

**Borough of Palmyra**  
**Council Caucus Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020**

The Regular Council Meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Palmyra was called to order by Mayor Tait at 6:02 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**

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 October 23, 2020. Notice was posted on the Municipal Door, Official Bulletin Board and the Borough of Palmyra Website and electronic signs on October 23, 2020 and notice was given to all Council Members.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mayor Tait requested a motion for approval of the October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Regular Council Meeting Minutes.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Regular Council Meeting Minutes. 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 following correspondence received:

Email received from Gail Furrer

Letter received from Brian McBride, Superintendent Palmyra School District

## **REDEVELOPMENT**

### Rt. 73 South Redevelopment Area- Update

Mr. Gural indicated permits have been approved by NJDEP and NJDOT regarding the project. Mr. Gural indicated the redeveloper has applied to the Land Use Board for subdivision and site plan approvals, which will be heard at the Land Use Board meeting on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Mr. Gural stated the special sheriff sale for the Fillit property is scheduled for December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 and will be held at Borough Hall; noting a special court master was appointed to oversee the sale. Mr. Gural indicated the consent order regarding our affordable housing with Fair Share Housing Center has been extended to December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

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

Mr. Gural indicated there was no additional information to report, noting the trial date for the valuation hearing is scheduled for February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.

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

Mr. Gural indicated the determination of need study was presented to the Land Use Board at the last meeting and the Board requested Mr. Brewer prepare a resolution for Board consideration, declaring the property as an area in need of redevelopment.

## **PROFESSIONAL UPDATES**

William Kirchner, ERI

William Kirchner indicated he wanted to update council on the current road projects. Mr. Kirchner stated the 5<sup>th</sup> and Race Street project is being delayed until the spring as the school intends to return students to school on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Mr. Kirchner indicated they have been working on the 2020 road project in the area of Walnut and Pear Streets and are hoping to have it complete by weeks end so New Jersey American can get in and pave before the children return to school at Charles Street School.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mayor Tait stated participants wishing to have or make a Public comment, email their questions or comments in advance to Borough 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 November 2nd,

2020. She noted comments submitted in a timely manner would be read during the virtual Council Meeting noting all comments would become part of the record and included with the Meeting Minutes. Mayor Tait stated for those who choose to “attend” the Virtual Meeting, she would open the meeting to the public for comments. Comments should be limited to no more than (2) two minutes. 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**

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

Municipal Clerk, Ms. Jackson indicated no comments were received prior to the meeting.

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

**Mr. Rader-** Harbour Drive – Mr. Rader inquired about the traffic entrances to the redevelopment area and if additional entrances were in the planning. Mr. Rader also inquired about the carbon monoxide emissions and if that would also be considered due to the additional traffic anticipated on Rt 73. Mr. Gural stated that everything related to Rt 73. is the responsibility of the Department of Transportation, noting that the Borough does not have a lot to say regarding it. Mr. Gural indicated the redeveloper has submitted several applications to the State for various curb cuts, acceleration lanes, etc. but the final changes to Rt 73. will be determined by the State of New Jersey DOT. Mr. Rosenberg indicated that the Land Use Board is the body that would address the issues that you are inquiring about. Mr. Brewer stated that safety is a matter of concern and the Department of Transportation will address what is safe or not regarding entering and exiting the property. Mr. Brewer stated local boards and governing bodies cannot regulate emissions. Dr. Cloud note that the Environmental Protection Agency during their permit review can require an air quality monitoring program as part of their permit approval, however, it is not something that the Borough can do.

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

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

**ORDINANCES** on first reading, public hear to be held December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**Ordinance 2020-10** An Ordinance of the Borough of Palmyra to Provide for and Determine the Rates and Ranges of Compensation of Each Employee and Officer of the Borough of Palmyra for Years 2021 and 2022. This Ordinance expires December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 unless otherwise amended.

Mayor Tait requested of motion to approve Ordinance 2020-10. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-10. 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 2020-10 was approved on first reading.**

## **RESOLUTIONS**

Resolution **2020-206** and Resolution **2020-207** 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 needed to be removed. Council indicated no. Mayor Tait read the following resolutions into the record:

**Resolution 2020-206**, Resolution Awarding a Contract to Municipal Emergency Services per Quote QT1408657 per New Jersey State Contract #17-FLEET-00819 in the Amount of \$22,076.09 Subject to Certification of CFO

**Resolution 2020-207**, Resolution Authorizing Application for Local Government Emergency Fund (CRF) Grant

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve Resolution 2020-206 and Resolutions 2020-207.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Resolutions 2020-206 and Resolutions 2020-207. 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 2020-206 and Resolutions 2020-207 were approved.**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mayor Tait asked the governing body what that wanted to do for the Christmas holiday season as that due to the pandemic that some of the things we usually do we more than likely will not be able to. President Howard suggested decorating the light poles and the house decorating contest as had been done by the Halloween Parade committee. Mr. Gural indicated that Raleigh's would be installing the snowflakes on the light poles and public works/ fire department could install the red bows on the poles also. President Howard also inquired about the light project Councilwoman Jenkins and committee worked on earlier this year. There was some discussion regarding that project, the vendor and payment. Mrs. Jenkins noted she would forward that information to Mr. Gural and he indicated he would follow up with the vendor. Mayor Tait indicated Santa will still be riding thru town but there will not be a lighting ceremony at the Bandshell.

Chief Campbell indicated no new dates have been set yet regarding the Police Department Firearms Basic Safety Seminar. Chief Campbell stated they were looking to schedule two more before the end of the year.

Mr. Gural indicated the Borough Hall staff has returned to their normal fulltime or part time schedules noting the safety measures that have been put in place. Mayor Tait stated in the last three weeks we have had 28 new positive covid-19 cases bring our total to 112 cases. Mr. Gural indicated we have had two positive cases of Borough employees. There was some additional discussion regarding the pandemic and Covid-19 cases and Mr. Gural indicated he could not recommend opening the building to the public currently given the rise in case numbers. Mr. Gural indicated that football had another one or two weeks on the field, but soccer would be awhile longer.

Mr. Gural noted he had not heard from the PPA regarding the offer which we made regarding the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Mr. Gural stated Ms. Condo indicated instead of paying down our principle that we would normally do. Mr. Gural stated the interest rates are low currently and if we bond now, we can take the payment pay down we would normally use for the BAN and put it into surplus. Mr. Gural noted we do not know what next year will look like regarding state-aid but overall, this would put us in a better financial situation.

Mr. Gural stated he received one complaint regarding political campaign signs. Mr. Gural noted there are no violations, and all signs must be down within five days after the election.

Mr. Gural explained that a resident had mentioned at the Land Use Board meeting, the Borough participating in the Inclusive Healthy Communities (IHC) Grant Program. Mr. Gural stated we sent the letter of intent to the program however given the amount of time and funding required, noting the time span to complete the application, us missing the first mandatory meeting of the application process, at this time we cannot recommend proceeding with the application. Simply there is not enough time, as we must bring in partners like the Heart and Soul grant, to put together a successful application, with the application due November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Mr. Gural stated the hybrid virtual/Borough Hall "Practice" Council meeting has been scheduled for November 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM. Mr. Gural indicated we are working on our technology in the hopes of being able to hold a combination of in person and online meetings. Mr. Gural stated it is advertised and open to the public and we are hoping a many as possible attend so we can test out the equipment.

## **ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

Mr. Gural stated public works is behind with the leaf collections due to covid-19 so be patient. Mr. Gural also noted the brush & limbs collection is done to this year as the focus is now on leaves. Mr. Gural stated all the information is on our website in the form of a "Did you Know" post.

Mr. Gural stated the Request for Proposals for professional services 2021 is posted on our website. Mr. Gural stated the proposals are due back by December 1, 2020. Mr. Gural indicted the Tree Services bid for 2021 thru 2022 is also posted on our website and due December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020.

Mr. Gural stated we are short staffed in Borough hall and do not have a deputy clerk, tomorrow is election day and due to the anticipated voter turnout, the clerk needs help. Ms. Jackson, the clerk has the power to deputize a person so that person can help with the election. Mr. Gural noted she will be deputizing Michele Sykes so that she can help with the election.

Mr. Gural indicated the various posts crossing guards will be posted to noting the shortage of crossing guards currently available.

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

**Mrs. McCann** – no comment

**Mrs. Russell**- no comment

**Dr. Cloud** reminded everyone to stay diligent and pay attention to what you are doing to continue to stop the spread of Covid-19.

**Mrs. Jenkins** – no comment

**Mr. Allmond** – no comment

**President Howard** – no comment

**Mayor Tait** thanked Mr. Allmond and all Veterans for their service to country. Mayor Tait asked all to stay safe, to wear masks and practice social distancing. Mayor Tait encouraged everyone to get out and vote tomorrow.

Mayor Tait asked Mr. Gural and Mr. Rosenberg if there were items for closed session. Mr. Gural 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 voted in favor of the motion. Motion Carried**

Meeting adjourned at 7:03 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Doretha R Jackson, RMC

Municipal Clerk