

**Borough of Palmyra**  
**Virtual Regular Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday May 17<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 6:30 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 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 May 4, 2021. Notice was also posted on the Borough of Palmyra Website on May 14<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 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Regular Council Meeting Minutes Mr. Allmond made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Regular Council Meeting Minutes. President Howard second the motion.

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

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

**AGAINST: None**

**Abstain: Mrs. Jenkins, Mrs. Russell**

## **Motion Carried**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mayor Tait requested a motion for approval of the May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, Council Caucus Meeting Minutes. Mr. Allmond made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, Council Caucus Meeting Minutes. President Howard second the motion.

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

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

**AGAINST: None**

**Abstain: Dr. Cloud, Mrs. Russell**

**Motion Carried**

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

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

Resignation Letter– Joanne Logue, Crossing Guard

Resignation Letter – Juan Delgado

Email- Cynthia King

Mayor Tait requested a motion to accept the letters of resignation submitted by Ms. Logue and Juan Delgado. Dr. Cloud made a motion to accept the resignation letters of Ms. Logue and Mr. Delgado. Mr. Allmond second to motion.

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

### **REDEVELOPMENT**

Rt. 73 South Redevelopment Area- Update

Mr. Gural stated the pre-construction meeting was held last week and went very well. Mr. Gural indicated the project is slated to begin soon with the dredge materials being transported from Cinnaminson and Palmyra to the site. Mr. Gural stated there are two ordinances on the agenda for final approval tonight and we are close to finalizing all the documentation needed to move the project forward. Mr. Gural noted the memo in packet from Mr. Rosenberg regarding the ongoing discussions regarding the Fillit bankruptcy and the fair share housing litigation.

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

Mr. Brewer indicated there is not anything new to report, we are still scheduled for trial which is scheduled for the end of August.

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

Mr. Gural indicated that Seabox has purchased the property and in speaking with them noted they are interested in possibly converting the building into office space to accommodate some new technology business they are looking at starting.

## PROFESSIONAL UPDATES

William Kirchner, ERI

Mr. Kirchner indicated that after a work stoppage last week, due to a union dispute, the contractor was back at work today and are working to make up the week lost. Mr. Kirchner stated the bids are out for the 2020-2021 Road Program Improvements project, noting they hope to award the project at the second meeting in June which includes the reconstruction of New Jersey Avenue, concrete work on Charles and Hubbs Streets, also Park Avenue. It also includes the milling and paving of Madison Street and the reconstruction of the Ethel B. Hardy Park basketball court and Second Street between Firth and Leconey and Rowland the dead-end off Cinnaminson Avenue. Mr. Kirchner indicated the estimated cost is about \$450,000.00. Mr. Kirchner stated the Borough received a 2021 DOT grant for Spring Garden Street between Park Avenue and Walnut Street and he will have the bid out by the end of June so it can be constructed last summer or early fall of 2021.

Mr. Kirchner indicated he received a repair estimate for the sewer generator which is about \$60,000.00. Mr. Kirchner indicated he is seeking generator replacement estimates and received thus far a generator to replace what is existing currently at the sewer plant costs about \$80,000.00 to \$90,000.00; noting that if we go bigger, it could cost as much as \$150,000.00. Mr. Kirchner stated he would have more to report soon. Mr. Kirchner stated last week they cleaned out the Berkley pump station due to clogs and removed a lot of rags. Mr. Kirchner indicated they are proposing including a mixer in the tanks as an interim solution until the pump station can be reconstructed. Mr. Kirchner indicated they purchased the mixer at an approximate cost of \$4,000.00 and it will cost about \$7,000.00 to have it installed.

## REPORTS

Palmyra Board of Education Liaison **Ms. Kate Yoakum** indicated the Board of Education has been a strategic planning process and are at the point where they have a draft which they would like to share with the community to get feedback. Ms. Yoakum indicated the draft would be going to the committee and a group of teachers this week and next week on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021, it will be heard at a public meeting. Ms. Yoakum also noted the Board of Education approved the four student representatives to council, ability to attending the groundbreaking ceremony on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021, during school hours. Ms. Yoakum thanked Councilwoman Jenkins for attending the last Board of Education meeting and providing information regarding covid vaccinations. President Howard inquired about the reconstruction of the gym floor, Ms. Yoakum noted it was for Charles Street School's gym floor which had mercury in the flooring and has now been remediated.

## PHS Student Representatives

**Coady McCann** – Mr. McCann stated the students held a yard sale fundraiser and made over \$600.00. Mr. McCann indicated both the boys and girls track teams won the BCSL Independence Division Championship at their Pennsauken meet

**Andrew Yansick** – Mr. Yansick thanked council for inviting them to the groundbreaking ceremony coming up this week, noting that the process was in the making long before they were born, but how great it will be to be a witness to such an enormous project for the Borough of Palmyra and they are looking forward to it.

Councilman Allmond asked if Palmyra was doing the adopt a Senior Student program this year. Mr. Yansick indicated he did not know. Councilwoman Russell indicated they were, and she would forward that information to the governing body.

## **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 May 17<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.

President Howard made a motion to open the public portion for comments. Mr. Allmond 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 comments from those present.

No one 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 hearing, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Ordinance 2021-08**, An Ordinance of the Borough of Palmyra in the County of Burlington, New Jersey Prohibiting the Operation of any Class of Cannabis Business Within its Geographical Boundaries.

Mayor Tait requested of motion to approve Ordinance 2021-08. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-08. 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 2021-08 was approved on first reading.**

Mr. Rosenberg noted the ordinance should be referred to the Land Use Board for comment regarding its consistency with the master plan.

#### **ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING public hearing**

**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 asked for a motion to open Ordinance 2021-06 for public hearing. President Howard made a motion to open Ordinance 2021-06 for public comments. Mrs. Russell 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 2021-06. President Howard made a motion to close the public hearing of Ordinance 2021-06. Mrs. Russell second the motion.

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

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.**

**Ordinance 2021-07**, An Ordinance of the Borough of Palmyra County of Burlington, Vacating and releasing any and all restrictive covenants contained within the Deed dated December 12, 1952, between the Borough of Palmyra as grantor and Miriam Isdaner, et als as grantee; said Deed having been recorded in the office of the Clerk of Burlington County on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1952, in Book 1140 at page 189.

Mr. Rosenberg explained the ordinance and why it was necessary to remove the restrictive covenant.

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to open Ordinance 2021-07 for public hearing. Mr. Allmond made a motion to open Ordinance 2021-07 for public comments. Mrs. Russell 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 2021-07. Mr. Allmond made a motion to close the public hearing of Ordinance 2021-07. Mrs. Russell second the motion.

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

Mayor Tait requested of motion to approve Ordinance 2021-07. Mr. Allmond made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-07. Dr. Cloud 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 2021-07 was approved.**

## **RESOLUTIONS**

Mayor Tait stated **Resolution 2021-126 thru Resolution 2021-136** would 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 resolution needed to be removed from the consent agenda. Seeing none

Mayor Tait read the following resolutions into the record:

**Resolution 2021-126**, Resolution Requesting Approval of Item of Revenue and Appropriation N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-87 (Chapter159) for 2021 NJDOT Spring Garden Street in the Amount of \$240,000.00

**Resolution 2021-127**, Resolution Requesting Approval of Item of Revenue and Appropriation N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-87 (Chapter159) for Safe & Secure Grant in the Amount of \$21,322.00

**Resolution 2021-128**, Resolution Requesting Approval of Item of Revenue and Appropriation N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-87 (Chapter159) for 2018 Recycling Tonnage Grant in the Amount of \$1,703.08

**Resolution 2021-129**, Resolution Requesting Approval of Item of Revenue and Appropriation N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-87 (Chapter159) for 2017 Recycling Tonnage Grant in the Amount of \$7,943.70

**Resolution 2021-130**, Resolution Requesting Approval of Item of Revenue and Appropriation N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-87 (Chapter159) for Drunk Driving Enforcement Grant in the Amount of \$3,501.79

**Resolution 2021-131**, Resolution Requesting Approval of Item of Revenue and Appropriation N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-87 (Chapter159) for Bullet Proof Vests in the Amount of \$1,805.40

**Resolution 2021-132**, Resolution Requesting Approval of Item of Revenue and Appropriation N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-87 (Chapter159) for Body Armor Gant in the Amount of \$995.80

**Resolution 2021-133**, Resolution Appointing Duane J. Wallace as Plumbing Subcode Official and Plumbing Inspector effective June 1, 2021, at the Combined Salary of \$17,500.00 subject to the Terms in the Offer of Employment Dated May 12, 2021 and Approved Application for Exemption from the Provisions of N.J.S.A. 52:14-7a of the New Jersey Act

**Resolution 2021-134**, Resolution Authorizing the Borough of Palmyra to Apply to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJDCAs) for a FY 2021 Local Recreation Improvement Grant (LRIG)

**Resolution 2021-135**, Resolution Adopting the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the FOP Lodge #2 for period of January 1, 2021, to December 31, 2023 and authorizing the Mayor to execute the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

**Resolution 2021-136**, Resolution Authorizing the Payment of May 2021 Bills in the Amount of \$2,144,664.81

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve Resolution 2021-126 thru Resolution 2021-136.

Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-126 thru Resolution 2021-136. 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 2021-126 and Resolution 2021-136 were approved**

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report of April 2021. Mrs. Russell made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for April 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. Treasurer Report was approved**

#### **COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT**

Mr. Allmond noted the Memorial Day Observation will be held on May 31, 2021, at 10:00 am. Mayor Tait indicated she received a letter from Mr. Elwee, president of the War Memorial Committee indicating they had reviewed the undated plans for the enhancement of the War Memorial and were in complete support of the project and the new scope of work.

Mayor Tait stated the planting has begun at the community garden at the Palmyra Nature Cove and noted the opening of the garden will be June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 10:00 am.

Councilwoman McCann thanked the PIA for their efforts with the clean-up on Broad Street on Saturday morning. Mayor Tait also noted the Juneteenth Celebration which will be hosted by both Palmyra and Riverton Boroughs on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Mayor Tait noted the celebration begins at the community center with an e-waste collection event beginning at 10:00 am followed by a concert in Riverton Park from 2-4 pm. Mayor Tait noted the Palmyra Pharmacy will be in attendance to administer Covid vaccines, there will be tables set up for voter registration and there will be a scavenger hunt with other fun activities.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Gural indicated the Borough Hall staff is back in the office and everyone is working their regular hours he noted we are still in a high-risk area. Mr. Gural indicated he was hoping to reopen Borough Hall probably on a limited basis after the Fourth of July, anticipating bringing back some laid off employees to help with that process. Mayor Tait indicated the Palmyra adult residents vaccinated percentage is 50%. Mr. Gural indicated we are proceeding cautiously. Mr. Gural stated the Legion Field restrooms are open and the cleaning by the sports organizations seems to be going well.

President Howard indicated he would note the field usage ordinance in his committee report.

Mr. McGill stated the public works vacancy has been filled and that new employees is in and working diligently with the flower beds and landscaping all over town.

Mr. Gural stated, Chief Campbell will be sending the public safety committee an email regarding the new police hires noting the background checks have been completed. Mr. Gural stated the Class I Policier Officer positions will be posted tomorrow, noting that Chief Campbell had reserved three spots in the upcoming classes for the Class I officers to attend.

Mr. Gural indicated the purchase orders signature requirement from Council, the sidewalk/snow & ice removal ordinance, parking ordinance, sewer lateral responsibility ordinance and handicap parking sign ordinance are just reminders that work is needed on those various items.

Mr. Gural stated the Riverton Borough Jetter agreement expires June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and we currently don't have plans to renew that agreement. Mr. Gural noted that if the governing body decides to renew the agreement the current fee schedule would have to be adjusted to better reflect the cost of the services provided.

Mr. Gural indicated the public safety committee needs to meet with Chief Dreby regarding the Fire Company lease and the requested increases. Mr. Gural indicated a meeting had been scheduled for June 4, 2021 with the EMS Squad president, Danny Norman, Chief Dreby and some department heads to sort out some of the administrative issues before meeting with the public safety committee.

Mr. Gural indicated he has provided information to the salaries review committee, he noted the administration and finance, public safety, and public works committees should meet and evaluate the information regarding merit increases; their recommendations should be forwarded to the master committee. President Howard indicated the master committee would be meeting tomorrow and discussing the recommendations submitted. Mr. Gural stated we would like to adopt any increases by the end on June so they are in place for the second quarter.

President Howard indicated he had spoken with someone regarding getting a push button at the Highland Avenue crosswalk and was waiting to hear if that crosswalk can handle the type of equipment which needs to be installed. He noted when he received additional information, he would notify council.

Mayor Tait stated the Rt. 130/Delaware River Corridor Plan Endorsement Committee appointees will be named next month; she is waiting for responses.



Mr. Gural reminded all that the next meeting begins at 6:00 pm as it is the night before the primary election.

Mr. Gural indicated the DCA Local Recreation Improvement Grant application submittal was approved earlier in the meeting and we are hoping to hear regarding approval or not in the fall. Mr. Gural stated the redeveloper is also willing to allow the change in the redevelopment agreement regarding funding for the turf field replacement. Mr. Gural indicated the DCA Shared Service Grant regarding the exploratory potential merger of Fire Department/EMS will be discussed at the upcoming meeting with the fire chief, ems president and public safety committee.

### **ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

Mr. Gural noted that the Verizon NJ Tax appeal as suggested in Mr. Rosenberg's memo to the governing body, is not worth expending funding to contest as it is less than \$10.00

### **COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Mrs. Jenkins-** Mrs. Jenkins indicated the administrative and finance committee meet and was eager to share their thoughts with the master committee.

**President Howard-** President Howard indicated he would be reporting for many various committees; he noted the following:

Congratulations to public works and the new hire. Public safety committee will be meeting with Chief Campbell regarding the new hires.

President Howard indicated the master committee, (Mayor Tait, President Howard and Councilwoman Jenkins) will be meeting tomorrow at 5:30 regarding the salary increases.

President Howard indicated the Legion field restrooms are open and things are working out well with the cleaning. He noted they are working on a plan for the fall regarding the restrooms. President Howard stated the committee would like to see additional trash cans placed on Broad Street, he indicated he would be speaking with Mr. McGill regarding stock, ordering if needed and placement of those trash containers. President Howard stated the committee working on the field usage and fee schedule will have the ordinance complete and ready for implementation by January 2022. There was some discussion regarding completion of the ordinance and implementation of it.

**Mrs. McCann** stated she was hoping that things would change regarding the necessity of cleaning the Legion Field restrooms every two hours.

**Dr. Cloud** noted she had been speaking with Sustainable South Jersey regarding getting support for our Green Team and possibly partnering to complete some projects or plan different projects or events. Dr. Cloud stated she and the committee would like to get moving again towards obtaining our certification from Sustainable Jersey. Mayor Tait suggested Dr. Cloud also contact the Bridge Commission as there may be some things done there which may also count towards our certification.

**Mrs. Russell** – Mrs. Russell stated that Eastern has planted several new trees. Mrs. Russell stated the committee met and spoke in length regarding the sidewalk snow removal ordinance, responsibility of the homeowner and the timing in which that snow needed to be removed. Mrs. Russell stated there were no changes recommended at this time noting the main issue is being able to enforce the ordinance already in place and have someone to do it.

**Mr. Allmond** – Mr. Allmond noted the Veteran Committee is trying to coordinate a meet and greet in the upcoming months so they can get to know those who signed up. Mr. Allmond stated they are also beginning the planning of a Veteran's Day Celebration and hoping to include the students at Charles Street School.

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

**Mrs. Russell** indicated she is excited about Friday and thanked everyone for all their hard work on the project.

**Dr. Cloud** – no comment

**Mrs. Jenkins** – Mrs. Jenkins stated good things are happening and she is excited to be a part of it.

**Mr. Allmond** – no comment

**Mrs. McCann**- no comment

**President Howard**- no comment

**Mayor Tait** reminded all the Memorial Day Celebration will be on Monday May 31, 2021 at 10:00 am. Mayor Tait noted the ground breaking ceremony on Friday May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021 at 11:30, another step forward for the redevelopment project. Mayor Tait noted to all that the covid vaccine second shots from the last vaccine clinic held in the Community Center will be given at Palmyra Pharmacy. Mayor Tait noted that anyone wishing to obtain a vaccine should contact the Palmyra Pharmacy they have plenty available.

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 8:08 PM

Doretha R Jackson, RMC

Municipal Clerk

Approved: June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021