



CITY OF ABSECON
Municipal Complex
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Absecon, New Jersey 08201

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CITY COUNCIL
REORGANIZATION MEETING
JANUARY 4TH, 2024 6:30 PM
MINUTES

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY THE MUNICIPAL CLERK

FLAG SALUTE

INVOCATION - Father Cosme - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church

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

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE

Alex Clark, Councilperson, Ward 1: Oath administered by Senator Vincent Polistina. Standing with Alex is his wife, Julie, and children, Alexander, Trevor, and Mia.

Christine Parker, Councilperson, Ward 2: Oath administered by Senator Vincent Polistina. Standing with Christine is her son, Joseph.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Councilmembers Sandy Cain, Alex Clark, Richard DeRose, Nick LaRotonda, Steve Light, Tommy Marrone, and Christine Parker

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Kim Horton, City Administrator/CFO Jessica Thompson, City Engineer Ed Dennis, City Solicitor Bill Blaney Esq., City Clerk Carie Crone, Deputy City Clerk Mary Fetske, and Police Chief J.R. Laughlin

REORGANIZATION MEETING AGENDA

ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Councilman Marrone – Nominated Councilman Nick LaRotonda, Seconded: Councilman Light

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

Roll Call: Cain - Yes; Clark – Yes; DeRose - Yes; Light – Yes; Marrone - Yes; Parker – Yes; LaRotonda - Yes

Oath administered by Senator Vince Polistina. Standing with Nick is his wife Julia and son, Donato.

ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM

Councilman Marrone – Nominated Councilman Richard DeRose for Council President Pro
Seconded: Councilwoman Cain

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

Roll Call: Cain - Yes; Clark – Yes; DeRose - Yes; Light – Yes; Marrone - Yes; Parker – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes

Oath administered by Senator Vince Polistina. Standing with Richard is his wife Bethanie.

MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS BY RESOLUTION – 2024

- 01** Appointing a Municipal Judge, namely Carl Tripician, Esq.

Oath administered by Mayor Kimberly Horton. Standing with Carl is his wife, Karen, and children, Kai, Kallan, and Kannon.

COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS – FOR THE YEAR 2024

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.

- 01** Authorizing the annual schedule of Regular Meetings of Absecon City Council for the calendar year 2023.
- 02** Authorizing the annual schedule of Regular Meetings of Absecon City Council for the calendar year 2024.
- 03** Confirming meetings of City Committees, Commissions and Boards for the year 2024.
- 04** Awarding a contract for professional services of a City Attorney.
Blaney, Donohue & Weinberg, PC
- 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.
James Grimley, Esq.
- 08 Awarding a non-competitive contract for professional services of a City Planner.
Edward Dennis, Remington & Vernick, Engineers
- 09 Awarding a contract for professional services for a City Engineer.
Edward Dennis, Remington & Vernick, Engineers.
- 10 Awarding a non-competitive contract for professional services of a Bond Counsel.
Anthony Solimine, Esq. of Wilentz
- 11 Awarding a contract for professional services for a City Auditor.
HFA-Holman Frenia Allison, P.C. - ***MOVED OUT OF CONSENT AGENDA***
- 12 Authorizing the Tax Assessor as the Agent in Adjustment appeals to reduce assessments.
- 13 Designating the Interest and Penalty rate on unpaid taxes.
- 14 Designating the official newspapers.
- 15 Adopting the Cash Management Plan of the City of Absecon.
- 16 Establishing the 2024 Temporary Budget for Current Fund and Sewer Utility Fund.
- 17 Appointing a Risk Management Consultant for the Atlantic County Joint Insurance Fund.
Robert Devanna, Glenn Insurance
- 18 Appointing a Fund Commissioner for the Atlantic County Municipal Joint Insurance Fund.
Kayla Lovallo
- 19 Appointing an Alternate Fund Commissioner for the Atlantic County Municipal Joint Insurance Finance.
Jessica Thompson
- 20 Appointing a Councilperson to the Planning Board.
Christine Parker, 1 year
- 21 Re-Appointing Members to the Zoning Board.
Michael Reilly, Atl. I
- 22 Appointing a Mercantile License Clerk.
Carie A. Crone, RMC
- 23 Appointing a Lien Clerk for the City of Absecon.
Jessica A. Snyder, CTC

- 24 Appointing a Registrar of Vital Statistics.
Carie A. Crone, 3 years.
- 25 Appointing an Alternate Deputy Registrar of Vital Statistics.
Tina Lawler, 3 years.
- 26 Authorizing the Tax Collector to participate in an Electronic Tax Sale.
- 27 Authorizing a fee for the creation, printing and mailing of Tax Sale Notices for Electronic Tax Sale.
- 28 Ensuring Time Capsule to be opened in the year 2052.

Motioned to move Consent Agenda: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman DeRose
Roll Call: Cain - Yes; Clark - Yes; DeRose - Yes; Light - Yes; Marrone - Yes; Parker - Yes;
LaRotonda - Yes

2023 RESOLUTIONS OUT OF CONSENT

- 11 Authorizing the annual schedule of Regular Meetings of Absecon City Council for the calendar year 2023.

Councilwoman Cain: Reminded Council that she was the Finance Chair in 2023, and that she was included in the City's decision-making process for its municipal Professionals. Expressed her opinion that their former Auditors did a great job and were always available. Acknowledged that some Councilmembers want to change professionals, but does not feel as though they need to change their Auditor.

Council President LaRotonda: Reminded Councilwoman Cain that they found themselves in the same predicament a year prior, there being a significant interest amongst Council in seeking different professional services for the City's audit. It is common practice, in both private and public sectors, to change auditors every 3-7 years. The RFP will save the taxpayers a lot of money and it has been decided that it is the best interest for the community to move forward with a different auditor this year.

Councilman DeRose: Emphasized the importance of open conversation among Council. Indicated that they agreed to keep the former auditor last year, with the understanding that their policy was going to change thereafter. Council aims to rotate professionals on a schedule to ensure proper protocol.

Councilwoman Cain: Pointed out that the Auditor, Bowman, was the only professional who applied for the service last year. Mentioned that Lacey Township has used the same auditor for 10 years.

Council President LaRotonda: Confirmed as true, but clarified that he did not agree with that decision.

Councilwoman Cain: Lamented how Absecon had Bowman's top auditor working with the City. Hopes that the new auditors work just as well with Absecon as the previous ones did.

Councilman Marrone: Expressed some concerns with Bowman Auditing service, as they have dropped some municipalities mid-year.

Councilwoman Cain: Gave justification that the company's inability to absorb the work they had previously agreed to do, was due to the death of one of their employees.

Motioned to move Resolution 11-2024: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Marrone
Roll Call: Cain - No; Clark – Yes; DeRose - Yes; Light – Yes; Marrone - Yes; Parker – Yes;
LaRotonda – Yes

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Mayor, Kimberly Horton: Expressed appreciation for everyone who contributes to making Absecon a great community. Thanked former Councilmembers Betty Howell and Butch Burroughs for their years of service and wished Councilmembers Alex Clark and Christine Parker lot so luck in the upcoming year. Emphasized the importance of local government for a municipality's vitality and day-to-day functionality. Pointed to the importance of working together in order to accomplish the tasks on the City's agenda. Called the City one of action. Listed areas of focus that the City aims to improve on in order to guarantee betterment for local residents, businesses, and employees. Emphasized the need to look forward and toward progress, with optimism. Encouraged enthusiastic commitment to improvement. Wished everyone a happy and preposterous year.

COMMENTS

Councilwoman Parker – Thanked Councilman Clark for giving her the opportunity to run for election with him and for giving her proper support and encouragement. Also thanked Councilmembers Light, Marrone, DeRose, Council President LaRotonda, and the public for their support. Thanked Senator Polistina for swearing them into office. And thanked her family, and specifically her sons, for being patient with her.

Councilwoman Cain – Entering her 12th year on Council. Welcomed the City's new Councilmembers and expressed her excitement to work with them. Declared that she will always stand up for what she believes is best for the whole City. Wished the public a happy new year.

Councilman DeRose – Echoed Councilwoman Cain's sentiment. Is thoroughly looking forward to 2024 and all that the City will accomplish. Expects that there will be many changes and improvements within the next 6-8 months. Welcomed Councilmembers Parker and Clark. Thanked Councilmember Parker's and Clark's family and also offered them his congratulations.

Councilman Marrone – Shared that he had a lot to learn upon joining Council, and that although Councilmembers Parker and Clark will have much to learn, they are all there to help them. Affirmed that 2023 was a great year for Absecon's Council in regard to transparency, accountability, etc. The City really came together in order to find solutions for unexpected issues. Thanked his fellow Councilmembers, including Betty Howell and Butch Burroughs, for their work last year. Is looking forward to what the City will accomplish in 2024.

Councilman Clark: Thanked his wife and kids for all their help and confidence during his campaign. Thanked Councilwoman Parker for running for election with him, and for the support from Councilmembers Light, Marrone, DeRose, and Council President LaRotonda. Also thanked Linda, Vince Polistina, his ASAC buddies, Chuck, Pete, Jim, Garry, Steve Hackett and Mike Reynolds. Looks forward to working with everyone in 2024, including Councilwoman Cain and Mayor Horton. Thanked the public for their support and votes.

Councilman Light: Announced to the public that they are the key to Absecon's success. Welcomed the new Councilmembers. Wished everyone a happy new year.

Councilman DeRose: Thanked the City's employees for their hard work.

Councilman LaRotonda – Praised the showing at that night's meeting. Welcomed the new Councilmembers. Looking forward to all that they will accomplish in the upcoming year. Thanked Council for their support in re-electing him Council President. Thanked his wife's support for both him and his son. Informed the public that they will have a celebration at Villa Rifici and all are welcome. Reminded the public that on Thursday, January 11th, there will be a Town Hall Meeting at 6:30PM with the ACUA to discuss the landfill odor issue. Everyone is encouraged to come to express their concerns.

PUBLIC PORTION

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

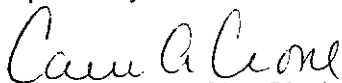
No Discussion.

Motioned to close to the public: Councilman DeRose; Seconded: Councilman Light
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: 1-18-24