



**CITY OF ABSECON**  
**Municipal Complex**  
**500 Mill Road**  
**Absecon, New Jersey 08201**

**Carie A. Crone, RMC**  
**Municipal Clerk**

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**CITY COUNCIL**

**JUNE 16, 2016**

**REGULAR MEETING - 7:00 PM**  
**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Chris Seher at 7:00 p.m.

**FLAG SALUTE – Mayor**

**INVOCATION – Rev. Dean Bult, Mainland Baptist Church, Galloway**

**STATEMENT OF SUNSHINE LAW – Chris**

**NOTIFICATION OF MEETING - Chris**

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Cain, Sheeran, Horton, Phillips, Ring, Vizthum, Seher

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mayor Armstrong, Tim Maguire, Jessica Thompson, Carie Crone, Ed Dennis

**REGULAR MEETING**

Motion was made by Councilman Sheeran to vote on Res. #115 separately from the Consent Agenda – second – Councilwoman Cain.  
All were in favor.

**REPORTS**

**Frank - Public Works** – bids for the 2016 Road Program were opened 6/10 and the lowest bidder was Asphalt Paving Systems who has been doing our roads for the past few years. Res. #113 will be awarding that bid. Res. #114 authorizes our engineers to be included in that project. New carpet and chairs will be coming in the near future for the courtroom.

**Jim - Public Safety** – 2 of the 4 dry suits ordered came in; Engine 85's new lights are operational; they are still looking for a vehicle. Engine 84 has a leak and they are looking into maintenance on it. The Police Chief was present and they uncovered a prostitution ring and the Click It or Ticket program is in force. On July 6<sup>th</sup> there will be an EMS work session for the members of that group.

**Sandy – Parks and Playgrounds** – no meeting. Concerts start Sunday, June 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Pat – Finance** – met tonight and the road program was discussed. After that is complete, we are going to do the micro surfacing. We are half way through the year, and we have spent 51% of the budget, which is normal.

**Mike – Community Affairs** – announced upcoming events

**Kim - Economic Development** – no meeting yet for June. They are still working on the revisions on the videos for the city that were done by CGI to advertise Absecon. Her next meeting is 7/7 @ 6:30 p.m.

**Mayor** – Comcast came yesterday and claims some wires needed some tightening up and it may solve the volume problem. Had a meeting today in Trenton on the proposal for our foreclosed and "zombie" properties and the added risk of needing more affordable housing. There is federal money coming to keep people in their homes in hard pressed areas and explained how it would work.

**Jessica Thompson** – went over some resolutions on the agenda tonight. The baseball field nets were repaired today.

**Eddie** – the road program work should begin soon. Res. #110 is to apply for a grant for the city and the school district to install sidewalks along Pitney Road and other curb work. The county's consultant is re-evaluating the data regarding the lights at 5 corners, once done, we will meet with them.

#### **MONTHLY REPORTS – Carie**

**Tax Collection** – \$3,639,364.29

**Municipal Clerk** - \$8,987.15

**Municipal Court** - \$8,924.31

**Construction Office** - \$28,443

**Chris** – explained how the grant for the bulkhead controversy to alleviate flooding problems came to light and the process for it. We still haven't been awarded the grant at this time; it's like a lottery. If approved, we wouldn't be going out right away to build it; a lot more work goes into it. We'd have to see how much the whole project would cost the city. We then heard from a group of residents who are against this plan, so we had a special meeting giving the public notice and we are here tonight now.

**Mayor** – suggested the presentation be made tonight that was done at the special meeting. All agreed it should be presented.

**Ed Dennis** – Gave a brief presentation showing the flood map and concept pictures.

## **PUBLIC PORTION**

Motion to open to the public – Councilman Sheeran – second – Councilman Vizthum

ROLL CALL: Cain, yes; Sheeran, yes; Horton, yes; Phillips, yes; Ring, yes; Vizthum, yes; Seher, yes

**Lou Polisano – 198 N. Shore Rd.** – he is hoping that Council rescinds the idea of installing a bulkhead mainly due to the cost. He is mad because no one was told about the project until after the grant was applied for. He questioned the signatures on the petition that is going around.

**Ed Dennis** – we've never looked at drainage issues in that area along Shore Road and it's an engineering project that could be looked at. It is a process to do that too.

**Ed Goldman – 51 Natalie Terrace** – he's a dock owner on Euclid Drive and is opposed to the project. Parking is difficult now down there and it would make matters worse. Flood rates were then discussed. He thinks there is always alternatives to this, for example, raising homes. He mainly feels it should be left alone.

**Jim Winks – 200 Euclid Drive** – there are 35 homes in that neighborhood and if a bulkhead is put in, the neighborhood would never be able to leech. Many years ago, it was a swamp at first, they dredged the creek and put homes there.

**Ed** – explained the drainage that would have be part of the design for the project.

**Pat** – how much would the project really cost? If we are awarded the grant, how long do we have to use it?

**Ed** – the grant covers the bulkhead itself, but the costs were estimates for now. We didn't really do any more investigating into other variables that would affect the project. We could always run into something while doing the work. We should have two years.

**Louise Speitel – 205 Tremont** – many don't read public notices, so many of us are just finding out with the June 7<sup>th</sup> letter. She got a petition started from residents who are in favor of this project; some were hesitant and unsure. She would like to see the concept of a bulkhead with the correct drainage system.

**Carl Robinson – 414 Pitney Road** – he is a dock owner down there. He did a lot of reading on this and if he says something wrong he has no problem being corrected. He mainly wanted to discuss the costs of this project and went through a list of items and estimated what the job would cost in total. He doesn't feel the benefits are worth the costs to the city.

**Jim Lafferty – 194 N. Shore Road** – Shore Road floods about 4-5 times a year now. Questioned where the water would go if the bulkhead is there. There seems to be a lot of extra costs in this project and the taxpayers have to pay for that.

**Jeff Jenkins – 2 Euclid Drive** – gave a history of his property and the flooding that happens. He raised his house and is safe now, but you would be bringing the road right up to his house now and that's upsetting to him. He couldn't move his house because of the setback requirements. He just doesn't want to lose 10 ft. of his property. He's been there 18 years and has had water there twice. He suggested maybe we dig Jenkins pond out and make it wider and deeper to hold the water and mitigate the flooding.

**Beatrice Petrella - 104 E. Church St.** – has lived there for 40 years. Questioned the construction and damage to homes in the area. She's upset that the wall will block the view of the bay.

**Mary Rehr - 211 Tremont Ave.** – she probably had the most damage from Sandy at \$50,000. She didn't have enough damage to need it to get raised. Tremont Ave. is sinking and it needs some type of flood mitigation and however it's done, I don't care.

**Gaskill – 11 Berkley Ave.** – he has lived there since 1959 and has seen many storms. He is in favor of the bulkhead. He is in the middle of the flood zone and has water in his crawl space once. He would like the city to reconsider this project.

**Tom Carey – 14 Euclid Ave.** – the front of his house is like a bowl. Whenever it rains he gets water in the catch basin in front of his house. He is in favor of the bulkhead and the city can take the whole front of his property if they want and then lower his taxes.

**Kathleen Marczyk - 210 Tremont Ave.** – has lived in her home since 1997 and she had given pictures of Tremont and Vassar Ave and the flooding that occurs. There are flooding issues on 3 blocks down there and would like the grant to go through to see what could be done. She would just like to maintain their homes and most of them don't have boats or docks.

**Chris** – if the grant is approved, which was based on the paperwork we submitted, do we have any flexibility in how that money is used for modifying the application to change the concept of the bulkhead.

**Ed** – we have some flexibility with the design, but it would need to be used for a bulkhead along the creek. We couldn't lower the elevation of it, due to the requirements of the grant.

**Jeff Speel – 212 Tremont Ave.** – has lived in the home for 6 years now and liked hearing all the opinions tonight. He had about 22" of water in his house from Hurricane Sandy and had to be out of it for 7-8 months and also with a new baby. Last summer a torrential downpour of 5" happened and he had about 4-5" of water in the backyard and part of it came in. He's tired of getting water in the house and following the tides so they can protect their house. There is no perfect solution for this and he understands the boaters' points of view. It's just frustrating dealing with the water issues on Tremont Avenue.

**Scott Williams – 618 Great Creek - Galloway, NJ** – he's a doc owner and after Sandy they raised homes in Mystic Islands and also in Brigantine. He doesn't feel the bulkhead will work. He feels the dock owners would lose their docks when a big nor'easter occurs every few years.

Discussion regarding FEMA was held

**Bill Carey – 6 Euclid Drive** – the homes should be lifted, but doesn't feel the city will help you. He's fought with the city for two years with his house.

**Scott Sykes – 5 Berkley Ave.** – he has a ½ lot on Tremont Ave. behind his house. He has been in that neighborhood for all his life. He's seen many floods and has water in his garage at least 5 times and water in the front many times. 90% of the time it comes from Jenkins pond. If the water gets trapped behind the bulkhead it won't be able to go anywhere so he is not in favor of it.

**Chris** – read a letter from Matt Morgan – 66 Natalie Terrace who is not in favor of the bulkhead and other emails that he had received. There was also a petition with names of residents who are in favor of the bulkhead.

**Linda Phillips – 31 Berkeley Ave.** – is opposed to the bulkhead  
Motion to close public – Councilman Vizthum – second – Councilman Phillips  
All were in favor.

## **REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

All matters listed under Consent Agenda, are considered to be routine by this City Council and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

- 106** Authorizing a refund of an overpayment of taxes on the property located at 331 W. Church Street.
- 107** Authorizing a refund of an overpayment of taxes on the property located at 1103 Plymouth Landing Rd.
- 108** Authorizing refunds of overpayments of taxes on several properties due to properties being sold and duplicate payments were made.
- 109** Approving the insertion of a Special Item of Revenue into the 2016 municipal budget to allow for the receipt of \$22,329.36 from the State of New Jersey Clean Communities.
- 110** Authorizing the submission of an application for grant funding and the execution of a grant contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation under the fiscal year 2016 Safe Routes to School Program.
- 111** Authorizing the sale of personal property not needed for public use under N.J.S.A. 40A:11-36.
- 112** Granting a 50-50 Raffle License to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church.
- 113** Authorizing the City of Absecon to award the contract for the 2016 Road Improvement Program.
- 114** Authorizing Remington, Vernick & Walberg, City Engineers, to administer the construction and inspection of improvements for the 2016 Road Program.

Motion to move consent agenda – Councilwoman Horton – second – Councilman Ring  
ROLL CALL: Cain, yes; Sheeran, yes; Horton, yes; Phillips, yes; Ring, yes; Vizthum, yes; Seher, yes

- 115** Withdrawing the submission of an application for grant funding under Round 2 of the Flood Hazard Risk Reduction and Resiliency Grant Program.

Motion to approve – Councilman Sheeran – second – Councilman Phillips  
Councilman Sheeran – doesn't feel we need to vote it down tonight. We don't know if we will be getting the grant and there is a lot more work to do before we find out even if we could do it.

Councilwoman Cain – agrees with Pat.

Councilman Vizthum - in favor of not withdrawing it

Councilman Phillips – we have plenty of time to make a decision about it when we find out if we receive the grant.

Councilman Ring – there is no harm yet in this. We might all be getting upset for no reason. We don't even know if we are getting the grant.

Councilwoman Horton – has empathy for both sides and everyone has valid points. She feels horrible for the homeowners who get flooded.

Council President Seher – he will be voting no tonight, but if he was voting tonight on moving with the project if we got the grant, he'd vote no too. We need to get more data to see how much it will really cost us to do this. Soft costs can be expensive to find out about this.

ROLL CALL: Cain, no; Sheeran, no; Horton, no; Phillips, no; Ring, no; Vizthum, no; Seher, no

#### **APPROVAL OF BILL LIST - \$1,368,894.90**

Motion to approve – Councilman Sheeran - second – Councilwoman Cain

ROLL CALL: Cain, yes; Sheeran, yes; Horton, yes, abstain on A-0005; Phillips, yes; Ring, yes, abstain 9230; Vizthum, yes; Seher, yes

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Regular Meeting Minutes – 6/2/16

Motion to approve – Councilman Sheeran – second – Councilwoman Horton

ROLL CALL: Cain, yes; Sheeran, yes; Horton, yes; Phillips, yes; Ring, abstain; Vizthum, abstain; Seher, yes

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn – Councilman Phillips – second – Councilman Sheeran

All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Carie A. Crone, City Clerk

Approved: 7/7/16