

BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE
Mayor & Borough Council Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2021

Mayor Canose called this meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. remotely via Zoom. Present were Council Members John Donahue, Jeff Hammond, Jena McCredie, Chad McQueen, Thomas O'Dea, Jr. and Christine Zamarra. Also present were John Pidgeon, Borough Attorney, Tom Czerniecki, Administrator, and Anthony Suriano, Borough Clerk.

STATEMENT OF PRESIDING OFFICER

Notice of this meeting was provided to the Bernardsville News, Courier News and the Star Ledger, filed with the Municipal Clerk and posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board on December 24, 2020.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATIONS

Mayor's Proclamation, Mayor Canose read a proclamation for National Poison Prevention Week as the week of March 21 to March 27.

OPEN SESSION

Mayor Canose opened the meeting to the public.

Christina Gianni, resident and small business owner, spoke in support of the Main Street USA resolution. She said it would help the revitalization of our town in a very positive way.

Issac Kramer of Metuchen and Executive Director of Metuchen Downtown Alliance, said he leads an organization which is one of 21 Main Street Programs in New Jersey. He said there are rigorous accreditation standards such as having a historic preservation ethic, a full time manager, and ongoing training for staff and volunteers. He said it has been successful in Metuchen as 80% of the businesses are still there since 2016. He said they had over 20,000 volunteer hours. He recommended the Main Street Program for Bernardsville. Mr. McQueen asked what contributes to their successful program. Mr. Kramer said it's due to their guiding communities every day throughout the different programs, numerous volunteers, and stable public funding.

Michelle Conover, Burrows Avenue, said revitalization is what Bernardsville needs. She said for the past three years there has been a resurgence in activities, which has to do with Downtown Bernardsville. She thanked Olivia Manning for her efforts. She encouraged council members to vote for Resolution #21-66 later in the meeting.

Johanna Wissinger, Washington Corner Road, agreed with previous speakers and encouraged council to vote yes for the Main Street NJ resolution. She commended Olivia Manning and the Governing Body for their community spirit. She said she saw poison concerns raised in the news

and wanted to mention there is lead in water in older homes. She said well testing is a good idea. The Environmental Commission is working on more awareness that lawn chemicals and fertilizers are deleterious for our health and water system.

Cheryl Maddaluna, Old Army Road, expressed support for the Main Street NJ program. She said she is a realtor and clients are always looking for a vibrant downtown and we will see a huge return on our real estate values with the Main Street NJ program.

Olivia Manning, Downtown Bernardsville, thanked those who have been supportive to what they are trying to accomplish over the past four years. She said the Main Street NJ program is not about one person, it is about as many people as we can get together from all areas of the community to do the work that needs to be done. She encouraged council to pass Resolution #21-66 later in the meeting.

Sharene Azimi, Old Colony Road, said she supports the Main Street NJ program. She said she is a big believer in the power of public/private partnerships.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Canose closed the open session.

ORDINANCES (Public Hearing)

Mayor Canose opened the public hearing on Ordinance #2021-1875, **BOND ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$2,550,000 AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$2,183,800 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH, FOR VARIOUS IMPROVEMENTS OR PURPOSES AUTHORIZED TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY.** Hearing no comments from the public, Mayor Canose closed the public hearing. Mr. O'Dea moved to pass this ordinance on final reading and adopt as published. Mr. McQueen seconded and the motion was approved by the following roll call vote. Mr. Donahue, Mr. Hammond, Ms. McCredie, Mr. McQueen, and Mr. O'Dea voted yes. Ms. Zamarra abstained.

ORDINANCES (Introduction) - None

RESOLUTIONS

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| #21-57 | AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS |
| #21-58 | SETTING RECREATION FEES |
| #21-59 | AUTHORIZING A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH TOPOLOGY LLC TO ASSIST THE BOROUGH IN ADMINISTERING RFPS TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL |

REDEVELOPERS FOR 65 MORRISTOWN ROAD AND QUIMBY LANE

- #21-60 AUTHORIZATION OF TAX REFUND**
- #21-61 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF NOT EXCEEDING \$761,000 BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES OF THE BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY**
- #21-62 RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE COMBINATION OF CERTAIN ISSUES OF BONDS OF THE BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY, INTO A SINGLE ISSUE OF GENERAL BONDS AGGREGATING \$5,103,000 IN PRINCIPAL AMOUNT**
- #21-63 RESOLUTION DETERMINING THE FORM AND OTHER DETAILS OF \$5,103,000 GENERAL BONDS OF 2021 OF THE BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY, AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR SALE**
- #21-64 AUTHORIZING SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH BERNARDS TOWNSHIP FOR FIRE PREVENTION (EXTENSION TO JUNE 30, 2021)**
- #21-65 RESOLUTION TERMINATING CONTRACT FOR PURCHASE OF 261 CLAREMONT ROAD**
- #21-66 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN THE MAIN STREET NEW JERSEY PROGRAM AND DESIGNATING A REPRESENTATIVE(S) OF THE 501(C)3 NON-PROFIT, DOWNTOWN BERNARDSVILLE, INC TO ASSIST IN COORDINATING ALL PROGRAM APPLICATION ACTIVITIES**
- #21-67 APPROVING EMERGENCY TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS**

Mr. O'Dea moved to adopt Resolutions #21-57 to #21-60 and #21-64 to #21-67. Mr. McQueen seconded and the motion was approved by the following roll call vote. Mr. Hammond, Ms. McCredie, Mr. McQueen, Mr. O'Dea, and Ms. Zamarra voted yes. Mr. Donahue voted no.

Mr. O'Dea moved to adopt Resolutions #21-61 to #21-63. Mr. Hammond seconded and the motion was approved by the following roll call vote. Mr. Donahue, Mr. Hammond, Ms. McCredie, Mr. McQueen, and Mr. O'Dea voted yes. Ms. Zamarra abstained.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Fair Ballots Resolution

Council considered a resolution as sent by former Fanwood Councilman Jack Molenaar who is part of an organization called the Fair Ballot Project. After discussion, council decided not to take any action.

Draft Ordinance, Prohibiting The Operation Of Any Class Of Cannabis Businesses Within Its Geographical Boundaries

Mr. McQueen moved that **Ordinance #2021-1876, ORDINANCE PROHIBITING THE OPERATION OF ANY CLASS OF CANNABIS BUSINESS WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES OF THE BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE AND SUPPLEMENTING AND AMENDING CHAPTER 3 OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED "POLICE REGULATIONS" AND ARTICLE 12 OF THE BOROUGH LAND USE REGULATIONS ENTITLED "ZONING"** be introduced by title, passed on first reading, published according to law, and that a public hearing be scheduled for a meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m., Monday, March 22, 2021. Ms. McCredie seconded and the motion was approved with six yes votes.

Temporary Outdoor Dining

Mr. Price received requests from local restaurants to have outdoor dining in 2021 as it was approved in 2020. Mr. McQueen moved that Resolution #20-155 is extended to December 31, 2021 for all provisions except those rendered moot by the new downtown zoning ordinance. Mr. Hammond seconded and the motion was approved with six yes votes. Mr. Price will contact local restaurants whether or not they participated last year and inform them of this extension.

Draft Alarm Ordinance

Council considered introduction of **Ordinance #2021-1877 AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING ALARM SYSTEMS AND SUPPLEMENTING AND AMENDING CHAPTER 3 OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED "POLICE REGULATIONS"**. Chief Valentine asked council for a recommendation on fees being annual or one time, the cost of registration, and the fee schedule for violations. Council discussed a one-time registration fee of \$50. Chief Valentine will work with Mr. Pidgeon on finalizing the ordinance and it will be ready for introduction at the March 22nd meeting.

Correspondence

Letter From Bernardsville Diversity Council, Mayor Canose shared a letter she received that the Bernardsville Diversity Council sent to the Somerset County Commissioners about Covid vaccines and making sure all populations get serviced. They also suggested extending the hours the vaccine is given for people who work during the day.

Letter From Assemblywoman Aura Dunn, Mayor Canose said we received a letter from Assemblywoman Aura Dunn in response to our opposition resolution of A-1571.

Letter From NJ Business Coalition, Regarding Opposition of A-1571, Mayor Canose said the NJ Business Coalition now has about one hundred organizations signed on to oppose A-1571. She said there are revisions that are being considered for this bill. Mr. McQueen said this bill needs to be defeated. Mayor Canose said the bill would completely stop any revitalization projects.

Ms. Zamarra noted that the Bernards Township Health Department is in the process of setting up a local site for Covid vaccines. Mr. Hammond confirmed.

Ms. Zamarra said the state and county website has a translate button so a user can click on this button to translate into any language. Mr. Hammond said there are translators for the county call center.

Mayor's Update

Mayor Canose said on February 23rd she attended the Somerset County Business Partnership program and they are doing a great women's series that had discussion with Commissioner Shanel Robinson. She attended a wellness campaign webinar on leveraging volunteers and community programs. She attended the Somerset County Human Services Advisory Committee meeting which had a presentation by Big Brothers and Big Sisters and she shared this with the Bernardsville Diversity Committee and Pastor Dan Fenco. On February 25th, our Land Use Committee met with the new owners of the Griffin and Howe and 56 Degree Wine. Mayor Canose said the last Assembly voting date on A-1571 will be March 25th. She attended a program by the Garden State Initiative on NJ's business climate in 2021. Senator Booker talked about vaccines and said as of March 15th we will be in Phase 1C. Mayor Canose said so far 2.6 million vaccines have been delivered to NJ and 2.2 million have been administered. She said the Johnson and Johnson vaccines are not available yet due to production issues and will be available probably by the end of March. The Star Ledger listed groups of volunteers who are assisting in getting people vaccine appointments. The Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee met with Pat Hoagland of Brandstetter Carroll to discuss a vision, mission and goals based on the survey results and focus group feedback. A presentation could be made in April with the finished plan in May. Chief Valentine had a meeting about the status of the emergency operations plan which is due next month and we are on track. Mayor Canose attended the Fire

Company and First Aid Squad awards dinner for 2019 as they are getting caught up. Those receiving awards were Tom Carton for 50 years, Jim Pickell for 40 years, Robert Steinkopf for 40 years, Richard Pierson for 40 years, Ed DeFilippis Jr. for 35 years, Dick Eick for 30 years, Scott McKay for 25 years, Gene Malin for 10 years, Gene Malin for Firefighter of the Year in 2019. For the First Aid Squad awards were to Ann Stone for 20 years, Alan Lu and Alana Harrington shared EMT of the Year, Matt Favreau was Responder of the Year. Council thanked the members of the Fire Company and First Aid Squad members for their time and service to the community.

Administrator's Report

Mr. Czerniecki said the Finance Committee hopes to have a budget presentation for the March 22nd council meeting. He said we have received RFP's for the Quimby Lane redevelopment project and are trying to work around schedules to get the applicants to come to a special meeting to introduce themselves to council and the community. Recreation spring programs will be opening this week. Public Works crews are fixing potholes after a rough winter season. He said we have initiated the mandatory Diversity and Inclusion Training and the non-mandatory component will take place in the near future. Sewer bills will be sent out next week and residents can sign up for email reminders.

Unfinished Business - None

New Business

Sustainable Jersey Grant, Mr. Hammond said we were successful in obtaining a Technical Assistance Grant from Sustainable Jersey which will help us look for energy efficiency throughout the borough.

Ridewise Dimmable Bulbs, Mr. Hammond said Ridewise had 60 watt LED dimmable bulbs and we are going to get 400 of them to distribute to low income families through the food banks and faith based organizations. He said he is working with our Chaplains and other organizations to make that distribution.

Raritan Headwaters Stream Cleanup, Ms. Zamarra said registration is now open for the Raritan Headwaters Stream Cleanup. The event is on April 17th and separated into three locations due to Covid.

Downtown Bernardsville, Mayor Canose said Wednesday night is their community meeting. Details are on their website and Facebook page.

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved to adjourn to an executive session to consider Contract Negotiations and Pending Litigation and that the time when and circumstances under which the matter can be disclosed to the public is when it is finally resolved. The motion was seconded and approved with six yes votes.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.
