



CITY OF ABSECON
Municipal Complex
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CITY COUNCIL
REORGANIZATION MEETING
JANUARY 2ND, 2025 6:30 PM
MINUTES

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY THE MUNICIPAL CLERK

FLAG SALUTE

INVOCATION - Father Cosme - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church

MOMENT OF SILENCE – Monsignor Coyne, founding Pastor of Elizabeth Ann Seton

STATEMENT OF THE SUNSHINE LAW & NOTIFICATION THAT THIS MEETING IS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE

Thomas Marrone, Mayor: Oath administered by Councilwoman Christine Parker. Standing with Tommy is his Aunt Jane, wife, Colleen, and children, Chris, Jackson, and Maddie.

Linda Evans, Councilperson, Ward 2: Oath administered by Hamilton Township Mayor Art Schenker. Standing with Linda is her husband, Robert, and sons, Robert and Eric.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Councilmembers Alex Clark, Richard DeRose, Linda Evans, Steve Light, and Christine Parker

ABSENT: Councilman Nick LaRotonda

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Thomas Marrone, City Engineer Ed Dennis, City Solicitor Bill Blaney Esq., City Solicitor John Amenhauser Esq., City Clerk Carie Crone, Deputy City Clerk Mary Fetske, and Police Chief J.R. Laughlin

REORGANIZATION MEETING AGENDA

ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Councilman Clark – Nominated Councilman Richard DeRose, Seconded: Councilwoman Parker

C. Crone: Hearing no other nomination, declared nominations closed.

Roll Call: Clark – Yes; Evans - Yes; LaRotonda – Absent; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; DeRose - Yes

Oath administered by Mayor Thomas Marrone. Standing with Rich is his wife, Bethanie.

ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM

Councilman Light – Nominated Councilman Alex Clark for Council President Pro-Tem. Seconded: Councilwoman Parker

Council President DeRose: Hearing no other nomination, declared nominations closed.

Roll Call: Clark – Yes; Evans - Yes; LaRotonda – Absent; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; DeRose - Yes

Oath administered by Councilwoman Christine Parker. Standing with Alex is his wife, Julie, and children, Alexander, Trevor, and Mia.

NOMINATION TO FILL THE VACANCY OF COUNCILMAN TOMMY MARRONE

01 Filling the vacant Councilperson, Ward 1 position.

Council President DeRose: Explained that in this case of a Council seat vacancy, the Absecon Municipal Republican Organization must put forward three names for potential candidates to fill the vacancy. The three names are presented by the Municipal Chair to Council. Council is then responsible for selecting the final candidate. Read a letter from Chairman Chris Seher in which he names Michael Sykes, Pat Sheeran, and Greg Seyer as the three candidates proposed.

Councilman Light – Nominated Michael Sykes for Councilperson, Ward 1. Seconded: Councilwoman Parker

Council President DeRose: Hearing no other nomination, declared nominations closed.

Roll Call: Clark – Yes; Evans - Yes; LaRotonda – Absent; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; DeRose – Yes

Motioned to move Resolution #01-2025: Councilwoman Parker; Seconded: Councilman Light

Roll Call: Clark – Yes; Evans - Yes; LaRotonda – Absent; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; DeRose - Yes

Michael Sykes, Councilperson, Ward 1: Oath administered by Mayor Thomas Marrone. Standing with Mike is his wife, Shannon, and children, Tyler and Addison.

MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS BY RESOLUTION – 2025

02 Re-Appointing an Emergency Management Coordinator, namely James Eberwine.

COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS – FOR THE YEAR 2025

CONSENT AGENDA: All matters listed under item, Consent Agenda, are considered to be routine by the 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 discussed separately.

- 03 Authorizing the annual schedule of Regular Meetings of Absecon City Council for the calendar year 2025.
- 04 Awarding a contract for professional services of a City Attorney.
John Amenhauser, Esq. of the DeWeese Law Firm, P.C.
- 05 Awarding a contract for professional services for a Labor Attorney.
Blaney, Donohue & Weinberg, PC
- 06 Awarding a non-competitive contract for professional services of a Public Defender.
Frank Lentz, Esq.
- 07 Awarding a non-competitive contract for professional services for a Municipal Prosecutor.
Barker, Gelfand, James & Sarvas, P.C.
- 08 Awarding a non-competitive contract for professional services of a City Planner.
Polistina & Associates, LLC
- 09 Awarding a non-competitive contract for professional services of a Bond Counsel.
Archer & Greiner, P.C.
- 10 Awarding a contract for professional services for a City Auditor.
HFA-Holman Frenia Allison, P.C.
- 11 Authorizing the Tax Assessor as the Agent in Adjustment appeals to reduce assessments.
- 12 Designating the Interest and Penalty rate on unpaid taxes.
- 13 Designating the official newspapers.
- 14 Adopting the Cash Management Plan of the City of Absecon.
- 15 Establishing the 2025 Temporary Budget for Current Fund and Sewer Utility Fund.
- 16 Appointing a Risk Management Consultant for the Atlantic County Joint Insurance Fund.
Hardenbergh Insurance Group

- 17 Appointing a Fund Commissioner for the Atlantic County Municipal Joint Insurance Fund.
Kayla Lovallo
- 18 Appointing an Alternate Fund Commissioner for the Atlantic County Municipal Joint Insurance Finance.
Joy Lewkowski
- 19 Appointing a Councilperson to the Planning Board.
Christine Parker, 1 year
- 20 Re-Appointing and appointing Members to the Zoning Board.
Michael Reilly-Regular Member, Arianne Sellers-Alt. 1,
Abby Curran-Alt. II
- 21 Appointing a Mercantile License Clerk.
Carie A. Crone, RMC
- 22 Appointing a Lien Clerk for the City of Absecon.
Jessica A. Snyder, CTC
- 23 Authorizing the Tax Collector to participate in an Electronic Tax Sale.
- 24 Authorizing a fee for the creation, printing and mailing of Tax Sale Notices for Electronic Tax Sale.
- 25 Appointing a Full Time Patrol Officer, namely Stanley Marczyk
- 26 Appointing a Full Time Patrol Officer, namely Nicholas Brown
- 27 Appointing a Full Time Patrol Officer, namely Barry Walker
- 28 Appointing a Full Time Patrol Officer namely Joseph Reitzler
- 29 Appointing a Full Time Patrol Officer namely Brayden Melendez
- 30 Appointing a Full Time Patrol Officer namely Scott McConnell.
- 31 Approving a Shared Services Agreement between the City of Absecon and the Township of Galloway for Chief Financial Officer and Purchasing Agent.
- 32 Ensuring Time Capsule to be opened in the year 2052.

Motioned to move Consent Agenda: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Clark
Roll Call: Clark – Yes; Evans - Yes; LaRotonda – Absent; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; Sykes – Abstain; DeRose - Yes

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Mayor Thomas Marrone: Expressed excitement for the City's new path forward. Since taking office two years prior, has aimed to ensure that the Absecon his children experience is the same Absecon that he himself experienced growing up. As a Councilman, worked with Councilmembers to

accomplish this particular goal in addition to others, despite the presence of roadblocks. Announced that “good enough” is no longer acceptable. Vowed to achieve overall betterment. Stated that a brighter future for Absecon residents and businesses is founded on public safety. Explained that in 2024, he along with fellow Councilmembers worked diligently to secure a fair and appropriate contract for the Police Department. The City is prioritizing the expansion of its Police force to bolster community safety. Thanked Chief Laughlin and his team for their hard work and dedication. Affirmed that Public Safety will continue to be priority in 2025. In 2024 the completed Crestview Avenue Project connected two Absecon parks ensuring children safe access to play. The City’s Raised Crosswalk Project, planned for 2025, will provide additional safety for pedestrians. Park/recreational upgrades achieved in 2024 include a new playground set at Heritage Park, utility installation at the Heritage Park Concession, new safety netting at the baseball field, and the resurfacing of tennis courts with the addition of two pickleball courts. Has strived to make changes and show the county and the state that Absecon is open for business. In 2024 White Horse Liquors made a historic investment in Absecon with the construction of their new store. Small businesses are repopulating Absecon’s New Jersey Ave. Downtown, will soon be home to the city’s first brewery, and a new Super Wawa to be constructed in 2025. Recognized the uptick in homelessness and acknowledges the seriousness of the issue as well as the demand for out of the box thinking to find effective solutions. Announced plans for a Mayoral Task Force on Homelessness and plans to work together in order to bring social services to those in need. Contended that although Absecon has been habitually overlooked by those outside the City, he is determined to make the voices of Absecon residents heard loudly by both County and State Officials. Will leave no stone unturned on his endeavor to protect Absecon. Thanked those who continue to support him. Concluded by cautioning all against dwelling in the past, and instead, recognized the present as a critical period in which we all must make an active effort in order to move forward to a brighter future. May God bless Absecon and the USA.

COMMENTS

Councilwoman Parker – Wished everyone a Happy New Year. Congratulated Tommy, Nick, and Linda.

Read a letter on behalf of Councilman Nick LaRotonda: Explained that he was unable to attend the meeting today because he is currently in DC serving on President Trump’s Inaugural Committee. Expressed gratitude for the residents of Absecon for placing their trust in him for re-election. Also thanked his wife, Julia, and son, Donato, for their support. Congratulated Mayor Marrone and Councilwoman Evans. Looks forward to working with them. Wished everyone a safe and healthy new year ahead. Announced that he was sworn in yesterday by County Clerk, Joe Giraldo.

Expressed her excitement for the upcoming year. Has learned a lot from her team, City professionals, and residents since joining Council. Will be the Chair of Public Safety this year. As the daughter of a professional firefighter, understands how lucky the City is to have their PD, Ambulance, and Fire Dept. Expressed excitement about the 6 new officers who will serve on the City’s PD. Hopes that by next year they will be discussing a K-9 Unit, Fire House improvements, and continuously growing Police and Fire Depts. With the City’s Mayor, Police Chief, and Fire Chief, anticipates great things in the future.

Councilman Sykes: Announced as the Chair of Parks and Playgrounds. Thanked Council for their vote for the confident. Has been a lifelong resident of Absecon. Looks forward to better serving the community and the residents.

Councilman Light: Announced as the Chair of Public Works. Stated that his goal this year is to compliment the City’s Public Works. Praised Public Work’s phenomenal job. Plans to use his

construction background in order to compliment their work, so that incremental improvements may be made. Congratulated the new Mayor and all the new Councilmembers.

Councilman Clark: Announced as the Chair of Finance. Congratulated Tommy, Linda, and Mike. Looks forward to his second year as the Chairman of Finance. Anticipates a busy three months ahead. This year Council has decided to merge Finance and Economic Development. He, Tommy, and other Councilmembers will be in contact with business owners throughout Absecon.

Councilwoman Evans: Announced as Chair of Community Affairs. Thanked everyone for their trust and support. Looking forward to beginning this new journey and working alongside her fellow Councilmembers. Thanked fellow running mates, Tommy Marrone and Nick LaRotonda. Thanked her family for believing in her and supporting her. Looks forward to being the voice of the people. Strives to keep the community safe for future generations.

Council President DeRose: Thanked Councilman Nick LaRotonda for his dedicated service as Council President these past several years. Looks forward to continuing the path paved. Welcomed Councilmembers Evans and Sykes. Asked they bring passion, willingness to debate, and a moral compass to guide them. Reminded them that they work for the residents of Absecon and that their actions have consequential impact. Thanked Councilmembers Light, Parker, and Clark for entrusting him with the responsibility of Council President. Stated that he seeks to strengthen their already strong foundation. Congratulated Mayor Marrone on his new position. Looks forward to assisting him in implementing his new ideas and creating the brighter future he speaks of. On behalf of all of Council, thanks friends and family for their support. Thanked City employees for their dedication and hard work. Reminded the public of Council's commitment to their residents. Vowed that no voice will go unheard. Declared 2025 to be a year of changes for the better.

Councilwoman Parker: Thanked Assemblyman Guardian, Surrogate Curcio, Commissioners Risley, Kern, and Ruffu, and Father Cosme, for their attendance here tonight.

PUBLIC PORTION

Motioned to open to the public: Councilwoman Parker; Seconded: Councilman Light
All in Favor, None Opposed.

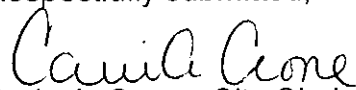
No Discussion.

Motioned to close to the public: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker
All in Favor, None Opposed.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned to adjourn: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker
All in Favor, None Opposed.

Respectfully submitted,


Carie A. Crone, City Clerk

Approved: 1-16-25