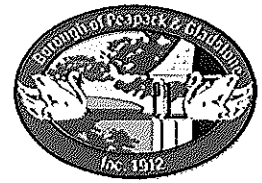




**MAYOR & COUNCIL
THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE,
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 21, 2020**



The regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone was held on Tuesday, April 21, 2020 electronically via the Go To Meeting conferencing service and began at 6:17 p.m.

Mayor Skinner called the meeting to order. Borough Clerk Nancy A. Bretzger read the Sunshine Notice "Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, Adequate notice of 2020 Meeting Dates was published in the Borough Library. Action may be taken."

Mayor Skinner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call indicated the following present:

Present: Mayor Skinner, Council President Corigliano, Councilman Caminiti, Councilwoman Dietrich, Councilwoman Murphy, Councilman Smith, Councilman Sweeney

Absent: (none)

Also present were: Randy Bahr, Interim Administrator, Mr. John Bruder, Esq., Borough Attorney and Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 82-20 – Authorization for Executive Session for Certified Specified Purposes – (1) Contract Negotiations (2) Potential Litigation was read. Motion was made by Councilwoman Murphy, seconded by Councilman Sweeney. Said motion was carried unanimously.

Public Meeting reconvened at 7:03 p.m.

MAYOR'S UPDATE ON COVID-19

Mayor Skinner stated that he was starting the meeting off with a quick update on COVID-19. He asked Kingsley Hill, OEM Director to give the update tonight. Mr. Hill stated that in general the Borough has a low number of cases in the Borough. He explained that there are 2 cases that are not related to Matheny. The Boroughs counts include Matheny. He stated that he delivered 2 pallets of PPE for the staff at Matheny today. He also stated that Matheny is doing a very good effort of isolating the infected patients from the unaffected and are working very hard. He said that there are a lot of volunteers helping with shopping and the food bank that is going on.

Mayor Skinner said that he wants to send a Thank you to the volunteers that are working with the food bank. He said that they are doing an excellent job of helping the residents in this town secure food and items that they may not have been able to get otherwise.

Mayor Skinner also wanted to let everyone know that the testing site is up and running at Raritan Valley Community College and they have been busy. It is for residents of Somerset and Hunterdon Counties, you must have an appointment, symptoms of the virus and a prescription from your doctor. You can go on the County's Health Department website to make an appointment.



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He also mentioned that he is happy to see people using the parks and maintaining their social distancing. He thanked Kingsley for his efforts during this time. He also stated that he is very grateful for the County and State for everything that they are doing during this time to help with Matheny.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – 5 MINUTES PER PERSON – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Skinner asked if any member of the Public wishes to speak about non-agenda items.

Ken Tiger St. Johns Drive, Gladstone – Mr. Tiger stated that he has heard that St. Johns has been sold. He asked that the Council stay on top of this to make sure that the new owners are aware that they are responsible for the maintenance of the road. He stated that the road is still bad and a guardrail has disappeared and there is a 20ft drop off. He stated that there are several homes for sale and they are having a hard time selling because of the condition of the road.

Councilman Sweeney stated that the new owners will have the same obligations as the previous owner. He stated that the town will stay on top of them due to the property maintenance ordinance.

MINUTES

Mayor Skinner asked if there was a motion and second to accept the Regular Meeting minutes of April 7, 2020. Councilman Smith motioned to accept the minutes, seconded by Councilwoman Dietrich. Said motion was passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Councilman Smith stated that he visited Highland Avenue after the last meeting and the request from Ruth Williams regarding installation of a gas line to her home. He explained that this would necessitate them opening up the newly paved road and there is an ordinance that states a three-year moratorium for this. He stated that he located Ms. William's home and the end of the new pavement which ends on the uphill side of her property. I called Ms. Williams and stated that they could open the old pavement and bring the line from there into her home. Ms. Williams was happy with this compromise and will be in touch with Public Service to have them revisit the plans. Mayor Skinner thanked Councilman Smith for his efforts in helping this resident.

Councilwoman Dietrich explained that the Historic Preservation Commission has designed a landscape plan for the Limekiln and would like to discuss with the Council during the May 12, 2020 meeting. She will have the designed landscape plans delivered to the Council for your review before the meeting. Councilwoman Dietrich stated then we can discuss the process for securing the work to be done.

Councilwoman Dietrich also stated that herself and Councilman Sweeney received an email from the non-profit that runs Smart Streets. She stated that the organization and this program has been on hold because of the pandemic. They have suggested that the Borough do the survey, by asking the residents about the roads before this pandemic and not what is happening now. We would post the survey on the website and send out it out PGNotify as well as on Next Door. We can post flyers around town for the residents to see as they are walking through town. The Council discussed how to promote the survey. The Council felt that since the majority of the residents are home at this time, this would be a good time to have them do the survey.



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Councilman Caminiti stated that the Borough should be receiving information back from the NJ DEP in the near future regarding the DAM Safety study and the status of that report. Councilman Caminiti also stated that we should have definitive timeline before the next meeting regarding the Government Energy Aggregation program.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Skinner asked if anyone had any new business to discuss.

Councilman Smith stated that he wanted to let the Council know that on Main Street in front of Liberty Park, one of the old mature Linden trees is severely diseased and has some structural issues with the trunk of the tree. He stating that hopefully before the next Council meeting, the tree will be taken down and the stump removed.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION/APPROVALS

Mayor Skinner asked if anyone had any miscellaneous discussions.

Randy Bahr, Borough Administrator said that he had one item. He explained that we received a call from the garbage hauler, Rubinetti asking if we could postpone the Bulk pickup scheduled for May 6, 2020. Mr. Bahr stated that the company is having a hard time with getting enough workers for crews. The Council discussed and said to see if we can schedule for the end of June. Once we get a date it was asked to make sure that we get the information out to the residents through the website, PGNotify and on NextDoor and also put signs in front of Borough Hall. Councilman Sweeney stated that he will ask OIC Ferrante to post it on the electronic billboard and move it around the Borough so that everyone has the opportunity to view it.

ORDINANCES

Introduction of Ordinance 1089-2020 – An Ordinance Amending Chapter XVII, Titled “Sewers” of the Revised General Ordinances Subsection 1.27 Titled “Sewer Charges”

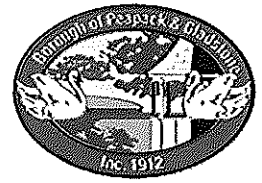
Mayor Skinner introduced **Ordinance 1089-2020** – An Ordinance Amending Chapter XVII, Titled “Sewers” of the Revised General Ordinances Subsection 1.27 Titled “Sewer Charges”. Councilman Caminiti moved to introduce the Ordinance at first reading, seconded by Councilwoman Dietrich. Said motion passed unanimously.

Council President Corigliano stated that this Ordinance is to reduce the sewer fees for residential and commercial sewers users recommended by the Sewer Committee.

Mayor Skinner stated that **Ordinance 1089-2020** is introduced and shall be published in summary in the Bernardsville News and the Public Hearing for said Ordinance shall be held on May 26, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter.



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PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION OF THE 2020 BUDGET

Council President Corigliano did a short presentation to the Council regarding the 2020 Budget. Mr. Corigliano stated that the presentation has been posted to the Borough website and the public can view the entire presentation. Council President Corigliano explained that the property owners will be taxed for \$14,000,000.00 which equates to a tax rate projected at 1.91%. He stated that 48% of those funds go to the School District, 21.4% goes to the County with 30.6% going to the Borough. With 29% of that percentage going towards Borough operations and 1.6% to the Open Space Recreation Trust Fund, with a total budget of \$6,450,000.00.

He further explained that an average resident property is assessed at \$674,000 and we are anticipating that the municipal tax paid on the average property will be \$3,115.00 which is a small reduction from last year, which was \$3,752.00. He also stated that they are projecting the total tax on the average residential property of \$12,822.00 versus \$12,808.00 from last year. We are projecting this, because it is typical as in past years for the County and School taxes to increase.

Mayor Skinner asked for a motion to open the Public Hearing on the Adoption of the 2020 Budget. Motion was made by Councilwoman Dietrich, seconded by Councilman Sweeney. Said motion passed unanimously.

Council President Corigliano asked if anyone from the public had any questions regarding the 2020 budget.

John Skinner, Potterville Road – Mr. Skinner said that he had a question regarding the debt service for 2020 and projection for 2021 that is showing on page 2 of the budget. What are those 2 numbers and why a drop in the number?

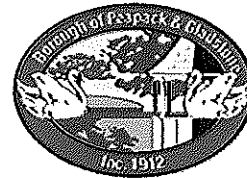
Council President Corigliano explained that last year we added a sufficient amount of money in our fund balance to do a one-time pick up of all of our outstanding bond, anticipation notes, in the amount of \$535,000.00. He continued to explain that instead of keeping these notes on the books and continue paying interest on them, since we had the funds to pay them, we made the strategic decision to pay those off. By doing this it helps give us a better bond rating.

John Skinner asked another question regarding the operations budget and the OEM budget. He asked why the OEM budget was appropriated \$6500.00 in 2019 and all but 12% of that was used. Why was it appropriated only \$5,800.00 this year especially with everything that is going on right now and what OEM is dealing with at this time. Council President Corigliano stated that the funds for COVID-19 are not coming out of the OEM line budget, they are coming from other line items. He further explained that the funds in last years budget were for a single hand held radio and we do not need to make that purchase this year.

John Skinner said that he has one more question and that it the budget for Shared Municipal Court. In 2019 there was appropriated \$75,000.00 and \$89,700.00 was actually spent. In 2020, you are budgeting \$92,000.00. He said it seems as if the cost of the courts is trending upwards. Councilman Sweeney stated that he can answer that questions, since he is on the Shared Courts Committee. The budget for the shared



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court is put together by the 3 participating towns. At the end of every year there is a true up which is based on the total cost of the Court amongst the three different towns by a percentage contribution. The percent contribution is based upon the size of the caseload of each town. It doesn't make a difference how big or small the town is it's the number of cases that run through the court which goes into figuring what the costs are.

John Skinner stated that he has no more questions, but he wants to make sure that the budget reflects what the costs are and that the first responders are taken care of after all of this is over.

Council President Corigliano stated that he wanted it to be known that the Council supports the First Aid Squad every year with a \$60,000.00 plus contribution. He also stated that the fire company submitted a budget and the Council increased that budget because we anticipated more costs than they anticipated. He reiterated that the Council does review the budget and that that our emergency services are well looked after.

Kathy DeLuca – Valley View, Gladstone – Ms. DeLuca stated that she appreciates that the municipal budget will give a little bit of a tax break to the residents. She would like to know if the Council will be pursuing or reducing the amount that is paid to the schools. Since the schools are not in session, physically in the building, will they be refunding the town some of the money. I understand that some of the teachers are working, but like the gym teachers, they are sending YouTube videos for the children to watch and do. They really are not doing their job because the parents are teaching their children.

Council President Corigliano stated that the largest part of the property tax is the school tax and he know of no effort by the school district to refund the town or reduce their budget. He stated that the school districts have contracts with these teachers and they still need to be paid. He also stated that they are a separate entity and that the town has little dealings with them other than collecting taxes on their behalf. He suggested to Ms. DeLuca that she get in touch with the towns school board members and voice her concerns to them or to attend one of the school board meetings to voice her concerns.

Ms. DeLuca also asked about the 2% CAP and being voted on for the school board budget? Councilman Sweeney said that he has heard that there is a bill floating around, that basically to roll back the clock, so that the residents have to vote on the school budget every year, because as you know now as long as they stay within the 2% we as residents don't get to vote on it.

Randy Bahr, Borough Administrator asked if Heidi Wollheib, Borough Auditor had anything that she would like to add. Ms. Wollheib stated that the Borough did get clearance from the Division of Local Government Services to adopt the budget tonight, she explained that budget review from the DLGS is on a 3-year rotation, so they reviewed the budget and had very minimal questions, which Randy Bahr and I were able to resolve. She also stated that she thinks this is a strong budget, you have met all of your obligations and continuing to provide services at the same level. She stated that there was a lot of time and effort put into this budget from the staff and Council.

Council President Corigliano stated that he would like to mention those who put a lot of effort into creating this budget. He stated that there is 450 lines in the municipal budget alone and is extremely complex. He stated that the Administrator, Christopher Tietjen, before he left started the process, Randy Bahr, Administrator continued with the Borough Clerk, all of the Department Heads. The Council put a



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lot of effort into this with a long meeting going over the budget, literally line by line and creating not only the appropriations budget, anticipated revenues budget but a capital budget as well. He said that he needs to acknowledge those employees as well as his second on the Finance Committee, Councilman Sweeney. I am very grateful and it is a pleasure to do the budget and work with all of you on it.

Mayor Skinner said that he wants to point out to the people that are listening, typically this Borough has between the second to fourth lowest tax rate in Somerset County. He said I know that we all think that we are high, but we are doing very good compared to other municipalities in the county.

Mayor Skinner asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing on the Adoption of the 2020 Budget. Motion was made by Councilwoman Dietrich, seconded by Council President Corigliano. Said motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 83-20 – Resolution to Adopt the 2020 Municipal Budget of the Borough of Peapack and Gladstone was read. Motion was made by Councilwoman Murphy, seconded by Councilwoman Dietrich. Said motion passed unanimously.

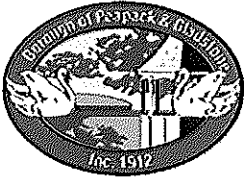
RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 84-20 – Resolution to Refund Lienholder for Redemption of Lien #19-0005 on block 22, Lot 1 Qualifier C1001 was read. Motion was made by Councilwoman Murphy, seconded by Councilwoman Dietrich. Mayor Skinner asked Randy Bahr, Administrator to explain what this resolution was for to the public. Mr. Bahr stated that this is a lien that was purchased at a tax sale. The owner of the property came forward to redeem the certificate from the lienholder. This is just a formality of releasing the certificate by cancelling it and the lienholder the monies owed to them. This comes with no expense to the town, the expense is to the property owner, we are just the pass through. Said motion was passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 85-20 – Authorizing the Borough of Peapack and Gladstone Tax Collector to Extend the Grace Period for Second Quarter Tax Payments to _____ was Pulled from the Agenda. Council President Corigliano stated that himself, Mayor Skinner and Councilman Sweeney spoke about having an extended grace period for taxes due on May 1st. Unfortunately, we have to withdraw this resolution because we learned that we are not able to allow this without the consent of the Governor and he has not done that at this time.

BILLS LIST

Resolution No. 86-20 Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List in the amount of \$717,298.95 was read. Motion was made by Council President Corigliano, seconded by Councilwoman Dietrich. Said motion was passed unanimously.



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PUBLIC COMMENTS – 3 MINUTES PER PERSON – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Mayor Skinner asked if anyone from the public would like to speak.

Kathy DeLuca, Valley View, Gladstone – Ms. DeLuca said that she has a question, regarding the taxes, she said that she read Brick Township has extended the grace period on their taxes. Mr. Bruder, Borough Attorney stated that maybe it was on their sewer bill, but you are not statutorily able to do it on a tax bill. He explained that you can change the interest rates, but you are not able to extend the grace period without the approval of the Governor.

John Skinner – Potterville Road, Gladstone – He asked if the capital budget will be presented at another meeting. Council President Corigliano stated that the capital budget was approved at this meeting, but it not been voted in by ordinance yet. Mr. Bahr, Administrator stated that there will be a public hearing for those capital improvements once the ordinance is introduced.

John Kappler, Holland Avenue, Peapack – Mr. Kappler asked if someone can explain the tax sale to him. Randy Bahr, Administrator stated that there was a tax lien placed on this property back in December of 2019 for the failure to pay taxes or municipal charges. The lienholder paid \$1,600.00 in premium to get the tax sales certificate. The property owner becomes aware of this and wanted to redeem the lien. In order to redeem the lien, they go through the municipality.

Mayor Skinner stated that everybody listening and the Council was aware that the Bedminster Township Police Department loss a Sergeant Patterson to COVID-19. He would like to extend his condolences to Bedminster for their loss of a great officer. He stated that he worked with Sgt. Patterson over the years many times in his capacity as a police officer, in fire and EMS.

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Councilman Caminiti, seconded by Councilman Smith, that this meeting be adjourned at 8:03pm. This motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk