



CITY OF ABSECON
Municipal Complex
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Absecon, New Jersey 08201

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CITY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

SEPTEMBER 7TH, 2023 6:30 PM

MINUTES

FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Councilmembers Butch Burroughs, Sandy Cain, Steve Light, Tommy Marrone, and Council President Nick LaRotonda

ABSENT: Councilmembers Richard DeRose and Betty Howell

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Kim Horton, City Administrator/CFO Jessica Thompson, City Solicitor Bill Blaney Esq., City Engineer Ed Dennis, City Clerk Carie Crone, Police Chief JR Laughlin

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

PRESENTATION – Atlantic County Prosecutor William E. Reynolds

Prosecutor Reynolds: Introduced himself and provided an update to the public regarding Atlantic County crimes and programs. Introduced Chief of County Detectives, Patrick Snyder. Complimented Absecon Police Chief JR Laughlin, declaring that there is no better Police Chief in Atlantic County. Praised Chief Laughlin's stellar communication and outreach, especially with the community's kids and elders.

PRESENTATION – Atlantic County Joint Insurance Fund (JIF)

Pooling Administrator Kamini Patel: Explained reasons for insurance rate increases, citing that 58% of their budget goes towards losses. Also mentioned cyber security.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

2023 RESOLUTIONS

- 103** Authorizing to cancel taxes for the final 2023 and preliminary 2024 tax year on the property located at 508 New Jersey Ave. (Block 200, Lot 18).

- 104 Authorizing the issuance of a duplicate Tax Sale Certificate pursuant to N.J. S.A. 54:5-52.1 for the property located at Block 15, Lot 2.
- 105 Authorizing the issuance of a duplicate Tax Sale Certificate pursuant to N.J. S.A. 54:5-52.1 for the property located at Block 86, Lot 5.
- 106 Authorizing the issuance of a duplicate Tax Sale Certificate pursuant to N.J. S.A. 54:5-52.1 for the property located at Block 291, Lot 2.
- 107 Authorizing a refund of an overpayment of taxes for the 3rd quarter of 2023 on the property known as 200 Coolidge Ave.
- 108 Authorizing a refund of an overpayment of taxes for the 3rd quarter of 2023 on the listed properties.
- 109 Authorizing the release of escrow fund posted by Todd & Susan Jacobs – 5 N. Shore Road, Block 170, Lot 22 – d/b/a The Hi Point.
- 110 Approving the insertion of a Special Item of Revenue into the 2023 Municipal Budget to allow for the receipt of \$5,250.00 from the State of New Jersey Highway Traffic Safety.
- 111 Approving the insertion of a Special Item of Revenue into the 2023 Municipal Budget to allow for the receipt of \$7,500.00 from the State of New Jersey Lead Grant Assistance Program.
- 112 Authorizing the City of Absecon to award the contract for the 2023 Road Program.
- 113 Authorizing Remington & Vernick, City Engineers, to administer the engineering services for the 2023 Road Program.
- 114 Authorizing the sale of Personal Property not needed for Public Use Under N.J.S.A. 40A: 11-36.
- 115 Authorizing the appointment of a UCC Fire Inspector, namely Patrick Baker.
- 116 Authorizing Flea Market events in the City of Absecon for the listed organizations.
- 117 Authorizing an Interlocal Services Agreement with the Atlantic County Improvement Authority for the Administration of the County-Wide Program for abandoned properties.
- 118 Supporting the Atlantic County Mayors Association's Resolution opposing the suggestion to utilize the Atlantic City International Airport as a shelter space for migrants.

Council President LaRotonda: Declared bipartisan support for the sentiments of Resolution #118. This is a matter which has united everyone across the county in fervent opposition.

Mayor Horton: As President of the Mayor's Association, asserted, on behalf of her members, that resources throughout the county are already drained.

Councilman Marrone: Expressed enthusiasm for local flea markets. Happy that Council has chosen to support this initiative. Thanked Oddball Vintage for their dedication in bringing the idea to fruition.

PUBLIC PORTION – (Agenda items only)

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

----- -New York Avenue: Expressed concern regarding the President agreeing to home migrants at the Atlantic City International Airport and the effect it will have on Absecon and its residents. Urged Council to take proactive action.

Councilman Marrone: Agreed. Believes the situation to be unacceptable.

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

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.

Council President LaRotonda read Resolution #103-118 by title.

Motioned to move the Consent Agenda: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilwoman Cain
Roll Call: Burroughs – Yes; Cain – Yes; DeRose – Absent; Howell – Absent; Light – Yes; Marrone – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST – \$ 1,858,748.24

Motioned to accept: Councilwoman Cain; Seconded: Councilman Burroughs
Roll Call: Burroughs – Yes; Cain – Yes; DeRose – Absent; Howell – Absent; Light – Yes; Marrone – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes – 8/3/23

Closed Session as to form and content only – 6/1/23

Motioned to accept: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilwoman Howell

Roll Call: Burroughs – Yes; Cain – Yes; DeRose – Absent; Howell – Absent; Light – Yes; Marrone – Abstain (8/3), Yes (6/1/23); Yes; LaRotonda – Yes

REPORTS

Councilman Light – Parks & Playgrounds: Last met on August 15th. Discussed parks, playgrounds, and tennis courts. Thanked Public Works for their help with the fields and parks. Committee discussion also touched on pickle ball, a water bottle station, a Community Garden (Green Team), soccer fields, and the removal of flags.

Alex Perri – Green Team: Indicated their primary focus at the current moment is to establish a community garden. Shared that he has already had discussions with Lloyd Jones of Public Works, as well as the Soccer Association. The Green Team is currently considering locations to establish their Community Garden of raised beds (i.e. fields near the Public Works Facility, Senior Park on Traymore and Morton). The Green Team has applied with the ACUA to adopt New Jersey Ave, where they will have their first cleanup on October 1st at 10am.

Mayor Horton: Announced that the City will be holding their City-wide Clean-up and Shredding Event on October 7th.

A.Perri: Mentioned their restoration efforts at Heritage Park. Informed the public that from September 15th to October 14th, they will be cutting down vines and other invasive species.

Councilman Marrone – Economic Development: Provided an update regarding the beautification of New Jersey Ave. Mentioned the possibility of murals being created. Informed plans for the City to amend their Feather Flag Ordinance. Shared a positive update pertaining to progressions being made by the much-anticipated Royal Pine Brewery.

Community Affairs Committee: Creekfest will be on September 17th and on November 11-12th, there will be the Battle of the Bay event. November 11th consists of the Veterans Day BBQ Cookout, while November 12th will be the Back Bay fishing tournament (first place prize of \$10,000).

Councilwoman Cain – Finance: No report.

Councilman Burroughs – Public Works: Meeting discussions touched on the traffic at Route 9 and California Ave. E. Dennis provided an update in regard to work on Shore Rd. Addressed questions about the Faunce Landing Boat Ramp. There was previously a tree issue, but that has been rectified.

Councilman Light: Discussed tree trimming on New Jersey Ave. Shared that the ASAC donated 2 score boards to Absecon schools.

J. Thompson – City Administrator/CFO: Announced the City's new bond rating of 883.

C. Crone – City Clerk: Monthly Report – July 2023

- Municipal Court: \$9,285.18
- Tax Office: \$1,542,999.71
- Construction Office: \$7,460.00
- Municipal Clerk's Office: \$6,068.85

E. Dennis – City Engineer: Indicated that the Shore Rd. project is progressing and he will soon have a more certain time line. Mentioned the NJ DOT State Road Grant. Touched on the installation of water at the Heritage Park Concession Stand and the Crestview Sidewalk project.

Mayor Horton: Remarkd the commencement of the new school year. Stated that the Absecon Senior Center is still without a Director, but position will be soon advertised. Explained that Operation Lifeline (609-641-0013, from 7AM-10AM) is police operated program in which community service officers and volunteers maintain daily contact with elderly persons living alone to ensure they receive medical/social aid. Thanked the public for their support of Resolution #118. Thanked Lt. Huenke and Captain Mazer their hard work.

PUBLIC PORTION

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

Lonnie Hill – 157 Marin Drive: Complained about the trash in front of their property. Requested to go back to cans.

Bill Blaney: Provided Council and Public a background history of Marin Drive. Explained on-going issue with maintenance, especially trash, since Home Owner's Association was disbanded.

Council President LaRotonda: Stated he had an upcoming meeting with Code Enforcement and will add this as a topic of discussion to see the best way to resolve this issue.

Joseph Decessino – 112 Holly Road: Received a violation for their storage-shipping container. Violation is currently on hold until a resolution is determined.

E. Dennis: Explained NJ Zoning Laws and how they apply to the situation.

Dana Henderson – 123 Holly Road: Also received a violation. Discussed her garage, upcycling, and escrow fees.

A.Perri – 620 Yarmouth: Requested maps from the City of all city-owned property and yet to receive response. Urged the City to establish an Environmental Commission. Asked for an update in regard to New York Ave.

Council President LaRotonda: Shared that an update was pending.

A.Perri: Asked about the Community Garden.

B. Blaney: Informed him that a Resolution would be required.

Chief JR Laughlin – Police Dept.: Discussed Public Safety, reminding the public that school is back in session and the importance and maintaining a safe driving speed.

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

CLOSED SESSION - #119 – Contract Negotiations

K. Weinberg: In accordance with the Open Records Act N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, the City Council went into Closed Session. Explained the reason to go into Closed Session is to discuss contract negotiations (Land Sale, Sewer Rates, Pleasantville, Developer Update)

Motioned to enter Closed Session: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Marrone
All in Favor, None Opposed.

(Closed Session)

Motioned to adjourn Closed Session and re-enter the meeting: Councilwoman Cain; Seconded: Councilman Burroughs
All in Favor, None Opposed.

REGULAR MEETING

Motioned to move Resolution #120-23 – Authorizing the Execution of an Amendment of the Sewer Agreement between the City of Absecon and the City of Pleasantville: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Burroughs

Roll Call: Burroughs – Yes; Cain – Yes; DeRose – Absent; Howell – Absent; Light – Yes; Marrone – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes

Motioned to move Resolution #121-23 – Authorizing the Chief Financial Officer to Refund the Sewer Accounts: Councilman Marrone; Seconded: Councilwoman Cain
Roll Call: Burroughs – Yes; Cain – Yes; DeRose – Absent; Howell – Absent; Light – Yes; Marrone – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,


Carie A. Crone, City Clerk

Approved: 9/21/23