

**Borough of Palmyra**  
**Regular Council Meeting Minutes**  
**June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

The Regular Council Meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Palmyra was called to order by Mayor Tait at 6:31 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

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, 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 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and notification was sent to the Burlington County Times on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 and published on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Notice was posted on the Municipal Door, Official Bulletin Board and the Borough of Palmyra Website and electronic signs on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 and notice was given to all Council Members.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mayor Tait requested a motion for approval of the June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 Regular Council Meeting Minutes and the June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 Executive Session Meeting Minutes. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 Regular Council Meeting and the June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 Executive Session Meeting. 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**

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Municipal Clerk, Ms. Jackson acknowledged the email received from Tanyika Johns resigning from the Land Use Board.

Ms. Jackson also acknowledged a letter received from Kaya Robinson thanking everyone for their help regarding the event held on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

## **PRESENTATION**

Paul Forlenza, Burlington County Joint Insurance Fund - Mr. Forlenza explained the benefits of BCJIF Membership. Mr. Forlenza explained how the program works and how our performance has been during our membership in the BCJIF. Mr. Forlenza explained our renewal was upcoming and indicated he hoped the Borough would renew and continue their membership in the program. Mr. Gural indicated this program has served the Borough very well and his strong recommendation is that we renew the contract for 2020-2021.

## **REDEVELOPMENT**

### Rt. 73 South Redevelopment Area- Update

Mr. Gural indicated the Redevelopment negotiations committee has seen many emails recently which relate to our agreement regarding affordable housing, COAH is compressing the time frame in which we need to act. Mr. Gural indicated they are requesting that we expedite the execution of the redevelopment agreement and the adoption of the revised redevelopment plan. Mr. Gural indicated we are looking at having both documents complete by October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Mr. Gural indicated we are looking at having a draft redevelopment agreement from the redeveloper by next week and requesting the redeveloper submit the application for a PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes). Mr. Rosenberg indicated Mr. Gural noted to the redeveloper that the pad for the affordable housing portion of the project would not be sufficient to obtain the CO for the commercial portion of the project, noting that the housing units would need to be constructed before the CO's would be issued for the commercial development, all of which need to be completed during phase I of the project. Mr. Rosenberg indicated the Borough may want to consider hiring a financial analysis firm to help with the negotiation of the PILOT as it can become quite complicated. Mr. Rosenberg indicated there is a requirement that the redeveloper pay for the financial analysis firm. Mr. Rosenberg also noted that we may need an insurance expert in regards to the natural resource liability and other environmental liability issues on RT. 73 south, noting that this to will be paid for by the redeveloper. Dr. Cloud asked that when the information regarding the new wetland delineations is obtained that it be forwarded to her or the committee so it can be reviewed. Mr. Gural indicated he would make sure everyone receives the information.

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

Mr. Gural indicated there is nothing new to report currently.

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

Mr. Gural indicated the report has been submitted to the Land Use Board and we are awaiting their decision. Mr. Gural indicated a draft copy was sent to the governing body however no comments should be made until we receive the decision from the Land Use Board.

## **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 Monday June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. All comments will become part of the record and included with the Meeting Minutes.

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to open the Public Portion. 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**

The Municipal clerk indicated no comments were received.

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 hear to be held June 202<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Ordinance 2020-06**, Bond Ordinance Authorizing the Acquisition of Various Pieces of Equipment and Completion of Various Capital Improvements in and for the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington, New Jersey: Appropriating the Sum of \$2,019,800.00 Therefore; Authorizing the Issuance of General Obligation Bonds or Bond Anticipation Notes of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington, New Jersey, In the Aggregate Principal Amount of Up to \$1,918,810.00 Making Certain Determinations and Covenants; and Authorizing Certain Related Actions in Connection with the Foregoing.

Mayor Tait asked if there was any discussion or questions. Seeing none, Mayor Tait requested of motion to approve Ordinance 2020-06. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-06. 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 2020-06 was approved.**

Ordinance 2020-07, Bond Ordinance Authorizing the Completion of Various Improvements to the Sewer Utility System in and for the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey; Appropriating the Sum of \$812,000.00 Therefor; Authorizing the Issuance of General Obligation Bonds or Bond Anticipation Notes of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey in the Aggregate Principal Amount of Up to \$771,400.00; Making Certain Determinations and Covenants; and Authorizing Certain Related Actions in Connection with the Foregoing.

Mayor Tait asked if there was any discussion or questions. Seeing none, Mayor Tait requested of motion to approve Ordinance 2020-07. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-07. 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 2020-07 was approved.**

#### ORDINANCE ON SECOND READING (Public Hearing)

Ordinance 2020-04 An Ordinance of the Borough of Palmyra to Amend the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual to Cap the Maximum Amount Payable to Non-union Employees for Accrued but Unused Vacation Time to the Sum of \$15,000.00

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to open Ordinance 2020-04 for public hearing. President Howard made a motion to open Ordinance 2020-04 for public comments. Mrs. McCann second the motion

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

Mrs. Russell indicated she would like to place this item on hold as other questions were raised today which the administration and finance committee would like to have answered. Mr. Gural explained the public hearing can be postponed to July if that is the wish of the governing body but if there are any material changes to the Ordinance as it currently is written then the governing body would need to discard this Ordinance and begin again. There was some additional discussion regarding the dollar amount of the Ordinance. Mr. Gural explained how the amount was derived and noted that the policy and procedures manual will be coming up for review again shortly. Mr. Gural reminded all that if this current Ordinance is not passed, then there is no limit/cap on unused vacation time payouts until something is put into place. There was some additional discussion among the governing body. Mr. Rosenberg indicated this is the conservative fiscal responsible thing to do. Mrs. Jenkins again expressed concern regarding the dollar amount. Mr. Rosenberg suggested that perhaps an expiration date should be entered to make this Ordinance effective to, until the PPPM is addressed. Mrs. Russell suggested we

add to this Ordinance, that it will expire with the adoption of the new PPPM. Mr. Rosenberg indicated the ordinance should be changed to read as follows: This Ordinance shall take effect as of August 1, 2020 and shall remain in place until the new PPPM is put into place, noting that it was not a material change to the Ordinance as introduced.

No other comments Mayor Tait requested a motion to close the public portion. Mrs. Russell made a motion to close the public hearing, President Howard second the motion.

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

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-04 An Ordinance of the Borough of Palmyra to Amend the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual to Cap the Maximum Amount Payable to Non-union Employees for Accrued but Unused Vacation Time to the Sum of \$15,000.00 until the new Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual is put into place.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-04. 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. Ordinance 2020-04 was approved.**

**Ordinance 2020-05** An Ordinance of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey, Appropriating the sum of \$22,000.00 now Available from the Capital Improvement Fund for Laptops with Secure Remote Access Implementation Improvements.

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to open Ordinance 2020-05 for public hearing. Mrs. Russell made a motion to open Ordinance 2020-05 for public comments. President Howard second the motion.

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

No comments Mayor Tait requested a motion to close the public portion. Mrs. Russell made a motion to close the public hearing, President Howard second the motion.

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

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-05 An Ordinance of the Borough of Palmyra, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey, Appropriating the sum of \$22,000.00 now Available from the Capital Improvement Fund for Laptops with Secure Remote Access Implementation Improvements. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-05. 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. Ordinance 2020-05 was approved.

## RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2020-131 thru Resolution 2020-142 were enacted as a single motion. Mayor Tait asked if anything needed to be removed. No one requesting anything be removed, Mayor Tait read the following resolutions into the record:

Resolution 2020-131, Resolution Authorizing the Refund of Prepaid Community Center Rental Fees to ESM Basketball League in the amount of \$75.00

Resolution 2020-132, Resolution Authorizing the Refund of Prepaid Community Center Rental Fees to South Jersey Folk Dancers in the Amount of \$400.00

Resolution 2020-133, Resolution Authorizing the Refund of Prepaid Community Center Rental Fees to Okazaki Karate in the Amount of \$2,050.00

Resolution 2020-134, Resolution Authorizing the Refund of Prepaid Community Center Rental Fees to Islamic Center of South Jersey in the Amount \$150.00.

Resolution 2020-135, Resolution Authorizing a Refund in the Amount of \$4,265.36 for Overpayment of Taxes on Block 5 Lot 10

Resolution 2020-136, Resolution Appointing Tanyika Johns, as Tax Collector for the Borough of Palmyra Working Part-time with office hours on Monday evenings for the amount of \$15,000.00.

Resolution 2020-137, Resolution for Approval to submit a grant application and execute a Grant Contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the Spring Garden Street Reconstruction Project

Resolution 2020-138, Resolution Awarding a contract to Air Systems Maintenance for the 2020 HVAC Maintenance Contract in the amount of \$20,443.00 per ERI's Recommendation of Award Letter dated May 22, 2020

Resolution 2020-139, Resolution Appointing Meghan Campbell as Chief of Police effective July 1, 2020 at an Annual Salary of \$120,000.00

Resolution 2020-140, Resolution Authorizing the Waiver of Interest for Taxes on Block 153.26 Lot 3076

Resolution 2020-141, Resolution of the Borough of Palmyra Approving and Authorizing Applications For All Food or Beverage Establishments to Expand their Footprint to Outdoor Dining Areas Pursuant to Executive Order 150 and Granting the Endorsement and Approval for any Licensees or Permittees with a Retail Consumption License to Apply for a COVID-19 Expansion of Premises Permit from the New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control

Resolution 2020-142, Resolution Authorizing the Payment of Bills for the Month of June 2020 in the Amount of \$1,095,777.15

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve resolutions 2020-131 thru 2020-142. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Resolutions 2020-131 thru 2020-142. 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, Resolution 2020-131 thru 2020-142 were approved.**

#### **MOTION TO APPROVE TREASURERS REPORT**

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve the Treasurer's Reports for May 2020. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Reports for May 2020. 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 Report was approved.**

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS – NEW BIZ**

Mr. Gural stated he and the staff have had some discussions regarding the staff returning and re-opening of the building to the public. Mr. Gural indicated a number of steps are being taken to address staffing concerns, by installing barriers between employees. Mayor Tait indicated this reopening will be in stages, she noted the staff will return first, then it will be decided when to allow the public access to the building. Mayor Tait also inquired, how we are going to reopen the fields. After some discussion, President Howard indicted the recreation committee suggested we open the fields and parks to the public tomorrow but not to organized sports or events until we have further direction from the governor, noting that the restroom would not be open. Mrs. McCann agreed. Mr. Rosenberg asked if Mr. Gural could contact the JIF regarding the Borough's liability for prematurely opening our facilities. There was some additional discussion regarding the opening of the parks and fields. Mr. Gural stated that just because the Governor indicated we could open does not mean we have to, he suggested we gather our information and open facilities in concert with the Governor's executive orders. The governing body agreed. Mr. Gural stated the restrooms will not be open as we currently do not have the staff to keep them clean the way they should be.

Mr. Gural indicated he had spoken with the representative from the Palmyra Police Association and that conversation should be had in executive session.

Mayor Tait noted the Primary Election will be held on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and everyone, all 9 districts, will be voting at the Community Center, noting that all voting will be by provisional ballots.

Mayor Tait indicated the Animal Control contract will be discussed in executive session.

Mr. Gural indicated there has been no response from former Mayor Michelle Arnold regarding the advance travel funds owed to the Borough. Mr. Rosenberg indicated he has had no response to the outstanding bills nor the deleted emails.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Gural stated we received the donation request from the Palmyra War Memorial Committee. Mr. Gural indicated all the required information has been submitted and during the budget process we indicated the \$2,000.00-donation request was included in the budget. Mr. Gural stated the payment will appear on the bill list next month.

#### **MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Mrs. Russell** indicated she wanted to thank Kaya and the ladies who put together the event on Sunday, she was very impressed.

**Mrs. McCann** - no comment

**Dr. Cloud** -no comment

**Mrs. Jenkins** – no comment

**Mr. Allmond** - no comment

**President Howard** indicated he, too though the event was well put together and the speakers were awesome. President Howard thanked the Police Department for their help and keeping everyone safe during the event. President Howard indicated just because some restrictions are being lifted be mindful to continue social distancing as the Corona virus is not gone.

**Mayor Tait** indicated the Burlington County Health Department has a new application which can be added to your smart phone which will allow you to keep up to date with everything that is going on with the Corona Virus/ Covid-19. Mayor Tait indicated the Virtual Palmyra High School Graduation was held yesterday, and the physical graduation ceremony will be held on July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Mayor Tait asked everyone to wear their mask and to continue practicing social distance.

Mayor Tait asked Mr. Gural and Mr. Rosenberg if there were items for closed session. Mr. Gural indicated yes.

**Resolution 2020-143, 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: **Contracts**

Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Resolution 2020-143. 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, Resolution 2020-143 was approved**



Mr. Gural explained the process and noted that we would return to this meeting, after the executive session and indicated it would be about 30 minutes.

Borough Council went into closed session at 8:19pm

Borough Council returned from closed session at: 9:19 pm

Mayor Tait requested a motion to open to the public. Mrs. Russell made a motion to re-open the meeting to the public. President Howard second the motion

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

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

*Doretha R Jackson*

Doretha R Jackson, RMC

Municipal Clerk