

CELEBRATING
1923 100 yrs. 2023

Borough of Palmyra
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2023, at 6:30 PM

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: Dr. Laura Cloud, Natashia Latimore, John Liebe, Michelle McCann, Jessica O'Connor, 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. Public Notice of this meeting been given by the Municipal Clerk in the following manner:

- Posting written notice on the official bulletin board at the Palmyra Borough Hall on January 13th, 2023.
- Mailing written notice to the Burlington County Times, and the Courier Post Newspaper on January 11th, 2023.
- Notice to All Council Members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 2, 2023 – Council Caucus Meeting Minutes

Mayor Tait requested a motion for approval of the October 2, 2023, Regular Council Meeting Minutes. President Howard made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 2, 2023, Regular Council Meeting. Mr. Liebe second the motion.

At the call of the roll the vote was:

INFAVOR: Ms. Latimore, Mr. Liebe, Ms. O'Connor, President Howard

AGAINST: None

Abstain: Dr. Cloud, Mrs. McCann

CORRESPONDENCE

Municipal Clerk Jackson acknowledged the following correspondence received:

Letter- Michael F. Cerra, Executive Director NJLM

REDEVELOPMENT

Rt. 73 South Redevelopment Area- Update

Mr. Brewer indicated he and Mr. Rosenberg are working with Conifer to acquire the property for the affordable housing portion on the redevelopment project.

Mr. Brewer the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the second warehouse, Friday October 27th, 2023, at 10:00 am at the site.

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

Mr. Brewer indicated there is nothing new to report.

Sea Box/ELM Office LLC, 321 E. Broad Street- Update

Mr. Brewer indicated there is nothing new to report.

PROFESSIONAL UPDATES

William Kirchner, ERI

Mr. Kirchner went over the resolutions on the agenda for approval. Mr. Kirchner stated he received complaints regarding mosquitos in an area in the rain garden, he noted that they have treated the standing water and will be installing additional plants in that area. Mr. Kirchner indicated the spoke with Mr. Gural regarding the EV charging station in front of the Borough. Mr. Kirchner indicated Mr. Gural will be contacting PSEG regarding the installation and pricing. Mr. Kirchner indicated the grant is for \$55,000.00 which should cover the charging station but was unsure if it would cover the cost on the installation. Mr. Kirchner stated the G-Max testing on the new turf field has been completed and he is waiting for the results. Mr. Kirchner stated the grooming brush has also been ordered for the turf field. Mr. Kirchner indicated he met with Mayor Tait, Mr. Gural and others regarding the community garden grant and would have additional information regarding the expansion design at a later date. Mr. Kirchner stated he did an inspection of the tennis courts and the basketball court at Legion Field. Mr. Kirchner noted the tennis courts are in good shape, noting a few cracks which he felt could be filled and then the courts could be micro-surfaced with new coloring. Mr. Kirchner indicated the basketball court is a little wavy so it would probably need the same resurfacing as Ethel B Hardy Park. Mr. Kirchner stated he would put together some pricing and get it back to the governing body so a decision can be made as to how you wish to proceed. Mr. Liebe asked if additional benches could be installed at the tennis courts. There was some discussion and Mr. Kirchner indicated it could be done by the same contractor.

BEST PRACTICES INVENTORY PRESENTATION

2023 Municipal Best Practices Inventory Presentation

Ms. Condo presented the 2023 Municipal Best Practices Inventory. Ms. Condo noted the fifty-seven questions asked and indicated our total score was 39.50, higher than the required score to receive full state aid available. Ms. Condo noted that the Best Practices Inventory questionnaire needed to be filed with the state by November 3rd, 2023, and that ours would be filed before the end of the week. Ms. Condo also noted that the questionnaire will also be posted on the website after it is sent to the state.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Please sign in at the podium and state your name and address for the record. 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 President Howard made a motion to open the public portion for comments. Mrs. McCann second the motion.

Mrs. Nowicki - Morgan Avenue – Mrs. Nowicki asked who was in charge of the Geen Team. Dr. Cloud indicated she was. Mrs. Nowicki asked if the Borough would be doing the Trex Challenge. Dr. Cloud indicated she was not aware of it. Mrs. Nowicki explained, and Dr. Cloud indicated she would look into it. Mrs. Nowicki indicated she was tired of the negativity and would like to say a few things; she stated she has been to public works a couple of times lately, noting Alan Berg noting that they were courteous, friendly and very helpful; Linda Yansick always returns her calls and emailed in a timely manner and to is very pleasant; Mr. Benson from the sewer department has been out he also was very pleasant; Rita has been wonderful helping with the Senior program. Mrs. Nowicki indicated she stopped in and spoke with the Acting Chief and he spent a lot of time with her, very focused and interested in what she had to say and shared some ideas with her. Mrs. Nowicki indicated she has not had any negative experience with the employees of the Borough but had found them to be very courteous and helpful. Mrs. Nowicki thanked Mayor Tait and Council President Howard for setting a good example. Mrs. Nowicki stated she wanted to send a thank-you out to the Borough employees from someone who lives in town and appreciates their efforts.

Ms. Arnold - Oregon Avenue - Ms. Arnold asked about resolution 2023-241 the purchase of the refuse truck in the amount of \$390,726.40. Ms. Arnold asked what the expected return was on the investment? Mayor Tait indicated that ultimately it would allow us to reduce the cost of our trash collection and bring it in-house. Ms. Condo indicated she did not have exact numbers, however the ability to bring the collection in-house will in the long term allow us to save money. Ms. Condo Also noted that this truck will allow us to have a back-up in the events there is a problem with one of our other trash refuse vehicles. Ms. Condo also noted that in-house collection is also about service and having the trash pick-up on the schedule set not just randomly as is the service we are currently receiving from our contractor. Ms. Arnold asked how many zones there are currently. Ms. Condo

indicated four and the Riverfront. There was some additional discussion. Ms. Arnold asked where we are with the selection of a Chief of Police. Mayor Tait indicated the ordinance has been passed and procedures are in place, after the required estoppel period the public safety committee will meet and make the necessary notifications to the clerk. Ms. Arnold asked what is being done to curtail the activity at 5th and Race Streets. Lt. Murphy indicated they are working on various things which he cannot discuss, he indicated he has sent officers down there to sit in that area and observe and during the 10 hours they were present there was zero activity. There was additional discussion.

Mrs. McCray- Broad Street – Mrs. McCray indicated she was excited about moving to Palmyra and bought the house on the corner of Broad and Market Street. Mrs. McCray indicated she received a letter last week indicating their taxes would be more than doubling, she indicated she was disabled, and her husband is retired. Mayor Tait indicated she had spoken with her husband earlier in the day and asked if they had spoken with the assessor. Mrs. McCray indicated they had, and he indicated the taxes increase was due to the renovations which had recently been completed and the increase in value of the home. Mrs. McCray noted several things that are wrong with the house. Mrs. McCray indicated there is a train that runs in front of the house at night that they were not aware of and that there is a bus stop on the corner that they did not know was there. Mrs. McCray stated she recently spoke with the police and that there is a half-way house located in the back of her home that she did not know was there. Mrs. McCray stated the entire experience has been disheartening. Mr. Rosenberg stated that we feel your pain, noting that is a horrible set of facts which you have relayed to us. Mr. Rosenberg stated that you may have the ability to file a lawsuit against the responsible parties which sold you the house regarding the condition of the house. Mr. Rosenberg explained that the governing body has nothing to do with the transaction/purchase of the house, that is between the buyer and seller with help from realtors. Mr. Rosenberg noted the governing body does not control the tax assessor, he is independent and does not answer to the governing body. Mr. Rosenberg indicated that you could file an appeal of the assessment. There was some additional discussion.

Seeing no one else wishing to make a comment, Mayor Tait asked for a motion to closed to the public for comments President Howard made a motion to close the public portion for comments. Ms. Latimore second the motion.

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

ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING (Public Hearing)

Ordinance 2023-17, Bond Ordinance Providing for Various 2023 Sewer Utility Improvements, By and in the Borough of Palmyra, in the County of Burlington, State of New Jersey; Appropriating \$615,000.00 Therefor from the Sewer Utility of the Borough and Authorizing the Issuance of \$585,714.00 in Bonds or notes of the Borough to Finance part of the cost thereof.

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to open to the Public for comments President Howard made a motion to open to the public for comments. Dr. Cloud second the motion.

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

Mayor Tait asked if there were any comments, seeing none. 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. Ms. O'Connor second the motion.

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

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-17.

President Howard made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-17. Mr. Liebe second the motion.

At the call of the roll, the vote was:

INFAVOR: Dr. Cloud, Ms. Latimore, Mr. Liebe, Mrs. McCann, Ms. O'Connor, President Howard

AGAINST: None

Motion carried. Ordinance 2023-17 was approved.

Ordinance 2023-18, An Ordinance of the Borough of Palmyra to Authorize the Mayor to execute a Deed on Behalf of the Borough of Palmyra to Palmyra Route 73, LLC for the site upon which the Rt.73 S. Affordable Housing Complex will be constructed, I.E. Block 156, Lot 107 on the tax Map of Palmyra

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to open to the Public for comments President Howard made a motion to open to the public for comments. Dr. Cloud second the motion.

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

Mr. O'Neil- Leconey Avenue – Mr. O'Neil asked if any decision had been made regarding getting the kids to school that will be living in affordable housing units. Mayor Tait indicated that a decision has not been made but that we will be talking with the school board regarding the matter. Mr. O'Neil stated that the Borough will need to create a crosswalk over Rt. 73 so the kids can walk to school. Mayor Tait indicated that the Borough will not be creating a cross over walkway. Mayor Tait indicated the school district will be responsible for getting the children to school. Mayor Tait indicated to find out more about how they intend to handle that you would need to attend the School Board meetings. Mr. O'Neil stated that the Chief should be named soon. Mayor Tait reminded all that this public session is for comments or questions regarding Ordinance 2023-18 only.

Mayor Tait asked if there were any comments, seeing none. 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. Dr. Cloud second the motion.

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

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-18.

President Howard made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-18. Mr. Liebe second the motion.

At the call of the roll, the vote was:

INFAVOR: Dr. Cloud, Ms. Latimore, Mr. Liebe, Mrs. McCann, Ms. O'Connor, President Howard

AGAINST: None

Motion carried. Ordinance 2023-18 was approved.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution **2023-239 thru** and Resolution **2023-250** 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 resolution needed to be removed from the consent agenda for additional discussion. Seeing none, Mayor Tait read the following resolutions into the record:

Resolution 2023-239, Resolution Authorizing the Refund of Sewer Overpayment to account #1822000-0 261 W. Broad Street in the amount of \$793.77.

Resolution 2023-240, Resolution Authorizing Change Order #1 for the Contract to Pioneer General Contracting Co., Inc. with an Increase in the amount of \$3,000.00 for Misc Concrete Work making the new total adjusted Contract price \$40,400.00 Per ERI'S recommendation letter dated September 26, 2023.

Resolution 2023-241, Resolution awarding a contract to Gran Turk Equipment Co., Inc for the purchase of a Labrie Automizer Right Hand 31 yd Refuse Truck in the amount of \$390,726.40 under the Sourcewell National Cooperative Purchasing Agreement

Resolution 2023-242, Resolution Adopting the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the FOP Lodge #2 for the period of January 1, 2024 thru December 31,2027 and authorizing the Mayor to execute the Collective Bargaining Agreement

Resolution 2023-243, Resolution Requesting Approval of Item of Revenue and Appropriation N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-87 (Chapter 159) NJBPU-EV Program in the Amount of \$55,000.00

Resolution 2023-244, Resolution Authorizing an agreement between the Borough of Palmyra and the Riverfront Seniors and Authorizing the Mayor to Execute the agreement.

Resolution 2023-245, Resolution appointing Pat McConnell, Bill Hertline, and Alissa DeLuca as members of the Borough of Palmyra Fire Department

Resolution 2023-246, Resolution approving the Affordable Housing Affirmative Marketing Plan

Resolution 2023-247, Resolution Appointing Doretha R. Jackson as Municipal Housing Liaison for the Administration of the Affordable Housing Program

Resolution 2023-248, Resolution Authorizing the Payment of October 2023 bills in the amount of \$1,713,265.63.

Resolution 2023-249, Resolution Authorizing the Cancellation of Outstanding Checks for the Borough of Palmyra Multi-Escrow Accounts

Resolution 2023-250, Resolution Adopting and Affordable Housing Preference for Veterans and Regional Residents

Resolution 2023-251, Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to execute a State of New Jersey Grant Agreement between the Borough of Palmyra and the Board of Public Utilities in the amount of \$55,000.00 for the EV Program per Grant Award number 23CLF015.

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to approve **Resolutions 2023-239 thru Resolution 2023-251**. President Howard made a motion to approve **Resolutions 2023-239 thru Resolution 2023-251**. Dr. Cloud second the motion.

At the call of the roll, the vote was:

INFAVOR: Dr. Cloud, Ms. Latimore, Mr. Liebe, Mrs. McCann, Ms. O'Connor, President Howard

AGAINST: None

Motion carried. Resolutions 2023-239 thru Resolution 2023-251 were approved.

MOTION TO APPROVE TREASURERS' REPORTS

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for September 2023. President Howard made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for September 2023. Ms. O'Connor second the motion.

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

MOTION TO APPROVE TREASURERS' REPORTS

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve the social affair permit for Philly Leather Pride Night LTD. Dr. Cloud made a motion to approve the social affair permit for Philly Leather Pride Night LTD. Ms. O'Connor second the motion.

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

PUBLIC EVENTS

Mayor Tait noted the following upcoming events:

Virtua Mobile Grocery Store will be in on Thursdays from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Mayor Tait noted the Porch Club Great Closet Clean-out on October 23,24,25, 2023 from 11:00 to 1:00 and 5:00 to 7:00.

The Burlington County Flu Clinic on October 26th, 2023, at Community Center from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon.

PTA Truck-OR-Treat on October 28th, 2023, at the Community Center at 5:00 pm

Mayor Tait also stated the Halloween Parade will be held on October 30th, 2023, along Broad Street.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mayor Tait noted the Palmyra School District Referendum of March 12, 2024, kickoff meeting to be held at the high school on October 18th, 2023, at 5:00 pm.

Mayor Tait indicated they met regarding the Community Garden grant and what they would like and be able to do with that funding.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Mayor Tait stated that Part 2 of the Wizer 2023 Cyber Awareness Training is available and needs to be completed.

Mayor Tait also noted that the Stormwater Management Education and Training program will be sent to all, and it needs to be completed.

MAYOR / COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Dr. Cloud- Dr. Cloud stated that the Green Team meeting scheduled for this coming Wednesday has been moved to next Tuesday as all towns green team meeting will be held this coming Wednesday. Dr. Cloud also noted that they will be adding the “Trex Challenge” to their agenda.

Ms. Latimore- No Comment

Mr. Liebe – Mr. Liebe indicated they had some committee meetings and additional information will be coming soon.

Mrs. McCann– No Comment

Ms. O’Connor – Ms. O’Connor stated that they held a Veterans Affairs meeting and discussed participating in the “Toys for Tots” program for the upcoming holiday season. Ms. O’Connor also noted that they are going to reach out to some of our Veterans and see what services we might be able to help them with. Mayor Tait noted that the Police Department participates in the “Toys for Tots” program every year so you may want to reach out to them to see what they are doing.

President Howard – No Comment

Mayor Tait –Mayor Tait indicated she had no further comments.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to adjourn. President Howard made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Latimore second the motion.

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM

Doretha R Jackson, RMC

Municipal Clerk

Approved: November 20th, 2023