



**MAYOR & COUNCIL
THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE,
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MAY 23, 2023**



The regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone was held on Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at the Municipal Complex, 1 School Street, Peapack, New Jersey and virtually via GoTo Meeting and began at 7:00p.m.

Mayor Corigliano called the meeting to order. Borough Clerk Nancy Bretzger read the Sunshine Notice "Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, Adequate notice of 2023 Meeting Dates was published in the Courier News and Bernardsville News on December 8, 2022 and posted at the Municipal Complex and the Borough Library. Action may be taken."

Mayor Corigliano led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call indicated the following present: Councilwoman Dietrich, Councilman Lemma, Councilwoman Murphy, Councilman Quartello, Council President Sweeney, Councilwoman Weible and Mayor Corigliano

Also present were: Mr. John Bruder, Esq., Borough Attorney, Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk/Administrator

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

No public comment

PRESENTATION

Matheny Hospital and School presentation by CEO, Bill Kent. Also present was Chairman of the Board, Bill Krist.

Mayor Corigliano stated it has been five years as of January 1 since the Borough and Matheny settled their differences from prior lawsuits. Those lawsuits resulted in an agreement between the two. There were a couple of requirements in the settlement agreement that will be addressed tonight. The Borough Council previously met to discuss the status of the contract and asked Matheny to come back and give a presentation to the public.

Bill Kent went through the Power Point presentation. He gave an update on the settlement agreement. He stated they have moved 30 administrative staff to Bedminster last month which decreased the traffic on Highland Avenue. Their plan is to stay up on the hilltop over the next few years so they can safely build a new facility and safely move their population. He spoke regarding COVID at Matheny. He then took questions.

Andy Purtell, 28 Highland Avenue asked is there an ask in this from the Borough. Mr. Kent stated the ask is to not shrink the 71 beds and to be able to stay at 101 beds until the new facility is ready. Mr. Kent stated that the timeline is important and we are moving on it as aggressively as we can.

Mr. Purtell asked if Matheny is in negotiations with anyone regarding the (new) property. Mr. Kent stated they are. They have looked at about 12 to 15 properties in total. It was then clarified that Mr. Purtell was asking about the existing site. Mr. Kent advised that they are not actively negotiating with anyone at this time.



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Ruth Williams, 29 Highland Avenue, had specific questions on the settlement that predates Mr. Kent's arrival. She wanted to know where Matheny is on traffic counts.

Mr. Kent discovered the system that was installed to count the traffic was not installed accurately. It has since been reinstalled and they are now getting accurate traffic counts. They are at the threshold. He said this is part of the reason they moved their administrative office. We also are allowing a hybrid work schedule to reduce the traffic. He knows traffic is a great concern and they want to be good neighbors.

Ms. Williams wanted to know if Matheny has added any parking spaces. The answer is no.

The total parking spaces should be at 300. Mr. Kent will have an accurate count done.

She also asked about resident students vs. non-resident. Mr. Kent said 2/3 live in the hospital, 7 are day students. She then asked about the proposed group homes.

Mr. Kent stated their intention is to move off the hill so they can create a state-of-the-art facility. He stated the Division of Developmental Disabilities who they have a relationship with are asking them to grow their group home network in other communities so they are exploring that as a growth plan.

Mayor Corigliano stated Mr. Kent's predecessor committed to the two group homes and it was determined it was not feasible to put them up on the hill so they did not make a commitment to do so. It is no longer part of the plan.

Mrs. Williams stated that it sounds like the Borough and Matheny will need to do some updating of the settlement agreements.

Mrs. Williams asked about the Department of Health approvals needed. Mr. Kent stated they will be working with the Department of Health as well as the Department of Education for this transition. There will be hundreds of things they will be looking at. Department of Education will need to provide approval for a new school.

Erica Convery, 17 Highland Avenue stated she walks the road frequently, she has school aged kids and she will say that traffic is a concern, especially speeding traffic and littering. She asked if there was anyway to enforce stricter traffic restrictions.

Mr. Kent stated they will work on this. He gave her his business card and stated that she may call him anytime.

James Miller, 61 Highland Avenue stated he is a neighbor and has invested a lot into his property. He noted that they are watching what is going on. His comments are more forward thinking. There will be a lot of people caring what the future activity will be.

In conclusion, Mayor Corigliano has lived here since 2008 and he lives in the Highland Avenue neighborhood. He knows there are residents who feel the situation at Matheny was misrepresented to them in the past by Mr. Kent's predecessors. It is up to this Borough's Council to keep the process transparent, to support Matheny as they transition to a new location and to ensure that whatever ends



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up on that hill is the appropriate and zoned use. Another institution cannot go up there so likely it will be housing. This Council will have its eyes on it very closely.

Mr. Kent thanked the Council. They are excited for their future. They love their patients and can't wait to have a state- of-the-art facility.

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor postponed Mayor's Punch List update until the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

● Elected and Governing Officials Evening

Mayor Corigliano stated that Congressman Thomas Kean's office contacted him and they wanted to do a pop-up. Mayor in turn expanded this and has coordinated an evening of Elected and Governing officials on June 22nd from 6 to 8:30PM in the Council meeting room. It will be promoted on the website.

● Police Promotional Ordinance

Council President Sweeney explained current ordinance is cumbersome and gives illusion of being objective. He feels it is overkill for our department. He has gone through 60 or 70 other ordinances and they fell into 1 of 3 categories. First being a rubric approach. Second, is they are very vague and then there is an in between. The in between has a lot a digression. He liked the ordinance Mount Olive has. They have a list of minimum requirements to promote to chief and a preferred list of requirements. What is very apparent is we are very different from other towns. He said that he and former Mayor Skinner tried very hard to get a test that was more indicative to policing in Peapack and Gladstone as opposed to policing a more urban area.

Discussion ensued with Council.

It was decided to provide full copies of the Mount Olive Ordinance and Bound Brook ordinances to the Council for review and further discussion.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION/APPROVALS

● Highlands Planning Area Assessment

Highlands previously gave their presentation to the Planning Board. The main concern was the ability to opt out and coming into compliance with it as opposed to joining the preservation area.

The next step will be to engage Highlands to provide a grant to do a study to examine the feasibility of P & G joining Highlands.

A resolution approving submission of the application will be on the next meeting's agenda.



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MINUTES

Mayor Corigliano asked for a motion to approve the Regular meeting minutes on May 9, 2023; motion made by Councilman Quartello; seconded by Councilwoman Dietrich roll call taken, said motion passed.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 112-23 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING BOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN CLICK IT OR TICKET FROM MAY 22, 2023 THRU JUNE 4, 2023

RESOLUTION NO. 114-23 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF 2023 GRANT APPLICATION TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, NEW JERSEY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (NJOEM) FOR THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANT AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY ASSISTANCE (EMAA) SUBAWARD PROGRAM

RESOLUTION NO. 115-23 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AWARD OF CONTRACT TO REASSESSMENT SERVICES, LLC TO PERFORM PROFESSIONAL APPRAISAL INSPECTIONS AND RELATED SERVICES IN CONNECTION WITH THE 2023 BOROUGH WIDE REASSESSMENT PROGRAM

RESOLUTION NO. 117-23 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN SOMERSET COUNTY DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED ENFORCEMENT OF MAY 27-MAY 29, 2023

RESOLUTION NO. 118-23 RESOLUTION TO APPOINT CHRISTIAN W. CLARKE AS SEASONAL BOROUGH DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS LABORER

Consent Agenda for Resolutions 112, 114, 115, 117, 118; motion made by Councilman Lemma, seconded by Councilwoman Weible roll call taken, said motion passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 113-23 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH SELLER, JOHN SMITH, FOR THE PURCHASE OF A FARMLAND PRESERVATION AGREEMENT

Attorney John Bruder stated that on the Deed the daughter Sarah is one of the owners. The resolution will be amended to reflect we are purchasing it from John Smith and Sarah Smith. Motion made by Council President Sweeney, seconded by Councilwoman Murphy, roll call taken, Councilwoman Dietrich abstained, motion passed.

BILLS LIST

RESOLUTION NO. 116-23 Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List Total Amount: **\$877,515.65**

Motion made by Councilman Quartello, seconded by Councilwoman Dietrich, roll call taken, motion passed.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Finance- Nothing to report.

Sanitation & Sewer – Nothing to report.

Borough Property- Councilwoman Murphy gave a shout out to DPW. They did a great job creating the trail over on the 12 acres that purchased using Green Acres and County Open



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Space funds last year. It is well marked. It is about a half-mile. There will be some additional signage. They are going to do a survey to name the park. It will be posted on the PG website. The names running are Conover Crossings, Schoolhouse Trail, Vernon Manner Reserve, PG Municipal Park. The survey will stay open for 2 weeks.

Nancy and Brad Fagen, Councilwoman Murphy and Locinda from Carter Van Dyke met last week for several hours walking thorough Liberty Park. It is V&K's obligation to maintain the parks plantings until the beginning of June. They wanted to access things before V&K hands them off to us. They discovered a lot of issues. They emailed a detailed summary of the walk through to V&K. They feel all the beds should be re- edged, re-mulched and weeded before it gets passed onto them. We requested multiple trees and shrubs be replaced due to being dead or dying or plant some other alternate plants. Some areas around the pond need help. They have not heard anything back from V&K. Nancy will make a phone call to confirm they received the email. It was suggested to send the email as a certified letter.

A discussion ensued on the geese problem and the new playground equipment is expected in July.

Councilwoman Dietrich reported that the free library was installed.

Fire/First Aid Squad – Councilman Lemma reported the fire department responded to 12 fires, 2 drills, 336-man hours of work. They started discussions with their subcommittee with the engine replacement. Participating in the discussion was Councilman Lemma, Council President Sweeney and Mayor Corigliano. They are off to a better start than they had with the rescue truck. They are looking at about 4 years from the time they place the order. Ron Hill and Brad Fagen are representative from the fire department.

Police- Councilman Lemma reported the Police Committee has interviewed the first candidate that was proposed and they will be interviewing a few more and the committee will report back at that time.

Roads & Transportation- Councilman Quartello is working with Brad Fagen on getting a master list of the roads to get it updated.

Zoning & Construction- No report.

Legal- John Bruder reported that with respects to Ruth Williams comment about group homes at Matheny, he said there was no mandate that there be group homes. They were a permitted use in accordance with the agreement. Because Matheny had elected to not do that, there was



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no need to make a written modification to the agreement. Ruth Williams was correct however there was no need for a modification stating there were not going to be group homes built because it was not a mandate but a permissive use. With respect to the beds, he stated as you recall, you instructed me last year to write them a reminder and ask them where they are in process to reducing the bed count from 101 to 71, John thinks this is what began this dialogue that culminated into this evening's presentation. If there is going to be a modification, then the Council should do it by way of resolution but that shall be related to the bed count.

Administrator's Report – No report.

Mayor's Report- Mayor reported that he was invited to attend a luncheon at the Somerset County Business Partnership last week to talk about the virtues of Peapack and Gladstone. He said it was very well received. He was there along with the Mayors from Bedminster and Bernardsville.

Next Monday, he will be officiating the Memorial Day Parade at 11:00 and the keynote speaker will be former Mayor Greg Skinner. Afterwards the fire department members are inviting everyone to the Firehouse for a BBQ lunch.

Council President Sweeney, Councilman Lemma and Mayor Corigliano were all at the First Aid Awards Dinner last Friday and it was a very nice event.

Mayor's Executive Summary

Council President Sweeney will get the two police ordinances from Mt. Olive and Bound Brook. Nancy Bretzger will put together a resolution for Highlands for the next meeting.

Mayor's Punchlist item will be added to next meeting agenda.

John Bruder will address the issues with V&K by letter.

John Bruder to prepare a resolution modifying the settlement agreement with Matheny.

Public Comment- Bill Mueller, Pottersville Road asked about the resolution that was voted on this evening regarding John Smith's property. When he was involved with the Council, Councilman Suriano always asserted that the property that John Smith owns on Branch Road and the Raritan River was not developable. He wanted to know if that is the same property that was dealt with tonight?

Councilwoman Murphy stated that John Smith's property is 40 acres and it is 4 buildable lots. There was a survey done. She stated that multiple people brought up that concern and we have had multiple surveys done and a wetland study. This is not including John Smith's property, it is to the right of Branch and left of the river. Ten percent of the cost is coming from the Borough. It is a beautiful piece of land and very minimal financial output from the Open Space Trust Fund.



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Mr. Mueller's concern is spending money on land that could not be potentially developed.

Mayor stated that obviously what we were told years ago is incorrect. It can be developed.

With no further business, Mayor Corigliano closed the meeting. Motion of Councilwoman Murphy and seconded by Councilwoman Weible.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Bretzger

Nancy Bretzger, Borough Clerk