

**Borough of Palmyra**  
**Virtual Regular Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

The Regular Council Meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Palmyra was called to order by Mayor Tait at 6:34 PM

**ROLL CALL**

At the call of the roll:

PRESENT: Brandon Allmond, Laura Cloud, Farrah Jenkins, Michelle McCann, Bernadette Russell, President Timothy Howard, Mayor Gina Ragomo Tait

ABSENT: None

The pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT**

Mayor Tait read the following into the record:

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 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Notice was posted on the Municipal Door, Official Bulletin Board, and electronic signs on April 8<sup>th</sup>,2021. Notice was also posted on the Borough of Palmyra Website on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and notice was given to all Council Members.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mayor Tait requested a motion for approval of the April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Council Caucus Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Council Caucus Meeting Minutes. President Howard second the motion.

**At the call of the roll the vote was:**

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

**AGAINST: None**

**Abstain: Mr. Allmond, Mrs. Jenkins**

**Motion Carried**

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

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

Thank- Card – George Moore

Letter- Dan Lambe, President Arbor Day Foundation

## **REDEVELOPMENT**

### Rt. 73 South Redevelopment Area- Update

Mr. Brewer indicated the ordinance on the agenda tonight, for first reading, is for the PILOT, a financial agreement, for one warehouse in the Redevelopment area. Mr. Rosenberg indicated they are working on the revised redevelopment agreement, given the current circumstances, and noted they would like to schedule a special meeting for next Monday April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021 for the execution and authorization of an amended redevelopment agreement and the authorization and execution of a bifurcated redevelopment agreement, dealing with parcel number 1 which comprises the 700 sq ft. warehouse building and the affordable housing element of the redevelopment project. Mr. Rosenberg noted they need to be approved by resolution, which Mr. Brewer will be preparing for the special meeting. Mr. Gural stated the ordinance on the agenda tonight for introduction is to authorize the execution of the PILOT for the warehouse. Mr. Gural introduced Jennifer Edwards of Acacia Financial, the borough's financial consultant. Mr. Gural indicated that over the life of the PILOT the Borough is guaranteed to receive more than 40 million dollars and that is only on the 700 sq ft warehouse portion of the redevelopment project.

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

Mr. Brewer stated the valuation trial was scheduled for today but has however been adjourned until August of 2021. He indicated when the specific date is determined he will let the governing body know. Mr. Gural indicated he had nothing new to report.

### Redevelopment Study Block 80 Lot 6, former Knights of Columbus property- Update

Mr. Gural stated he was aware that Seabox purchased the building, and he would be reaching out to see what their plans were.

## **PROFESSIONAL UPDATES**

William Kirchner, ERI

Mr. Kirchner indicated that they have completed the installation of the gravity-controlled storm drain in the southernmost section of the project between VanSant and Delaware Avenue without many issues. Mr. Kirchner indicated they are working on the curbing, aprons, sidewalks, and handicap ramps from Van Sant to Cinnaminson Avenue. Mr. Kirchner indicated the work is progressing well and he is pleased with the quality of the construction. Mr. Kirchner indicated we are on schedule and the

contractor has been working four, ten-hour days. Mr. Kirchner indicate the 5<sup>th</sup> and Race Street project will not begin until school is out. Mr. Kirchner stated he was hoping to have the bids out in May for an award in June for the 2021 Road Improvement project.

## PROCLAMATION

Mayor Tait read the following: **Arbor Day Proclamation 2021**

**Whereas**, in 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees, and

**Whereas**, this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska, and

**Whereas**, Arbor Day is now observed throughout the nation and the world, and

**Whereas**, trees can reduce the erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, cut heating and cooling costs, moderate the temperature, clean the air, produce life-giving oxygen, and provide habitat for wildlife, and

**Whereas**, trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, fuel for our fires and countless other wood products, and

**Whereas**, trees in our city increase property values, enhance the economic vitality of business areas, and beautify our community, and

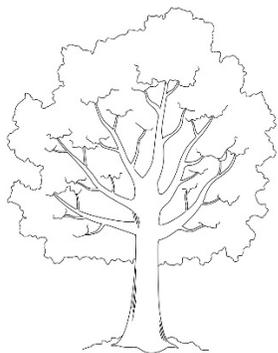
**Whereas**, trees, wherever they are planted, are a source of joy and spiritual renewal.

**Whereas**, the Borough of Palmyra has been recognized as a Tree City USA 15<sup>th</sup> year by the National Arbor Day Foundation and desires to continue its tree-planting practices

**Now, Therefore**, I Gina Ragomo Tait, Mayor of the Borough of Palmyra, urge all citizens to celebrate Arbor Day and to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands, and

**Further**, I urge all citizens to plant trees to gladden the heart and promote the well-being of this and future generations.

Dated this 19th day of April 2021



mayor Ragomo Tait  
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Mayor Gina Ragomo Tait

## PHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

**Andrew Yansick** – Mr. Yansick indicated school has returned to a full five-day schedule in house.

**Coady McCann** – Mr. McCann stated the Interact Club has been doing food drives and toy drives and noted that recently they were told they could do a clean-up at the Cove which they have scheduled for May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Mr. McCann noted that wrestling has completed its season with Zack Kahana finishing sixth in the region. Mr. McCann indicated the tennis team has a match tomorrow at Legion field against Pennsville, the girls' softball team has senior night tomorrow and is playing against Maple Shade and baseball opened its season today.

**Naomi Caban** – Ms. Caban indicated the juniors are working on the Senior Prom and are selling tickets to juniors and seniors but may open the event up to other underclassmen. Ms. Caban thanked all the local business for donating to the 2021 post-prom.

Mayor Tait thanked the students for handing out flyers for the Covid Vaccine Registration event held last Saturday. Mayor Tait introduced Kate Yoakum and noted the school board would have her attend our meetings as a representative of the Board of Education.

**Ms. Kate Yoakum** indicated she would be attending the meeting just as a representative of the Board of Education and if there are questions or comments, she will forward them to the superintendent for follow-up as he is the spoke person for the board. Ms. Yoakum indicated the board is excited that the students will be returning to in class instruction five days a week, noting for those wishing not to return there remains a remote option. Ms. Yoakum stated that Octavia Lee has been hired, beginning July 1, 2021 as principle for Charles Street School. Ms. Yoakum noted the Board of Education is in the process of developing a new 5-year strategic plan and noted that a draft will be available later this spring. Ms. Yoakum stated a tentative budget hearing is scheduled for May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and noted the following meeting would be held May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## PUBLIC COMMENT

We requested 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](mailto:djackson@boroughofpalmyra.com). The opportunity to submit comments prior to meeting expired at 12:00 PM on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 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 are part of the record and are included with the Meeting Minutes.

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to open to the Public for comments.

Mr. Allmond made a motion to open the public portion for comments. Mrs. Russell 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 no comments were received prior to the meeting.

**Mr. Gift – Horace Avenue-** Mr. Gift stated there is an ongoing problem with the neighbors at 404 Horace. Mr. Gift indicated they are having massive parties every weekend. He noted they started in March and have been going every weekend. He stated they are incredibly loud, there is a large amount of alcohol consumption and public urination and all the vehicles that show up have Pennsylvania tags. Mr. Gift stated they along with other residents have called the police numerous times, but the parties continue. President Howard indicated he would follow up with the Chief Campbell and get back to them. Chief Campbell indicated there have been nine calls over the past year regarding noise and parting at that residence. Chief Campbell indicated anyone concerned with the loud noise and partying is welcomed to come to the station and fill out a probable cause statement and the police can call the Judge and find out if there is probable cause for the issuance of a complaint.

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

No one from the public wishing to be heard, Mayor Tait asked for a motion to close the Public Portion. Mrs. Russell made a motion to close the public portion, President Howard second the motion.

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

#### **ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING public hearing May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Ordinance 2021-06.** An Ordinance of the Borough of Palmyra County of Burlington, New Jersey Approving an Application for a Long-Term Tax Exemption and Authorizing the Execution of a Financial Agreement for a Tax Exemption for an Urban Renewal Project with Respect to the Property Commonly know as Block 156, Lots 1 and 1.01 (Future Lot 1.08) on the Tax Map of the Borough of Palmyra.

Mayor Tait requested of motion to approve Ordinance 2021-06. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-06. President Howard seconded the motion.

**At the call of the roll, the vote was:**

**INFAVOR: Mr. Allmond, Dr. Cloud, Mrs. Jenkins, Mrs. McCann, Mrs. Russell, President Howard**

**AGAINST: None**

**Motion carried. Ordinance 2021-06 was approved on first reading.**

#### **RESOLUTIONS**

Mayor Tait stated **Resolution 2021-117 and Resolution 2021-118** will be enacted as a single motion, if either resolution needs additional discussion, it will be removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately.

Mayor Tait asked if either resolution needed to be removed from the consent agenda. Seeing none Mayor Tait read the following resolutions into the record:

**Resolution 2021-117**, Resolution Awarding a Contract to Environmental Resolutions, Inc. (ERI) for the Engineering Services to update the Evaluation of Harbour Drive per their Proposal Dated March 22, 2021 in the Amount of \$6,750.00

**Resolution 2021-118**, Resolution Authorizing the Payment of April 2021 Bills in the Amount of \$3,101,549.61

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve Resolution 2021-117 and Resolution 2021-118.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-117 and Resolution 2021-118. President Howard second the motion.

**At the call of the roll, the vote was:**

**INFAVOR: Mr. Allmond, Dr. Cloud, Mrs. Jenkins, Mrs. McCann, Mrs. Russell, President Howard**

**AGAINST: None**

**Motion carried. Resolutions 2021-117 and Resolution 2021-118 were approved**

### **MOTION TO APPROVE TREASURERS' REPORTS**

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve the Treasurer's Reports for February 2021, and March 2021. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Reports for February 2021, and March 2021. President Howard second the motion.

**At the call of the roll:**

**INFAVOR: Mr. Allmond, Dr. Cloud, Mrs. Jenkins, Mrs. McCann, Mrs. Russell, President Howard**

**AGAINST: None**

**Motion Carried. Treasurers Reports was approved**

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mr. Gural indicated the Borough Hall staff is back to everyone working in the office regular hours and he had nothing more to report. Mr. Gural stated that he sent an email to the governing body regarding the Legion Field restrooms. Mr. Gural noted that JIF has indicated that if we open the restrooms at Legion Field then we are required to follow the CDC guidelines. Installing and or allowing port-a-pots does not release our liability. Mr. Gural indicated the CDC guidelines indicate that regular clearing must occur, and it must be documented. Mr. Gural noted that we do not have the staff to clean the restrooms on a regular basis thru out the day/weekend. There was discussion regarding staffing, the cleaning schedules, the probability of the groups using the fields hiring and or cleaning the restrooms. Mr. Rosenberg stated that if the organizations/groups clean the restrooms that does not release the Borough of the liability or ability to be sued and we cannot require them to hire someone to clean the restrooms. There was additional discussion, and it was decided the parks and recreation committee would investigate creating a cleaning schedule and check list for cleaning and would meet with the various sports organizations regarding the possibility of them cleaning the restrooms. Mr. Rosenberg will create a form indicating who specifically from the organization would be responsible for the keys, cleaning the restrooms and opening and closing of the restrooms.

Mr. Gural stated the field usage ordinance is on as a reminder that it still needs to be addressed.

Mr. Gural indicated the included in your packets was the revised MOU for the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Palmyra Police Association. Mr. Gural indicated he had received the revised contract for the attorney which he and Ms. Condo are reviewing, once completed the attorney will send it to PPA/FOP for their review and in two weeks we should be ready to execute that document.

Mr. Gural stated the public works vacancy is a discussion for closed session.

Mr. Gural indicated Chief Campbell indicated the need for Class I Police officers who could do parking enforcement as well as patrol the parks, which the public safety committee will be discussing. Chief Campbell indicated they have completed the second round of interviews for the police department vacancies and have narrowed the field to three individuals. Chief Campbell stated additional information will be presented at the public safety committee.

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.

Mr. Gural indicated the marijuana legislation is something which needs to be addressed soon as they are deadlines which must be met. Mayor Tait indicated additional information will be forth coming regarding the marijuana legalization and the public safety committee will be meeting regarding it soon.

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. Gural indicated the Fire Company lease agreement was increased in the budget from \$15,000.00 to \$17,500.00. Mr. Gural stated we usually sign a 3-year lease; however, the Fire Company is requesting a \$2,500.00 increase over the preceding year in each additional year after the first year. Mr. Gural noted the public safety committee needs to look at the agreement, as it is a significant increase over the three-year period.

Mr. Gural stated the sewer lateral responsibility ordinance has not been updated since 1969; he noted it needs to be updated just so everyone is clear as to is responsible for which parts of the lateral and sewer connections the homeowners is responsible for and what the Borough is responsible for.

Mr. Gural indicated salaries review committee again is a reminder but there are somethings he needs to speak to the governing body about in closed session. Mayor Tait stated she would like one person from each committee get together with a master committee so they can recommendations to the entire governing body.

Mayor Tait indicated she would like to have the parking ordinance ready for the May agenda, noting she would be speaking with Ms. McCann and Ms. Russell prior to that.

Mr. Gural indicated this too is a reminder that the handicap parking sign ordinance needs to be addressed, noting if Mr. Rosenberg could look into making some changes to allow it to be completed by resolution rather than ordinance to speed up the process for our residents.

Mr. Gural stated the YMCA had again contacted him regarding the Community Center Summer Camp Program. Mr. Gural indicated he told them he would ask the governing body if they wished to open the community center for the summer program. Given the current circumstances and our inability to keep the center cleaned as it should be, it was again decided the community center would not hold the summer camp program.

Mayor Tait indicated she was working on the appointees for the Rt. 130/Delaware River Corridor Plan Endorsement Committee.

Mr. Allmond indicated he currently had no additional information to report regarding the Veterans Memorial Park Improvement Project.

### **ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

Mr. Gural reminded all that the JIF Elected Officials Training Seminar needs to be completed by May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. 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.

Mr. Gural indicated all Financial Disclosure Statements are currently due to be completed by April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Mr. Gural also noted the codification project has been completed and the supplements are in. Please contact Ms. Jackson if you have a code book so it can be updated.

Mr. Rosenberg indicated that a cross appeal was filed against Roto Cylinders tax appeal regarding their 2021 assessment. Mr. Rosenberg noted we currently have two appeals pending by Roto Cylinders and we have a motion to dismiss their last year's appeal for failure to provide their experts report. Mr. Rosenberg indicate he will have additional information at the next meeting.

### **COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

President Howard indicated that many committees had not yet had an opportunity to meet. President Howard stated the committee reports should be ready for the May 17<sup>th</sup>, regular council meeting.

Mayor Tait thanked Mr. Gural, Mr. Rosenberg, and Mr. Brewer for all their hard work over the weekend regarding the redevelopment agreement. Mayor Tait noted that the groundbreaking ceremony will take place on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021 at a time to be determined.

### **MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Mrs. Russell-** no comment

**Dr Cloud** – no comment

**Mrs. Jenkins** – Mrs. Jenkins stated the covid vaccine clinic was very well put together. Mrs. Jenkins noted that the vaccine is available at the Palmyra Pharmacy which should be getting about 100 shots per week.

**Mr. Allmond** – Mr. Allmond noted the great job of putting together the covid vaccine clinic and thanked Mr. Gural and Mr. Rosenberg for all their work on the redevelopment agreement this weekend.

**Mrs. McCann**- Mrs. McCann thanked everyone for talking about the bathrooms at Legion Field. Mrs. McCann noted the covid vaccine registration/clinic went very well.

**President Howard**- President Howard thanked Mr. Gural and Mr. Rosenberg for their dedication and work on the redevelopment agreement. President Howard also thank Mayor Tait for all her efforts in putting together the covid clinic. President Howard also noted he and Mayor Tait we on the call with the Legislator from Philadelphia regarding the noise coming from the parks. He noted that they are putting a lot of work into quieting down the noise coming from the parks in Philadelphia. President Howard stated Ann Smith from the Harbour would be setting up a town watch to notify certain people when the noise occurs and to try to identify where it is coming from.

**Mayor Tait** stated our covid-19 case count is up to 504, she noted that over 50 vaccinations took place at the covid registration clinic. Mayor Tait thanked Councilwomen Jenkins, and McCann for their help. Mayor Tait also thank OEM Officer Dreby for his help with the project.

Mayor Tait indicated the community garden will be starting and anyone wishing to participate should contact either Dr. Cloud or her. Mayor Tait again reminded everyone that we accept electronics for recycling. Mayor Tait noted that on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 we will be partnering with Riverton Borough with an electronic collection site in front of the community center. Additional information to follow. Mayor Tait indicated she has received a lot of emails regarding potholes, please keep them coming so they may be addressed. Mayor Tait noted that if anyone received or receives an email from [councilman20@gmail.com](mailto:councilman20@gmail.com) indicating it is from her, do not answer it or open it as it is not her and she did not set it up.

Mayor Tait asked if everyone was available for a special meeting on Monday night at 6:30pm regarding the redevelopment project. All agreed they would be available and/or would make every effort to make it.

Mayor Tait asked Mr. Gural and Mr. Rosenberg if there were items for closed session. Mr. Gural and Mr. Rosenberg indicated yes. Mr. Gural stated there are some personnel matters that need to be discussed.

**Resolution 2021-119 Resolution** Excluding the Public from Certain Meetings Pursuant To Section 8 of the Open Public Meeting Act C. 231 P. L. 1975 for matters relating to: **Personnel**

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve Resolution 2021-119. Mrs. Russell made a motion to

Approve Resolution 2021-119. President Howard second the motion.

**At the call of the roll, the vote was:**

**INFAVOR: Mr. Allmond, Dr. Cloud, Mrs. Jenkins, Mrs. McCann, Mrs. Russell, President Howard**

**AGAINST: None**

Into closed at 8:29 pm

Out of closed at 8:55 pm

Mayor Tait requested a motion to open to public. President Howard made a motion to open to the public. Dr. Cloud second the motion.

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

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Doretha R Jackson, RMC Municipal Clerk

Approved: May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021