

Borough of Palmyra
Virtual Council Caucus Meeting Minutes
Monday April 5th, 2021

The Regular Council Meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Palmyra was called to order by Mayor Tait at 6:35 PM

ROLL CALL

At the call of the roll:

PRESENT: Dr. Laura Cloud, Michelle McCann, Bernadette Russell, President Timothy Howard, Mayor Gina Ragomo Tait

ABSENT: Brandon Allmond, Farrah Jenkins

The pledge of Allegiance was recited.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., and in consideration of Executive Order No. 103, issued by Governor Murphy on March 9, 2020, declaring a State of Emergency and a Public Health Emergency in the State of New Jersey and in response to Executive Order No 196 issued by Governor Murphy on November 16, 2020. Please be advised the Borough of Palmyra does hereby notify the public that to protect the health, safety and welfare of our citizens while ensuring the continued functioning of government, the meeting of the Mayor and Council will be a Virtual Council Meeting. Members of the public are invited to “attend” the Virtual Council Meeting but all members of the public participating in the meeting may be muted and their video image disabled. Notice of this meeting was published in the Burlington County Times on January 12th, 2021. Notice was posted on the Municipal Door, Official Bulletin Board, and electronic signs on March 22, 2021. Notice was also posted on the Borough of Palmyra Website on April 1, 2021 and notice was given to all Council Members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Tait requested a motion for approval of the March 15th, 2021 Regular Council Meeting Minutes Dr. Cloud made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 15th, 2021 Regular Council Meeting Minutes. Mrs. McCann second the motion.

At the call of the roll the vote was:

INFAVOR: Dr. Cloud, Mrs. McCann

AGAINST: None

ABSTAIN: Mrs. Russell, President Howard

Motion Carried

CORRESPONDENCE

Municipal Clerk, Ms. Jackson acknowledged the following correspondence received:

Thank-You Note – McCann Family

Resolution 2021-10 – Lewis Yetter, Land Use Board President

Letter – Sean Toner, Board of Education, President, Palmyra Public School District

E-mail – Carolyn Furrer

Resignation Letter – Michael Julia

Mayor Tait requested a motion to accept the resignation letter of Michael Julia

Mrs. Russell made a motion to accept the resignation letter of Officer Julia. Dr. Cloud second the motion.

All present voted in favor of the motion:

Motion Carried

REDEVELOPMENT

Rt. 73 South Redevelopment Area- Update

Mr. Gural stated ordinance 2021-05 is on the agenda for public hearing and second reading tonight, it allows for administrative review and approval of minor modifications and/or field changes by the engineer, relating to previously approved site plans. Mr. Gural indicated the redeveloper is scheduled to settle on the National Amusement property in the next few weeks. Mr. Gural indicated resolution 2021-113 is on the agenda also, is for approval of the treatment work application, which allows the redeveloper to construct a sanitary sewer and connect to our sewer and waste water treatment system. Mr. Gural stated we have received for NJDEP, approval of the acceptable use determination permit which allows for use of the dredge materials at the Cinnaminson CDF to be removed and transported to the redevelopment area. Mr. Gural noted we have already received approval for use of the dredge materials located at the Palmyra CDF. Mr. Gural stated this allows the redeveloper to begin transport of the materials from Cinnaminson to the redevelopment area. Mr. Gural indicated the traffic plan for transportation is included in the agenda package. Mr. Gural stated we received a long-term tax exemption application/Pilot from the redeveloper which he forwarded to everyone. Mr. Gural noted that the pilot was still in discussion stages and he would forward additional information as received. Mr. Gural stated we also received a financial agreement and a revised redevelopment agreement. Mr. Gural indicated the material is scheduled to begin moving in May and additional information will be forth coming from the Mayor regarding a groundbreaking ceremony. Mr. Brewer indicated the financial agreement needs to be adopted by ordinance.

Outlaw Training & Fitness/620-622 Highland Ave Redevelopment Project – Update

Mr. Gural indicated he had no current update regarding the redevelopment project. Mr. Brewer indicated the appeal should be heard in the next couple of weeks. Mr. Rosenberg asked if the owner was current with his escrow payments. Mr. Gural indicated he would look into it.

Former Knights of Columbus property - Block 80 Lot 6 – Update

Mr. Gural stated he believed the building had been sold to Sea Box and was waiting for additional information.

PROFESSIONAL UPDATES

William Kirchner, ERI

Mr. Kirchner stated the treatment works approval application resolution allows the Mayor to sign on behalf of the Borough, as the owner of the existing sewer system indicating that we are aware someone is extending the sanitary sewer system that will be treated by our sewer plant. Mr. Kirchner indicated the redeveloper has submitted plans which include an onsite sanitary sewer collection system and a pump station with a force main to push the sewage over to the developed side of Rt. 73 where it will be picked up by our existing sewer system and treated at our treatment plant. Mr. Kirchner stated the 2020 road program is almost complete expect for some stripping and clean up work. Mr. Kirchner stated the contractor paved Virginia, Oregon and Leconey about two weeks ago. Mr. Kirchner stated that Temple Blvd. is moving along and are looking forward to having this phase completed by the end of May. Mr. Gural stated on the agenda for discussion are the sewer lateral responsibility ordinance and Main Harbour Drive engineering study. Mr. Gural indicated the ordinance regarding sewer lateral responsibility is not clear and we are looking to clarify exactly who is responsibility for what. Mr. Gural explained the responsibility of the homeowner and the Borough. Mr. Gural noted that Mr. Kirchner prepared a draft ordinance for consideration and is ready to take questions if there are any. Mr. Gural noted we received a proposal from Mr. Kirchner regarding updating and completion of the evaluation of Main Harbour Drive study. Mr. Gural explained that a while back the former Mayor and he met with the Harbour as they expressed an interest in dedicating/giving Main Harbour Drive to the Borough. Mr. Gural explained that for the road to be accepted by the Borough it must meet certain standards. Mr. Gural stated that ERI, at that time, began to prepare an evaluation of Main Harbour Drive and in 2016 there were changes on the Harbour Condominium Board and the board members no longer felt the need to continue discussions regarding the dedication of Main Harbour Drive. Mr. Gural stated the draft that had been prepared just sat for the last five years and seeing no interest the final report was not completed. Mr. Gural explained the funding appropriated, what was used, the remaining balance and the new proposal to completed and updated the study, as when he and Mayor Tait met with the Harbour Condominium Association, they again expressed an interest in dedicating Main Harbour Drive to the Borough. There was discussion regarding what happened in the past, the current road conditions, speed bumps and the completion of the evaluation. Mayor Tait asked Mr. Kirchner when they were going to complete New Jersey Avenue. Mr. Kirchner indicated he was hoping to have the bid out by the end of April, beginning of May so construction would begin in June.

PUBLIC COMMENT

We request those participants wishing to have or make a Public comment, email their questions or comments in advance to Municipal Clerk Rita Jackson at djackson@boroughofpalmyra.com. The opportunity to submit comments prior to meeting expires at 12:00 PM on Monday April 5th, 2021. All comments will become part of the record and included with the Meeting Minutes.

For those who “attended” the Virtual Meeting, Mayor Tait opened the meeting to the public for comments. All comments will become part of the record and included with the Meeting Minutes.

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to open to the Public for comments Mrs. Russell made a motion to open the public portion for comments. President Howard second the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion Carried

Mayor Tait asked if any comments were received before the meeting.

Municipal Clerk, Ms. Jackson indicated the following were received prior to the meeting.

Mrs. Veitenheimer – Rowland Street

This has been eating at me since the Budget workshop meeting on March 27 that I feel I must say something now. In 2020 the taxpayers were told that all staff raises for 2020 were eliminated. Now in the 2021 budget you plan to go back and give all staff a 1.50% pay increase for 2020 plus a 2.00% pay increase for 2021, effectively a 3.50% raise. To go back to 2020 and give raises after telling the taxpayers otherwise is so wrong on so many levels. It's outrageous! If a taxpayer was not at the budget workshop meeting (which only two were), they'll never know. With everything that is happening in the world, do you think many people got raises in 2020 other than minimum wage workers? Look at how many people are out of work and struggling. Look at the line of cars at food pantries. How many companies can afford to give raises when their businesses are struggling? I know I didn't get any raise in 2020. In fact, my hours were cut, I had added job duties and my workplace has been open to the public since September 2020. Yet my Municipal taxes were raised 4.35% last year and another Municipal tax increase is anticipated this year along with the \$40 sewer increase. On top of that the Municipal surplus is higher than ever.

Please take this into consideration and do more for the taxpayers in the way of tax relief.

Mayor Tait asked if there were any additional comments from those present.

Mr. Rader – Harbour Drive- Mr. Rader asked if someone could explain what Resolution 2021-112 was about. What is the charter? Mr. Rader Asked if the Mayor would be appointing the people to the committee.

Mayor Tait stated that the advisory committee is for the Rt. 130 corridor. Mayor Tait noted the state requested that all the communities affected have a citizen advisory committee to make sure that plans

submitted are consistent with the Master plan and that we utilized all services and grants available to the Borough. Mayor Tait indicated she would be appointing those citizens to the committee.

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to close to the Public for comments President Howard made a motion to close the public portion for comments. Mrs. Russell second the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion Carried

ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING (Public Hearing)

Ordinance 2021-5 An Ordinance Amending the Borough of Palmyra Land Development Code Section 158-27(B) and the Route 73 South Redevelopment Plan to Permit Administrative Review and Approval of Minor Modifications and/or Field Changes Relating to Previously Approved Site Plans

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to open Ordinance 2021-5 for public hearing. Mrs. Russell made a motion to open Ordinance 2021-5 for public comments. President Howard second the motion

All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Seeing no comments Mayor Tait requested a motion to close the public portion for hearing of Ordinance 2021-5. Dr. Cloud made a motion to close the public hearing of Ordinance 2021-5. President Howard second the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Mayor Tait requested of motion to approve Ordinance 2021-5. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-5. President Howard seconded the motion.

At the call of the roll, the vote was:

INFAVOR: Dr. Cloud, Mrs. McCann, Mrs. Russell, President Howard

AGAINST: None

Motion carried. Ordinance 2021-5 was approved

RESOLUTIONS

Mayor Tait stated **Resolution 2021-110** thru **Resolution 2021-115** 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

Mayor Tait asked if any resolutions needed to be removed from the consent agenda. Seeing none

Mayor Tait read the following resolutions into the record:

Resolution 2021-110, Resolution Authorizing a Refund in the amount of \$2,000.00 for Block 153.07 Lot 1033, 1033 Harbour Drive due to approved Veterans Deduction.

Resolution 2021-111, Resolution Appointing Amy Austin as Captain of the Crossing Guards at the per shift rate of \$18.67

Resolution 2021-112, Resolution Authorizing the Creation of the Plan Endorsement Citizen's Advisory Committee

Resolution 2021-113, Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Treatment Work Approval Application, and related documents for the TAC-PAL Logistics Center

Resolution 2021-114, Resolution Appointing Colin Macadam as Full-Time Public Works Driver/Laborer and Gardener at the Hourly rate of \$17.50 Effective April 19th, 2021 Subject to the terms in the Offer of Employment dated March 30th, 2021

Resolution 2021-115, Resolution Appointing Paul Schmidheiser as Full-Time Public Works Driver/Laborer at the Hourly rate of \$16.50 per hour Effective April 19th, 2021 Subject to the terms in the Offer of Employment dated March 30th, 2021

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve the consent agenda Resolutions 2021-110 thru Resolution 2021-115.

President Howard made a motion to approve the consent agenda Resolutions 2021-110 thru Resolution 2021-115. Mrs. Russell second the motion.

Mr. Gural introduced Mr. Macadam to the governing body, as he was present at the meeting.

At the call of the roll, the vote was:

INFAVOR: Dr. Cloud, Mrs. McCann, Mrs. Russell, President Howard

AGAINST: None

Motion carried. Resolutions 2021-110 thru Resolution 2021-115 were approved.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Mayor Tait stated that April 17th, 2021 the Borough and OEM will be hosting a Covid-19 vaccine registration at the community center

Mayor Tait asked anyone interested in serving on the Mayor Advisory committee to email her.

Mayor Tait noted there will be a zoom meeting on April 15th, 2021 regarding the Philadelphia Boom cars. Anyone interest should contact her for the link to the meeting.

Mayor Tait noted that on June 19th, 2021 the Borough in combination with Riverton's Green team will be hosting a e-recycle collecting electronics in front of the Community Center. Mayor Tait also noted that electronics can be taken to public works again for disposal.

Mayor Tait indicated she met with the Bridge Commission and they will be starting a community garden at the Cove.

Mayor Tait noted a groundbreaking ceremony will be held on the southside of Rt. 73 on May 21st, 2021, noting additional information will be coming.

Mr. Gural indicated that the State Street Event and others were hoping to hold an event at Kove Catering on Garfield Avenue. Mr. Gural noted that due to local zoning ordinances that event was not permitted. Mr. Gural noted that Mr. Casparro suggested that perhaps they could offer the event at an

approved location under the umbrella of the Palmyra Improvement Association. Mr. Gural indicated that they could be considered on a as requested basis.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Gural indicated Borough Hall is ready to re-open from a logistical position however the concerns are still ongoing regarding the number of cases continuing to rise. Mr. Gural noted we have had ten infections in the last five days in Palmyra. Mr. Gural stated the State's infection rate is at its highest level since last April. Mr. Gural noted several infections in Cinnaminson in the police department, public works department and employees. Mr. Gural indicated he could not currently recommend re-opening to the public. Mr. Gural noted the restrooms at legion field are in high demand. Mayor Tait indicated on her call with the Governor's office that question was asked by another Mayor and they were told they must be cleaned every two hours. Mr. Gural indicated that we do not have the staff to clean the restrooms every two hours after business hours or on the weekends. Mr. Gural noted if the governing body wished to consider allowing the sports organizations to place port-a-pots they could. Mrs. Russell inquired if they would be cleaned every two hours. Mr. Gural indicated probably not. There was additional discussion regarding opening the restrooms and the cleaning of them. Mrs. McCann indicated Riverton was opening their restrooms. Mrs. McCann asked if signs could be purchased noting to "enter at your own risk" and "please wash your hands" etc. There was additional discussion and Mr. Rosenberg indicated that the CDC guidelines indicate that restrooms can be opened but need to be cleaned regularly. Mr. Gural indicated that if the governing body approves then they can be opened on the weekend only, from Saturday morning thru Saturday night opening again on Sunday morning and closing again on Sunday night, just know they will not be cleaned during that time. Mr. Rosenberg suggested giving cleaning supplies to the teams for them to go in and clean the restrooms. The Governing body indicated they would allow the bathrooms to be opened on the weekends.

Mr. Gural indicated the PPA took a second vote and agreed to ratify our proposal. Mr. Gural indicated we should have an agreement to sign by next meeting.

Mr. Gural stated there is a letter in your packet being sent to all employees, notifying our employees of our responsibilities under the American Rescue Plan Act. Mr. Gural noted there is also a financial aspect of the plan and indicated the Borough expects to receive \$701,377.99 over the next two years. Chief Campbell indicated they have about five or six candidates moving on to the next round of interviews for the Police Department.

Mr. Gural indicated the Purchase Order; Council signature requirement ordinance and sidewalk/snow & ice removal ordinance will remain on the agenda until we have additional info for governing body approval.

Mayor Tait indicated additional information will be forthcoming regarding the marijuana legalization. Mr. Gural noted that 2nd Street was the only street not getting any improvements in the area where they are working on the road improvement project. Mr. Gural noted the Mr. Kirchner provided a

proposal to do that street and it will be included in one of the road improvements projects yet to be determined.

Mr. Gural indicated he will be requesting changes to the Riverton Jetter Assistance agreement due to expire in June of this year. Mr. Gural indicated he would have an updated agreement for consideration before the agreement expires.

Mr. McGill indicated they received asphalt and have repaired most of the larger potholes. Mr. McGill indicated they are using the hot box and should have them all repaired soon.

Mr. Gural indicated the Fire Company lease is expiring and they are requesting an additional \$2,500.00. Mr. Gural noted the lease is for the storage of our equipment and was for \$15,000.00. Mr. Gural stated the \$2,500.00 increase is not just for this year but will be requested for the next two years after this. Mr. Gural indicated he and Mr. Rosenberg could handle the agreement if the governing body were amenable. Mayor Tait indicated the public safety committee should look at it and get back to Mr. Gural

Dr. Cloud indicated she would contact Mr. Casparro regarding an April- Spring Clean-Up Day in town. Dr. Cloud indicated the river clean-up will be held on Sunday April 25th, 2021. Mrs. Russell indicated the theme for "Earth Day" this year is "Restore our Earth".

Mr. Gural indicated Mr. Rosenberg provided a memo regarding some signage are our parks and on the route of our children to and from school. Mr. Rosenberg indicated the US Supreme court has addressed this issue and it is a first amendment right, free speech. Mrs. Rosenberg indicated although it is in poor taste it is lawful and efforts to infringe upon it could met in disastrous results.

Mr. Rosenberg indicated several criminal complaints have been filed against the owner of the sober living facility due to criminal violations. Mr. Rosenberg noted that to attempt to impose restrictions on group homes based on zoning ordinances, intending to limit the numbers or impose conditions are routinely struck down by the courts.

Mr. Gural indicated our ordinance requires residents requesting handicap parking signs in front of their homes apply for handicap sign approval. Mr. Gural stated this approval must be done by ordinance which requires, a first and second reading of the changes to our ordinance change every time there is a request. Mr. Gural asked if it would be possible to have Mr. Rosenberg investigate a modification of our ordinance to allow the handicap sign placement to be approved by resolution thus allowing a timelier answer to a request. Mr. Gural indicated this have been done in the past. Mr. Rosenberg indicated he would investigate and get back to the governing body. Mr. Gural indicated we have a request for 738 Morgan Avenue currently and asked if we could approve that application by resolution tonight granting relief to the resident and allowing Mr. Rosenberg to look into the ordinance amendment for future requests.

Mr. Gural indicated Resolution 2021-116 would allow for approval of a handicap parking sign to be placed at 735 Morgan Avenue. President Howard made the motion to approve Resolution 2021-116 Approving a handicap parking sign at 735 Morgan Avenue. Mrs. Russell second the motion.

At the call of the roll, the vote was:

INFAVOR: Dr. Cloud, Mrs. McCann, Mrs. Russell, President Howard

AGAINST: None

Motion carried. Resolutions 2021-116 was approved

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Mr. Gural reminded all that the JIF Elected Officials Training Seminar needs to be completed. Mr. Gural noted that every one of the governing body members needs to attend the JIF Elected Officials Training Seminar noting that the Borough receives \$250.00 deduction from our insurance premium. Mr. Gural noted the need for everyone who works with or around minor children to take the Safe Treatment and Protection of Minors Training Webinar also required to have a criminal background check completed by the Police Department.

Mayor Tait indicated that council would go back to reporting on council committees at the regular meeting of the governing body. Mayor Tait asked everyone to be prepared to report on their committees at the next meeting.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mrs. Russell- no comment

Dr Cloud – no comment

Mrs. McCann- Thanked everyone for being understanding regarding the bathrooms at Legion Field.

President Howard – Mr. Howard thanked Ms. Russel for coming to the meeting while she is on vacation. President Howard thanked everyone for coming up with a solution regarding the bathrooms at Legion Field. President Howard thanked whoever found his keys and badge at the Riverline and turned them into the police noting how great his town is.

Mayor Tait asked if anyone is interested in serving on a committee or the Mayor's advisory committee, please contact her.

Mayor Tait asked Mr. Gural and Mr. Rosenberg if there were items for closed session. Mr. Gural and Mr. Rosenberg indicated no.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. President Howard second the motion.

All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM

Doretha R Jackson, RMC

Municipal Clerk

Approved: April ,2021