

Borough of Palmyra
Council Caucus Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 4th, 2024, at 6:30 PM

The Council Caucus 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: Dr. Laura Cloud, Natashia Latimore, John Liebe, Michele McCann, Jessica O'Connor, President Timothy Howard, Mayor Gina Ragomo Tait

ABSENT: None

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT

Mayor Tait Read the following open public meetings statement into the record:

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 14th, 2024.
- Mailing written notice to the Burlington County Times, and the Courier Post Newspaper on January 14th, 2024.
- Notice to All Council Members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 20th, 2024- Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Mayor Tait requested a motion for approval of the February 20th, 2024, Council Caucus Meeting Minutes.

President Howard made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 20th, 2024, Council Caucus Meeting Minutes. Dr. Cloud second the motion.

At the call of the roll the vote was:

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

AGAINST: None

Abstain: Ms. Latimore, Mr. Liebe

CORRESPONDENCE

Municipal Clerk Jackson acknowledged the following correspondence received:

Thank-You Note – The Gural Family

Letter of Resignation- Jayson Rossignol

PROCLAMATIONS

Mayor Tait read the following Proclamations:

READ ACROSS AMERICA

WHEREAS, the citizens of Borough of Palmyra stand firmly committed to promoting reading as the catalyst for our students' future academic success, their preparation for America's jobs of the future, and their ability to compete in a global economy; and

WHEREAS, Palmyra School District has provided significant leadership in the area of community involvement in the education of our youth, grounded in the principle that educational investment is key to the community's well-being and long-term quality of life; and

WHEREAS, "NEA's Read Across America," a national celebration of Dr. Seuss's 114th birthday on March 2, 2018, promotes reading and adult involvement in the education of our community's students;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor Gina Tait calls on the citizens of the Borough of Palmyra to assure that every child is in a safe place reading together with a caring adult;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor Gina Tait enthusiastically endorses "NEA's Read Across America" and recommits our community to engage in programs and activities during the month of March to make America's children the best readers in the world.

NATIONAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK

WHEREAS, the School Breakfast Program has served our nation admirably since it was permanently established in 1975, and reaches some 14 million children across 91,000 schools and institutions in the United States each day; and

WHEREAS, the School Breakfast Program meets the nutritional needs of children, improves food security, and advances child health and well-being by providing nutritionally balanced breakfasts to school children each day; and

WHEREAS, school-aged children who experience hunger are more likely to be absent from school, visit the school nurse, and experience more challenges than children with a nutritious diet, and skipping breakfast has consistently been linked with worse academic and health outcomes for children; and

WHEREAS, eating breakfast improves children’s overall diets, builds healthy, lifelong eating habits, and enhances their ability to learn and perform academically; and

WHEREAS, making breakfast a part of the school day, commonly known as Breakfast After the Bell, and offering breakfast to all students at no cost are desirable and effective ways to ensure more students realize the benefits of breakfast; and

WHEREAS, parents, caregivers, teachers, and school food personnel all play an essential role to ensure the children of Palmyra have the basic resources needed to grow, learn, discover their own potential, and live happy fulfilling lives; and

WHEREAS, No Kid Hungry offers information, tools, resources, and grants to support schools in implementing and expanding school breakfast programs and the School Nutrition Association offers free materials to help schools commemorate “National School Breakfast Week” including artwork to decorate their meal serving areas, toolkits and handouts, sample menu items, marketing materials, and suggested promotional activities, including games, activities, and contests; and

WHEREAS, my administration is committed to helping expand access to and enhance current school breakfast programs to ensure that our children have the means to succeed.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Gina Ragomo Tait Mayor of Borough of Palmyra, do hereby proclaim March 4-8, 2024, as **SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK**. I encourage all residents of Palmyra to recognize and commemorate school administrators, food service directors, and cafeteria staff who operate school breakfast programs that ensure the health, safety, and success of our children.

REDEVELOPMENT

Rt. 73 South Redevelopment Area- Update

Mr. Gural stated the footing and foundation of the second warehouse are underway and they should be finished by month’s end. Mr. Gural stated they are on schedule. Mr. Gural indicated the affordable housing component is moving along and they are still awaiting the final remedial action work plan.

Mr. Gural stated the redeveloper PURE is being billed for the \$250,000.00 marked for the Neighborhood Preservation/Community Development Project and expect to have the entire funding by the end of year. Mr. Gural indicated that the Borough has two industrial properties which have now become vacant, noting that both properties are environmentally challenged. Mr. Gural stated that both properties, Callahan Chemical and Roto Cylinders/Armotec could be good fits of being names areas in need of redevelopment. Mr. Gural and Mr. Brewer explained the process. There was some discussion and the governing body asked Mr. Brewer to prepare a letter of instruction/resolutions to the Land Use Board to investigate the possibility of declaring those properties “areas in need of redevelopment”.

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

Nothing new to report

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

Mr. Gural stated there was nothing new to report and the renovations are proceeding.

PROFESSIONAL UPDATES

William Kirchner, ERI

Mr. Kirchner stated the community garden plans will go out for quotes which should be back by the 25th of March to be awarded in April.

Mr. Kirchner noted that ERI was awarded the 2024 Road Program, which is between Garfield and Cinnaminson Avenues. Mr. Kirchner stated that he was made aware of an accident at the corner of Temple Blvd. and Garfield Avenue and in concert with Mr. Gural and Lt Murphy went back and reviewed the accident reports of that area, noting a concern of the residents was to have a four-way stop, however that based on the history of the crash reports the area does not meet the warrants as to permit a four-way stop under the state guidelines. Mr. Kirchner explained. Mr. Kirchner gave some examples of things which could be done to slow the traffic in that area and stay within the state guidelines. Mr. Kirchner explained that if acceptable those improvements could be included in the 2024 Road Program bid process. There was some additional discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

This public portion is for discussion on professional updates, resolutions and ordinances listed on the agenda. Please sign in at the podium and state your name and address for the record. Each citizen will be allotted up to three (3) minutes to speak, to allow everyone an opportunity to ask questions and express their opinions or concerns. 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. Dr. Cloud the motion.

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

Mr. Haber - Garfield Avenue- Mr. Haber stated people try to avoid the lights and trains fly up Temple Blvd to get to Elm Avenue. Mr. Haber asked if speed bumps could be installed.

Mr. Ridgeway – Garfield Avenue – Mr. Ridgeway indicated that it means a lot to the residents that this intersection be addressed. Mr. Ridgeway stated that people just do not stop at the stop sign. Mr. Ridgeway asked if the intersection could be monitored during the rush hours of 4:00 pm thru 6:00 pm. so you could see how people fly thru. Mr. Ridgeway asked if blinking stop signs could be installed. There was some additional discussion.

Mrs. Holloway – Broad Street – Mrs. Holloway asked if anyone had any idea of the taxes that would have to be paid regarding getting children from the affordable housing into the school districts. Mr. Gural indicated that several studies had been completed regarding the number of students the affordable housing units would produce and two indicated about 34 and 54 students. Mr. Gural explained. Mr. Gural noted that the school district is aware and there have been many conversations regarding that matter. Mrs. Holloway stated that she noticed on the agenda that the School District

Special Election will be discussed, she asked if she would be able to ask questions. Mayor Tait indicated the item was a reminder and if she had questions she should consult with the School Board. There was some additional discussion.

Mr. Atkins- Garfield Avenue – Mr. Atkins stated his concerns regarding the intersection at Garfield and Temple Blvd. Mr. Atkins noted he had pictures of the street and the accident that they recently had if council would like to see them. He indicated he would leave them with Ms. Jackson if they would like to review them. Mr. Atkins also noted the hedges on corner which block the sight line.

Ms. Vanemburgh – Garfield Avenue – Ms. Vanemburgh complained about the parking at the Mosque on Wednesdays and Fridays on Spring Garden Street and Garfield Avenues, she noted that cars are parked all the way to the corner and across various driveways.

Ms. Fox -Cinnaminson Avenue – Ms. Fox asked if the 25 MPH could be painted on the street on Cinnaminson Avenue. Ms. Fox noted that the intersection of Cinnaminson and Broad is dangerous for pedestrians. Mr. Fox also noted that her son was harassed by a homeless person at Wawa panhandling. Mr. Rosenberg noted that the State of New Jersey has ruled that a person has the right to ask for money and there is nothing that the police can do about it.

Lt. Murphy noted that they have issued 460 summonses in the last two months and 109 warnings. Lt. Murphy stated that people just do not follow the traffic laws, but they are being enforced by the department.

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. McCann second the motion.

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

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution **2024-94 thru** and Resolution **2024-101** 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 2024-94, Resolution Approving LOSAP Eligible Volunteers for 2023 in accordance with Chapter 21: A1 of the Code of the Borough of Palmyra entitled “Fire Department Length of Service Point System”.

Resolution 2024-95, Resolution Appointing Taniyka Johns as Tax Collector for the Borough of Palmyra effective January 1, 2024

Resolution 2024-96, Resolution awarding a non-fair and open contract for the purchase of a capital item exceeding \$15,000.00 for server upgrade and migration from All Covered, IT Services totaling \$27,432.00

Resolution 2024-97, Resolution Authorizing the rescinding of Resolution 2024-81

Resolution 2024-98, Resolution Authorizing the cancellation of taxes for a totally Disabled Veteran at Block 12 Lot 16 for Tax year 2024 and thereafter and refunding taxes already paid in 2024 in the amount of \$1,332.66

Resolution 2024-99, Resolution Authorizing the cancellation of taxes for a totally Disabled Veteran at Block 152 Lot 9.02 Qualifier 6003 for tax Year 2024 and thereafter and refunding taxes already paid in 2024 in the amount of \$1,726.83

Resolution 2024-100, Resolution Appointing Linda Yansick as Deputy Tax Collector for the Borough of Palmyra at the Hourly rate of \$23.38 effective March 4th, 2024

Resolution 2024-101, Resolution Authorizing the Administrator and or Chief Financial Officer to execute any documents required to engage Kaye Personnel Inc. for the hiring of a Temporary Administrative Clerk

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to approve **Resolutions 2024-94 thru Resolution 2024-101**.

President Howard made a motion to approve **Resolutions 2024-94 thru Resolution 2024-101** 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. Resolutions 2024-94 thru Resolution 2024-101 were approved.

PUBLIC EVENTS

Mayor Tait noted the following upcoming events.

Mayor Tait stated the Virtua Mobile Grocery Store is in the Community Center parking lot on Thursdays from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm.

Read Across America 2024, March 5, 2024, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Ms. McCann stated that the Easter Egg Hunt would be held at Legion Field on March 23rd, 2024, at 9:00 am. Ms. McCann also noted that on March 20th, 2024, they will be filling the eggs in the community center. Mrs. McCann stated that the Borough would also be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt for special needs children at 12:00 pm on March 23rd, 2023, at the Community Center. Mrs. McCann thanked Mrs. Sykes for all her help and effort in putting together that event.

Mayor Tait noted the Rabies Clinic to be held in April 13, 2024, in Chief Payton Flournoy Park at 1:00 pm.

Mayor Tait also noted the Palmyra Day will be held on May 4th, 2024, and there is no rain date.

Mayor Tait noted that the Spring Townwide yard sale will be held on May 18th, 2024.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Gural noted that the Chief of Police vacancy discussion will be held in closed session with Lt. Murphy.

Mayor Tait noted that the 2024 Budget Workshop meeting- will be held on Saturday April 6th, 2024, at 8:30 am

A reminder that the Palmyra School District Special Election - \$18.4M bond referendum will be held on March 12th, 2024, in the Community Center.

Mayor Tait noted that the Community Garden was discussed earlier, and planting will begin soon.

Mr. Gural noted the delivery of the second Trash collection last week. Mr. Gural went over the process of how we got to where we are today. Mr. Gural indicated we will be taking over trash collection on Zone 1 May 1, 2024, and anticipate taking over the entire town collection by January 1, 2025.

Mr. Gural stated that the intent is to hire 4 laborers for public works and two CDL drivers for the sanitation dept of public works. Mr. Gural noted that it would not occur before the budget was approved.

Mr. Rosenberg noted that the Garner vs. Borough of Palmyra should occur in closed session.

Mr. Gural explained the AT&T wanted to add some upgrades to the cell tower at Borough Hall to build a generator to support the tower. Mr. Gural noted that we did not have the space for them to build/place the generator so thru some conversations the potential exists that they may replace and upgrade our emergency generator to accommodate the Borough's needs along with theirs at their cost. Mr. Gural indicated that the unit is a 95 unit and is reaching the end of its life expectancy. Mr. Gural stated that they would purchase, install at their cost and the Borough would maintain it over the years to come.

Mr. Gural explained the New Jersey's revised liquor license laws for breweries, distilleries, and pocket licenses noting that we have someone with a pocket license and this law allows the license to be transferred to another municipality or sell it. Mr. Gural asked Mr. Rosenberg to investigate the law and see what exposure we may have or what efforts we may undertake to expedite the sale or purchase of that license.

Mr. Gural stated the NJDCA Local Recreation Improvement Grant for Legion Field playground upgrades was submitted February 22nd, 2024, in the amount of \$58,000.

Mr. Gural stated the Tax Collector's 2023 End Year Report was included in councils' packets and they to take note of the collection rate as it will be useful at budget time.

Mr. Gural stated the Police vehicles bid opening was held February 29th, 2024, and a resolution would be on the agenda at the next meeting with the recommendations, noting that it will be a capital purchase.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Mr. Gural reminded all that the 2024 Burl Co JIF Elected Officials Training seminars are all online, noting that for every council member that attends we receive a \$250.00 dollar reduction to our insurance billing.

Mr. Gural stated that Part 1 of the Wizer 2024 Cyber Awareness Training is available and needs to be completed to continue using the Borough email addresses.

Mr. Gural explained the requirement of the entire governing body and Land Use Board attending the Stormwater Management Education and Training. Mr. Gural stated the training needed to be complete by March 18th, 2024.

Mr. Gural noted the Burl Co JIF Annual Safety Celebration & Kickoff Breakfast to be held on March 27th at 8:30am in Marlton, NJ at the Indican Spring Country Club.

ONGOING REMINDER PROJECTS

Mayor Tait stated the following items are reminders for the various projects the governing body is addressing. Mayor Tait noted additional information will be forthcoming in the future.

Purchase Orders - Council signature requirement.

Sidewalk/snow & ice removal Ordinance

Sewer Lateral responsibility Ordinance and sewer bills

Parking Ordinance - additional amended code subsections required.

Accessory Structures/cargo containers - Zoning/Land Development Ordinance amendments

PUBLIC COMMENT

We request those wishing to have or make a public comment, 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. Ms. Latimore the motion.

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

Ms. Nowicki- Morgan Avenue- Mrs. Nowicki congratulated Ms. Yansick on her accomplishment. Ms. Nowicki asked if we knew the cost of the generator. Mr. Gural indicated no and noted that Mr. Kirchner was specking out the project so we would get that cost.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that a public safety meeting was held with Lt. Murphy and one of the programs he wished to implement was to have different officers attend the council meeting so the public and council could get to know them. Mr. Rosenberg noted the appearance of two of the officers, Officer Matt Maresca and Sgt. Huble, tonight.

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. Mrs. McCann second the motion.

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

MAYOR / COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Dr. Cloud- Dr. Cloud noted that the documentation for Sustainable NJ is cumbersome, and their focus should be on doing the actions and moving forward even if we do not get the certification this year.

Ms. Latimore –no comment

Mr. Liebe-no comment

Mrs. McCann– Ms. McCann thanked the officers for coming.

Ms. O'Connor – Ms. O'Connor stated that at the last Green Team meeting they had a conversation regarding getting the Green Team back on track with the certification and looking at the things we are currently doing that factor into Sustainable NJ.

President Howard-no comment

Mayor Tait – Mayor Tait stated she met with Councilwoman O'Connor regarding the public relations committee, social media, publicity, and redoing our website. Mr. Gural mention the newsletter which the committee may wish to consider.

Mayor Tait asked Mr. Gural and Mr. Rosenberg if there were items for the closed session. Mr. Gural and Mr. Rosenberg indicated yes regarding personnel, negotiations, litigation.

Resolution 2024-102 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:

Mayor Tait requested a motion to approve Resolution 2024-102. Dr. Cloud made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-102. President Howard 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

Resolution 2024-102 was approved.

Into closed at 8:13 pm

Out of closed at 9:20 pm

Mayor Tait requested a motion to open the meeting to the public. President Howard made a motion to open the meeting to the public. Ms. Latimore second the motion.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Tait asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Liebe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. President Howard second the motion.

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 9:21 PM

Doretha R Jackson, RMC

Municipal Clerk

Approved: March 18th, 2024