



**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 3, 2021**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Bennett at 5:30 p.m.

**FLAG SALUTE**

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Burroughs, Cain, Cavileer, Howell, Larotonda, Light, Bennett

**ABSENT:**

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mayor Horton; Attorney, Fred Scerni; Jessica Thompson; Carie Crone & Ed Dennis

**STATEMENT OF THE SUNSHINE LAW**

**NOTIFICATION THAT THIS MEETING IS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED**

**PRESENTATION**

**Gary Conover, ACUA Solid Waste Director and Rebecca Terrigan, County Clean Communities Coordinator**

They did slide show on why the city should switch to 96-gallon recycling carts. Photos were shown with the different options and colors. Most residents now have a blue 20-gallon can and once it's full, they put the rest of the items in the trash. They named other towns that went with the carts and their recycling numbers went up. The pros are: they store more; are easier to move around; they come with branding with the city name and a serial number and mostly, the recycling won't blow around. They come with a 10-year warranty and ACUA will cover any repairs. Every home would get one and it would stay with the home. If someone bought another type of can, they would be allowed to keep those. ACUA will front the money and will put them together and deliver them and spread the cost out over 7 years. There are some grant funds available come in a year later.

**Betty** – said we have a lot of elderly residents and they don't have a lot of recycling and this type might be too hard for them to pull out.

**Gary** – said they could still be able to use the 20-gallon can

**Keith** – likes the idea of having a can with a lid. It seems the wind blows every recycling day. The money part doesn't seem terrible, but if we estimate a 10% increase, what would the numbers be for what we get back?

**Jessica** – the recycling grant was around \$12,000

**Caleb** – did the other towns who went with these cans also do the 7-year payments?

**Gary** – Brigantine and Ventnor did and some did five years.

**Steve** – travels a lot and he commended Gary for the ACUA doing a great job

## **2021 RESOLUTIONS**

- 96** Authorizing Remington & Vernick, City Engineers, to administer the Construction and Inspection of improvements for the 2021 Road Program.

**Eddie** – we usually do this when we award the road program, but it wasn't. It is for us to be able to do the inspections for the road program.

- 97** Accepting a Volunteer Firefighter into the Absecon City Fire Department, namely Raymond Thomas Hunter, IV

## **PUBLIC PORTION (Agenda Items Only)**

Motion to open to the public – Councilwoman Howell – second – Councilwoman Cain  
All were in favor.

**Steven Hill – 601 N. Shore Road** – has lived there for 7 years and plans on staying here. He loves the trash cans and he loves the burgundy color. He first complained about a house on Lisbon Avenue and then on 623 Sooy Lane that might be an illegal air bnb, that he has had to tolerate. If you ask the police, there have been calls made to there. He asked for the police to sit at the light at Rt. 9 and Lisbon to catch the people making right turns on red that are not allowed. He has been threatened by people and he has installed cameras on his property.

Motion to close public portion – Councilwoman Howell – second – Councilman Burroughs  
All were in favor.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Keith** – read the resolutions again

Motion to move consent agenda – Councilwoman Howell – second – Councilman Cavileer

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Larotonda, yes; Light, yes; Bennett, yes

## **APPROVAL OF BILL LIST - \$345,417.83**

Motion to approve – Councilman Burroughs – second – Councilman Cavileer

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; Larotonda, yes; Light, yes; Bennett, yes

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Regular Meeting Minutes – 5/20/2021

Closed Session as to form and content only – 5/6/21 (Distributed last meeting)

Motion to approve – Councilman Cavileer - second – Councilman Burroughs

ROLL CALL: Burroughs, yes; Cain, yes; Cavileer, yes; Howell, yes; yes; Larotonda, yes; Light, yes; Bennett, yes

## **REPORTS**

**Jessica** – she read the following statement regarding the School Board tax increase for 2021  
On May 21st, the city received the school budget tax levy certification, which had been signed by the School Business Administrator on April 27th. After reviewing this document and comparing it to the same certification from last year, I determined that the school tax levy is increasing \$68,264. This equates to a school tax increase of .95 cents, just shy of 1 cent. After hearing publicly several times that the school was not increasing taxes this year, I was surprised and alarmed that this was not correctly presented to the public. I reached out to the School Business Administrator with my concern and was provided information, but with no response as to the total school tax levy increase. Are we to understand that the school board feels one cent on the tax levy is a slight increase and not worthy of communicating with the public? The school will receive almost a million dollars more in state aid alone than last year.

The City's governing body worked diligently with no additional state aid and a severe loss of revenue due to the pandemic to approve a budget that had an increase of 1.5 cents. We regretted having to increase taxes this year but were completely straight forward with the public. Several members of the public addressed this council and the concerns over any tax increase. All the while, the public believed that the school was not increasing their budget.

My email of Friday, May 21st to the School Business Administrator was then replied to by a member of the school board, John Rynkiewicz, who insulted me and questioned my financial proficiency. This behavior is inappropriate from an elected board member to a city official. If a school board member does not understand the impact of the school budget on the taxpayers of this community, questions should be made to the School Superintendent and School Business Administrator rather than posing offensive remarks to the person who has brought this issue to light.

For the record, over the last nine-year period, the local tax levy has still been reduced by almost one cent and the school levy has increased over 23 cents.

**Eddie** – he sent the 2021 road program into the NJDOT because we have a state aid grant associated with that project and they have concurred with our award, which gives us the green light to proceed with construction and that will be scheduled soon. There is a lot of activity at the boat ramp with the State dredging project and the contractor has mobilized and there are questions as to what to expect. The city dredging has not begun yet; it is separate from the States. We don't have readily information for that project; however, they have let us know what they are doing and when they will be impacting certain areas and asking for certain accommodations and we are trying to help facilitate that work, which will benefit everyone who uses that creek. They don't anticipate closing off the channel entirely during the project. You will see the equipment out there at all times, but you can proceed around it with caution. Dredging is usually a 24/7 operation, so it will be continuous. There is a limited window of time on when this work can take place and it has to stop by the end of the year. They want to get as much done as they can. They do plan on working 6 days a week; 24/7, but it is subject to change. There will be a fuel barge that will be located off to the side of the floating docks that they will be using and they were told that we are okay with that, but if it became problematic, we would need to revisit it. He did ask the State to prepare a general overall press release stating the specifics of the project, so we can post something on the website. The State will be doing their own survey and they might decide to do the dredging up to Church Street when they get the results. It could save us thousands of dollars. He then gave an update on what is happening with the Cannabis report. They have been meeting a few times over the past month. He handed out a two-page summary that he went over, which includes the State's regulations and how it impacts us here and all towns in the State. He then explained it to everyone. If we move forward on this, he said the deadline is 8/21. If nothing is decided, they get approved by default and permitted in certain zones. To meet that deadline two Ordinances would need to be created and introduced by the June 17, 2021. Because it amends the land use portion, the Planning Board reviews it and sees if it's consistent with the Master Plan and that deadline is July 28<sup>th</sup>. Adoption would then happen on 8/12. He then explained the zoning map

**Fred** – plans on getting a draft ordinance to Jessica by Monday. The committee should review it and report to council as well. There can be special meetings if needed and decide as we go along. Whatever we decide, it will be a tight schedule.

**Keith** – told everyone to review the ordinance as soon as they receive it

**Eddie** – they have not rushed this through. The ad hoc committee has had many discussions and even when it gets introduced on 6/17, we will still be working on it for many weeks until the adoption on 8/12. He then described the map of the different uses and the zone they would be permitted. They wanted to have Rt. 30 and also the downtown area benefit from this. The industrial use would be allowed in our already designated Industrial zone. None of this is set in stone; it's what the ad hoc committee came up with. Consumption is a whole different matter.

**Nick** – asked Fred if we are able to limit the amount of licenses

**Fred** – yes, when he prepares the ordinance, it will be left blank for now. The licenses come from the State, so we don't know the number that they will permit or any geographic controls over those. You would expect that at a state level, the decision-making process that it would be done so that there would be in all counties, so everyone would have a fair chance. It hasn't been decided yet.

**Mayor** – thanked everyone who was involved on the Memorial Day Parade. It went smoothly and it was a nice event. She will be attending the Honors Luncheon at the school next Friday.

### **PUBLIC PORTION**

Motion to open to the public – Councilman Light – second – Councilman Burroughs. All were in favor. No public comment.

Motion to close public – Councilman Light – second – Councilman Larotonda. All were in favor.

### **GOOD AND WELFARE**

**Sandy** – the Police Department and Community Affairs are going to have "Christmas in July" Movie at Heritage Park on July 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. The movie is Elf and admission is free, but they are asking to please donate a brand-new unwrapped toy to help the Absecon Police Department with their 2021 Christmas toy drive. Food will be available for purchase at the concession stand and all the proceeds will be used to help purchase toys for children in our town, who are in need. We are also receiving funds from the sale of the "Thank You Blue" signs for the toy drive.

**Steve** – the entrance signs to town were painted by Mr. Boney's granddaughter; he brought up the channel markers out in the water and the fishing boat that usually knocks them out by accident; there is graffiti at the railroad track, but we should contact NJTA and it doesn't look good. Asked if there could be additional parking during the longer weekends at the ramp area.

**Chief Laughlin** – we wanted to add more trailer parking, but the state wouldn't let us do it. If the graffiti goes on much longer, we talked about taking care of it ourselves.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn – Councilman Light – second – Councilman Burroughs. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Carrie A. Crone, City Clerk

Approved: 6-17-21