will be on December 20th, 2017 and December 21st, 2017. Mrs. Tait stated first and second prizes will be given for the traditional and the eccentric. Mr. Tait stated to participate in the contest the entry form must be completed by December 18th, 2017 and entry forms are available online or in Boro Hall.

Mayor Arnold indicated she visited Charles Street School where she presented a proclamation to Carter Priest, a fourth grade student at Charles Street School, for his heroic efforts in an emergency situation in the cafeteria. Carter Priest used the Heimlich maneuver to render aid to a choking student.

Ms. Weiner reminded all that the Holiday Market will be held at the Bandshell in Friday December 15th, 2017, food, fun and music, come out and enjoy, she also indicated the rain date would be December 22nd, 2017.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

NEW Business

Mr. Gural indicated the sign ordinance needs a lot of work, and has been a work in progress for a couple of years. Mr. Gural stated two years ago we began working with Kerbeck's professional team including their attorney and members of our Land Use Board to revise the sign ordinance so it was more reflective of what they do on Rt. 73. The work was never completed, the changes were never adopted although we still have the original documents. Mr. Gural stated that Kerbeck believed the sign ordinance changes were completed and thus put up signs which they believed were in compliance, and they received a violation notice. Mr. Gural stated we have met with representatives from Kerbeck and advised them that the ordinance was not adopted, it was the governing body's prerogative and it still needed to go thru the Land Use Board for adoption and approval. Mr. Gural stated they agreed they were in violation and paid the fines. Mr. Gural indicated the work still needs to be done and whichever council committee council feels should handle it, start over from the ground up and develop a draft with recommended changes to the sign ordinance then get council's recommendations to the Land Use Board for approval. Mrs. Tait inquired if the old information is still available. Mr. Gural indicated yes. Mrs. Russell suggested it fall under the construction committee for the upcoming year. Mrs. Tait volunteered to go out and speak to the business owners to see what things they feel need to be addressed regarding the sign ordinance.

Mayor Arnold indicated the Palmyra Police Association contract negotiations and PCR EMS agreements/shared service will be addressed in committee reports.

Mr. Gural indicated we have received applications from many qualified applicants for the code enforcement officer position. Mr. Gural stated the construction committee met last week to short list the applicants, and the top three candidates have been scheduled for interview on December 11th, 2017.

Mayor Arnold stated at the last meeting she requested everyone on council email her with their suggestion for the reorganization meeting date in January; she heard from some and some she didn't, thus she would like to discuss it now. Mrs. Tait suggested January 6th, 2018. Mayor Arnold asked why it can't be on a week night indicating January 3rd or January 4th, 2018, instead of a Saturday. Mrs. Russell indicated the meeting has been held on a Saturdays in the past. Mayor Arnold then indicated several days when the reorganization meeting was held on weekdays. After some discussion, Mrs. Russell made a motion to hold the reorganization meeting on January 6th, 2017. Mrs. Tait second the motion.

Further discussion was had regarding the date and the availability of council members during the week of January 1st. Mr. Gural asked if council could establish the time prior to the vote. Additional discussion was had regarding the time of the meeting, some members indicating 10:00 am and others 1:00 pm, after more discussion regarding the time, the consensus of the governing body was 10:00 am.

At the call of the roll.

AYES. Mrs. Russell, Mrs. Tait, Ms. Weiner, Mr. Yetter

NAYES. None

After deciding on the reorganization meeting date discussion was had regarding the remaining meeting dates for the entire year of 2018. Mr. Gural inquired if council wished to have the second meeting in January, as in the past sometimes it was decided not to hold that second meeting. Mr. Gural noted that if council decided to hold that meeting it would be on the 16th of January as Monday the 15th is MLK Day. After some discussion, it was decided not to hold that second meeting and the remaining meeting dates and times were set for the entire 2018 calendar year. Additionally all the meeting dates were set for the Redevelopment Agency for the 2018 calendar year. Borough Council also decided to cancel the scheduled December 18th, 2017 meeting.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Gural stated the decorative pole lights are going up today however the holiday decorations, wreaths with lights and bows we just could not get together in time. Mr. Gural suggested that next year we budget additional monies for the decorations during the budget process and begin the process of acquiring the decorations earlier in the season so we will have them ready to install in a timely manner, not last minute.

Mr. Gural stated the additional insurance coverage for the land use board claims which was discussed at previous meetings, we were notified JIF will offer to municipalities in 2018 at no cost. Mr. Gural stated we will acquire it in 2018.

Mr. Gural indicated he is working on the letter going out to the residents of those areas to be improved due to PSE&G and NJ American Water Co. repair projects, explaining what is going to be done and including a map of the area identifying the specific streets, curbs, etc. to be repairs being done next year.

Mr. Gural indicated the Burlington County JIF program announced the annual divided refund to participating municipalities, our refund is in the amount of \$6,387.00 and we need to notify them by resolution how we wish to accept it, as a cash dividend or as a credit towards future premiums. Mr. Gural stated in January or February there will be a resolution on the agenda to accept the cash option from the JIF. Mr. Gural indicated the deadline to respond is February 15th, 2017, so we have time.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Yetter – No reports

Councilwoman Russell – Mrs. Russell stated she will be meeting with Mr. Gural regarding the applications for the code enforcement position. Mrs. Russell indicated the Shade Tree Committee will be meeting later this week.

Councilwoman Tait – Mrs. Tait stated she spoke with some people regarding the Clarence B Jones Institute for Social Advocacy requesting a representative from Borough Council to sit on its Board. Mrs. Tait indicated a letter will be coming from Valeria Still indicating how they wish to proceed. Mrs. Tait stated she felt whom every of liaison to the school board should be the person to fill that seat. Mrs. Tait also stated the Youth & Recreation/Parks & Playgrounds will be meeting after the first of the year.

Councilwoman Weiner – Ms. Weiner indicated the Business and Community Development committee is hoping to meet this week. Ms. Weiner also indicated the Tuxedo Club has opened its doors on Cinnaminson Avenue, however the Barista Café has closed its doors.

Mayor Arnold – Mayor Arnold stated the Public Safety/ Negotiations Committees met and there are a few changes which need to be made to the PBA contract; those changes have been sent to the Police Association and once the changes are made it will be presented to council for discussion. Mr. Gural stated Mr. Rosenberg drafted an agreement between the Borough of Palmyra and the PRC EMS Squad. The public safety committee met with Mr. Rosenberg to answer some questions he had regarding the proposed agreement which is now complete. The proposed agreement was sent to council and will be sent to the PRC EMS Squad for their approval and then it can be adopted in January or February.

Mayor Arnold stated she attended the Regional Chamber of Commerce giving program where many non-profit organizations were in attendance. The program was about the economic impact our non-profit organizations have on our community. Mayor Arnold also indicated she attended another seminar on cloud based businesses and then had a conversation with our tax collector and perhaps there are some things we may be able to implement moving forward. Mayor Arnold stated the Palmyra Panthers POP Warner Cheerleaders junior squad are competing in Nationals in Florida tomorrow and wished them the best on luck. Mayor Arnold also indicated she spoke with Lew, Mr. Gural, and Mr. Haines from Public works regarding color coding the various zones for brush and leaf pick up. Possibly color coded stickers on the sewer bills to help people understand of the various zones and dates. Ms. Weiner stated some regular updates on our website and Facebook could also be helpful. Mayor Arnold also indicated the LEPC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday December 6th, 2017 at the Community Center at 7:00 pm.

Mayor Arnold asked for a motion to open the public portion.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to open the public portion. Mr. Yetter second the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion

Mr. Rader – Harbour Drive – Mr. Rader stated that sometimes the seniors hold their activities in the Community Center gym area and tables and chairs are brought in from the storage area on a cart. The cart which is in the center currently is damaged and there is something wrong with the wheels. The seniors have an activity planned for January 3rd, 2018 and are expecting about 70 people. Mr. Rader asked if there were funds available to repair or replace the cart before January 3rd, 2018. Mr. Gural indicated this is the first he is hearing about this. Mr. Gural indicated he would look into it. Mr. Rader inquired if it had been decided how the Council Committees will be assigned. Mayor Arnold indicated no, then she explained how it was done in the past, being the appointment of the Mayor with the consent from council.

Mrs. Holloway – Broad Street – Mrs. Holloway thanked council, Mayor Arnold, Mr. Gural and anyone who had something to do with getting the Broad Street sign in place, it's beautiful. Mrs. Holloway inquired if the holiday lights will be going all the way down Broad Street to Rt. 73, Mayor Arnold indicated yes. Mrs. Holloway inquired if in the resolutions regarding property maintenance liens there was one regarding 515 Race Street. Council indicated that address was not. Mr. Gural stated that these liens are being placed for work we had performed on the various properties, (ex. lawn cuts) and had to pay to have completed. Chief Pearlman indicated he thought the property had been sold. Mrs. Holloway indicated great perhaps it will now get cleaned up.

Mr. McElwee – Columbia Avenue – Mr. McElwee thanked the Mayor, Mr. Gural and whoever else donated cookies for the Troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. Mr. McElwee stated the yellow ribbon club sent 190 boxes of cookies to the Troops, and will receive \$1.00 for every pack of cookies sold at Chick-Fa-Lay, until the end of December. Mr. McElwee also thanked and acknowledged Wawa and Verizon who paid the postage to mail those cookies to Afghanistan and Iraq. Mr. McElwee inquired about the Tri-Boro Vets building, noting it was still standing. Mr. Gural stated they are still doing the final things to have the building taken down. Mr. McElwee asked if we received our \$1.00. Mr. Gural indicated yes. Mr. McElwee indicated we are hoping to unveil a new plaque with the names of 20 civil war veterans on Memorial Day. He also wished everyone a happy holiday.

Mrs. Cintron– Leconey Avenue – Mrs. Cintron thanked Palmyra and the neighboring towns which helped with the Boy Scout food drive. Just wanted to let everyone know there were 13,280 items collected, far exceeding last year’s drive, all of which was donated to Epworth Food Pantry.

No one else from the public wishing to be heard, Mrs. Russell made a motion to close the public portion. Mrs. Tait second the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Tait – Mrs. Tait wished everyone a safe and happy holiday and hoped the New Year would be a much better year.

Councilman Yetter – Mr. Yetter reminded everyone that Santa is coming to town, and he has a new sled.

Councilwoman Russell – Mrs. Russell thanked everyone for coming out to the meetings and wished everyone a safe a happy holiday.

Councilwoman Weiner – Ms. Weiner asked Mrs. Tait if we had something planned for the Martin Luther King Holiday. Mayor Arnold stated she had something planed and would reach out to Ms. Weiner with the details, and they can work together on that.

Mayor Arnold – Ms. Arnold stated, this being the last meeting of the year; she felt there were somethings which needed to be said so that we could start the new year fresh.. Mayor Arnold talked about the prior meeting when conversations were being had regarding the vacancy on council. Mayor Arnold indicated some of the comments made were incorrect. Mayor Arnold stated that in the past things where done differently and then explained how things were done in 2015, 2016 regarding the candidates wishing to fill vacant seats on council and allowing the full council the opportunity to read

biographs and speak with potential replacement candidates. Mayor Arnold stated moving forward with this type of situation, council should give everyone on council the opportunity to do their job collectively and council should do a better job of working together. Mayor Arnold spoke about conduct at council meetings and everyone should be aware that it is an open public meeting and we are here to conduct the business of the Borough, passing notes to one another, sending emails, text messages, checking phone messages and even hand signals from the audience are inappropriate. Mayor Arnold indicated all should be mindful of our employees, they are salaried employees and if you have questions or concerns you should try to reach them during business hours, keeping in mind there are some things which they cannot approve; simply some things must go thru the governing body. Mayor Arnold stated everyone, council, employees and volunteers all work with various groups in and around the borough helping in different capacities; however we must remember that individual entities are separate from the Borough and the business of these organizations must be kept separate from Borough business. Mayor Arnold thanked everyone for listening, coming out and wished everyone a delightful holiday season.

Having nothing for closed session, Mayor Arnold asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Yetter second the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:35 PM

Respectfully submitted

Doretha R. Jackson

Acting Municipal Clerk