



MAYOR & COUNCIL
THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE,
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 18, 2024



The regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone was held on Tuesday June 18, 2024 in person and began at 7:00PM.

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 2024 Meeting Dates was published in the Courier News and Bernardsville News on December 5, 2023 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: Councilman Quartello, Councilman Silva, Councilwoman Sueta, Council President Sweeney, Councilwoman Weible and Mayor Corigliano

Absent: Councilwoman Murphy

Also present were: Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk/Administrator, Steven Warner, Esq., Borough Attorney.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

MaryLynn Schiavi, 106 Wehrli Road, Long Valley NJ, stated when looking through the work order that the Council signed with the USDA and on page 7, paragraph 3, the Borough certifies that they have used non-lethal methods to manage the Canada Geese and the Borough agrees to use non-lethal methods going forward. She asked why did they sign a 5-year contract to gas the geese? Her next question was in the work order the Borough stated they have used several methods but is it documented anywhere what you used, when you used it and how long you used it for? She feels the public would like to know that information.

Mayor Corigliano stated the contract is a 5-year contract that is renewable yearly and the Borough was advised by the USDA that once the culling occurs that the Borough agreed to keep non-lethal methods in place to prevent a flock from returning. The USDA's advice to the Borough was by doing these remediations methods effectively, we will not have a geese problem in the future, therefore there will not be a need to gas geese in the future.

Council President Sweeney outlined the remediation methods the Borough has used prior to the park being renovated and after it was renovated.

Jennifer Douglas, 200 Old Army Road, Bernardsville, NJ thanked the Council for exploring the possibility of relocating locating the geese. She did mention the story about the 400 geese that were removed from New York and brought to South Carolina and returned prior to truck returning, she said that story has been told by the USDA for decades. She said that all they are asking for is implementation of best practices. She said that by gassing the geese it is an ineffective method. One of the best practices is Goose Busters. She also mentioned they have volunteers who will help with the cleaning up of the geese poop and they are going to provide training for addling of the eggs so taxpayer money does not need to be used. She asked the Council if they could all work together.



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Ben Lacha, 319 No. 11st Street, Phil, PA spoke next. He is a stonemason from Philadelphia. He said he has never been to the Park but he stopped there before coming to the meeting. He said that he did not see any geese. He said they have had problems in Pennsylvania and they found a way to use non-lethal methods and they did not see killing as a solution. He asked the Council to do the right thing and he hopes they will do the right thing.

Wendy Ristelli, Basking Ridge, NJ asked the Council if they have tried the Geese Police? She said you need to keep up with it.

Council President Sweeney stated the Borough used them for several years. He said the Borough stopped using them when the renovations of the park took place. The Borough has used the strobes, and spraying for the last 2 years.

She asked so if it didn't work on this flock, how is it going to work on the next flock?

Mayor Corigliano stated that the Borough's consulting Biologist advised the Borough that once this population is remediated and if we have the right countermeasures in place, a flock will not land here and will not make the Park their home.

Jacqueline Braun, 63 Main Street, Peapack, NJ mentioned the Journey Through Peapack History book. detailed that in 1995 Mrs. Edgar Rosenblatt gifted a pair of swans to the town. It speaks in this book of the hundred years of the ducks, geese and swans that have graced Liberty Park. She said you should keep the park the way it is including the wildlife. She said in the newspaper Mayor Corigliano was quoted as saying it would be a liability for volunteers to clean up the park. She wanted to know that if she provided the Council with a letter from her Attorney that they would all sign that if we trip and fall, we would not sue.

Mayor Corigliano stated other than verbal proposals, we have had no formal proposals or formal offers to have volunteers clean our park. While such proposals are welcomed, the Borough is not likely to accept such a proposal because it presents a major liability issue for the Borough. We don't even want our own Borough employees picking up fecal matter.

She said they will present the Council with a formal proposal.

Karen Rodgers, 7 West Avenue, Peapack, NJ has been a resident since 1995 and has never seen border collies in the park. She wanted to know if the Council could show them who they paid.

Council President Sweeney stated the first time was in 2006 because there was article in the Bernardsville News archives referencing it. They came back about 3 or 4 times in a row.

Mayor Corigliano stated that at that time it was around \$450 to \$500 per visit and now that would be an unsustainable cost over a period of a year.

Connie Gilmore, Lebanon Township has been very interested in what has been happening in Peapack. She wanted to know if there was another vote for not gassing the geese would the Council have changed their minds about gassing the geese. She said they have the right and power to change their minds.



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Mayor Corigliano stated that at the end of the first year if we are satisfied that our health and safety issue in our park has been properly addressed, we will make decisions based on the facts at that time.

Barry Braun, 63 Main Street, Peapack, NJ wanted to know why this has become such a problem now and he wanted to know if he and his sister could gift swans to the Borough?

Mayor Corigliano stated that the Borough is not amenable to taking swans at this present time.

Elizabeth Jonak, 7 Franklin Court, Bernardsville wanted to know if the Borough is working with the Animal Protection League to implement the remediations measures to make sure they work.

Council President Sweeney said no. The Borough did have talks with the landscape architect and the Animal Protection group wanted 9-inch grass. When the geese are gone the Borough will be replacing the Riparian buffer.

Ms. Jonak asked the Borough Attorney if the contract can be cancelled. Borough Attorney said he will look at it again.

Mayor Corigliano stated the answer is if we don't have a geese problem when the contract comes up for renewal than we mostly likely won't renew it.

Carol Lane, 1 Hillyard Lane, Gladstone thanked the Borough for upgrading the Tot Lot. The Friends of the Library installed a Free Library right next to the Tot Lot and that has caused some extra work of removing the geese excrement. She has been thrilled to see all who have been using the Tot Lot. She has been a resident for 20 years and the activity there is greater than she has ever seen. She said orchestrating volunteers to clean up the park is a bigger issue. This problem goes way beyond the park. The geese travel through town and there is excrement everywhere. She wanted to make sure the people in the audience that are not from Peapack realize it is a much bigger issue than just cleaning up the park.

Mayor Corigliano stated that the Borough is very sensitive to the fact that many children are using the Tot Lot in the park and the point that Ms. Lane makes is very important to us. The issues that the geese have caused in our park because of over populating is a good part of what is driving our efforts here.

From the residents of Willow Avenue and Main Street and a few other streets, we have gotten tremendous feedback from our residents of how the geese effecting their lifestyles, ruining their properties and causing them troubles and those issues factor into our decision making as well. This is not a simple issue. It's not an issue of simply maintaining a park. If there were a handful of geese as in the past, I don't think we would be having these issues. The fact is there is an over population of geese in the park and that is what the Borough is looking to address.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS –

Chief Ferrante gave a presentation to update the Borough on their staffing analysis. The last time they came before the Board was April of 2022 when they were in need of replacing an officer. They were able to hire a police officer. At that time, numbers showed that police department should be staffed with 10



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patrol officers. He gave a description of what a patrol officer does and said they are the local officers you see driving around town. Currently the Police Department has 9 full time officers, one part-time officer and these numbers include the Chief. The data provided in 2022 again showed 10 patrol officers not including the police chief. The numbers that Chief Ferrante provided today will show that they should be at 10 full-time patrol officers not including the police chief. He said with this additional officer they will be able to continue the same level of customer service. He said the Police Department is the only agency in the Borough that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year including holiday and we don't close in bad weather. They deal with mental health issues, weapon related incidences, search residences from the basement to attic at all times of the day and night after a burglar alarm activation. They have to make face to face notifications with relatives when loved one have died, they deal with overdoses and medical trauma calls. They have also changed tires and light bulbs for people, shoveled snow for elderly residents, removed animals from homes, carried groceries in for the elderly residents, and have provided assistant to our residents in their time of need. Sargent Scanlon provided a power point presentation to show the Council numbers and data that will support their request to hire an additional officer without including the Chief. Having an additional officer will help them better staff, better cover and put more officers on during a 24-hour period to better serve the residents.

The Council asked their questions. Mayor Corigliano stated it was a very good presentation.

In other new business, Councilman Silva suggested recognizing residents for achievements such as graduations and the like.

Council President Sweeney stated maybe the Borough's newsletter could have a Spotlight section to showcase these important things.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION/APPROVALS

●SaraKay Lot

Councilman Quartello mentioned a while ago about the idea of subdividing the SaraKay lot and taking the one corner that is at Willow and School Street and creating a pocket park and adding that part to the Borough's ROSI and taking the other portion and having that sold as a buildable lot. There would be a couple of variances needed to do so. He has spoken with some of the residents on Willow that are mostly impacted. The thought for this is to potentially prevent future affordable housing development going there and also the original lot (Sarah Kay property) was purchased to create the library which did not happen. The Borough would like to see the tax payer dollars come back and benefit the Borough and the residents. With the Borough's consent, he would have the Borough Attorney draft a resolution to explore the sale of the property and pursue the sale and put it out for auction. Council consented to allow Councilman Quartello to proceed.

●Special Use Permit application from Music in the Somerset Hills for a Gilded-Age themed gala from 5:00PM to 9:00PM on Saturday, October 5, 2024 at Blairsden.



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Mayor Corigliano said from the drawing the traffic looks like it is coming off Blair Drive. As a condition of approval, He would like to see the guests coming in through the Matheny easement similar to last time. Representatives for the event spoke and apologized if the map was misleading. They will definitely not be going up Blair Drive. One of the representatives reviewed the map with Mayor Corigliano and explained how the guests will be arriving and they will have to use Blair Drive for a tiny bit to get to Matheny.

- Application for Use of Municipal Facilities from Zephyr Belski/American Traveling Morris Dancing on July 26, 2024 at Liberty Park in the afternoon. The Council consented to allowing this to take place in Liberty Park.

MINUTES

Council President Sweeney made a motion; seconded by Councilman Quartello to approve the Regular Meeting minutes from the May 14, 2024 and June 6, 2024 Council meetings, roll call taken; motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 119-24 *RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING BRIAN HAIG TO BE ACCEPTED AS A MEMBER OF THE PEAPACK & GLADSTONE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT*

RESOLUTION NO. 120-24 *RESOLUTION FOR THE GOVERNING BODY CERTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL AUDIT*

RESOLUTION NO. 121-24 *RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE RESIGNATION FROM FRANK D'AMORE AS THE FIRE SUB-CODE OFFICIAL FOR THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE*

RESOLUTION NO. 122-24 *RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A SANITARY SEWER, ACCESS, AND FENCE EASEMENT ON REAL ESTATE KNOWN AS BLOCK 2.02, LOT 14, BETWEEN MATTHEW AURELIA AND DEBRA SWANKOSKY, AS GRANTORS, AND THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE, AS GRANTEE*

RESOLUTION NO. 123-24 *RESOLUTION TO APPROVE A SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR MUSIC IN THE SOMERSET HILLS, AT BLAIRSDEN, 30 BLAIR DRIVE, PEAPACK, NEW JERSEY*

RESOLUTION NO. 124-24 *RESOLUTION FOR RENEWAL OF PLENARY RETAIL CONSUMPTION LIQUOR LICENSE FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2024 TO JUNE 30, 2025 FOR GLADSTONE TAVERN*

RESOLUTION NO. 125-24 *RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A DONATION OF \$10,000.00 FROM DR. CAESAR DEPACO, CEO AND FOUNDER OF SUMMIT NUTRITIONALS INTERNATIONAL FOR THE PURCHASE OF FIRE ARMS FOR PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE POLICE DEPARTMENT*

RESOLUTION NO. 128-24 *RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING MATHENY GRADUATES AND MAKING THEM HONORARY CITIZENS OF PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE FOR LIFE*



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RESOLUTION NO. 129-24 *RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN FOR THE 2023 AUDIT*

RESOLUTION NO. 130-24 *RESOLUTION FOR RENEWAL OF PLENARY RETAIL DISTRIBUTION LIQUOR LICENSES FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2024 TO JUNE 30, 2025 FOR WESTIE THREE DOG, LLC*

Motion made by Councilman Quartello to approve Consent Agenda vote for Resolutions No. 119-24 through 125-24, and 129-24 through 130-24; seconded by Councilwoman Sueta, roll call vote taken; said motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 128-24 *RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING MATHENY GRADUATES AND MAKING THEM HONORARY CITIZENS OF PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE FOR LIFE*, motion made Council President Sweeney; seconded by Councilman Quartello to approve this resolution

Discussion

Council President Sweeney attended Matheny's graduation and stated it was one of the most profound experiences he has ever had and he promised Matheny that he would present this resolution. There were 10 graduates this year that were honored.

Roll call taken, said motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 131-24 *RESOLUTION TO APOINT BERNARD GRILETTI AS TEMPORARY SUBCODE FIRE INSPECTOR*

Nancy Bretzger stated that the Borough's Subcode Fire Inspector resigned so the Borough needed to hire someone on a temporary basis. Motion made by Councilman Quartello, seconded by Council President Sweeney to approve the resolution, roll call taken; said motion approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 132-24 *RESOLUTION FOR RENEWAL OF PLENARY RETAIL DISTRIBUTION LIQUOR LICENSE FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2024 TO JUN 30, 2024-GLADSTONE WINE & LIQUORS*

Motion made by Councilman Quartello; seconded by Councilman Silva to approve the resolution, roll call taken; said motion approved unanimously.

BILLS LIST

RESOLUTION NO 126-24. *Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List Total Amount: \$705,947.67*

Motion made by Councilman Quartello; seconded by Councilwoman Weible to approve the Bills List, roll call taken; said motion approved unanimously.

Council Reports

Council President Sweeney said the police have been offered exercise equipment from Pfizer and they would like to put it on the second floor of the Municipal Building. Bill Ryden, Borough Engineer is comfortable that the equipment will not be too heavy for the upstairs. Council concurred that the equipment can be used by the employees as well. It was also decided that a rubber mat will be put down.



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Borough Attorney, Steve Warner stated that the Borough and the County of Somerset closed on the Smith Property Farmland Preservation sale of development rights to ensure that it will remain open space and not be developed.

Mayor's Executive Summary

Councilman Silva will follow up on recognition project.

Mayor Corigliano will bring copies of the Matheny resolution printed and deliver it.

Public Comment

Carol Lane, 1 Hillyard Lane, Gladstone stated that she can recall an analyze done by the County of Somerset Sheriff's office when they were covering the police department for a number of months and they had come up with an optimal number for our staff. She wanted to know if the Council remembers that and was that number in accordance with what was presented tonight?

Mayor Corigliano stated that it is an outdated number. When they came and took over that was probably 5 or 6 years ago. At the time, the opinion of the supervising Sargent was that our Borough was properly staffed. We have exceeded that number now but when the police come to us with such a matter, we take it very seriously.

Carol Lane stated that she has heard of some possible retirements and wanted to know if it was possible to fill these positions all at one.

Council President Sweeney stated that it would be wonderful if we had a slew of candidates to choose from but unfortunately, we don't.

Ms. Lane mentioned there has been some turnover with the police department and mentioned maybe we could offer them some type of housing as a benefit to working for the Borough.

Mayor Corigliano stated that he does not feel there has been much turnover. Two officers did resign one was asked to leave and the other resigned to go elsewhere. He also said that a couple of years ago the Borough explored the idea, when the Borough was negotiating with Melillo for affordable housing, of setting a couple of the affordable housing units aside for first responders. At that time, it was not feasible because affordable housing needs to go through a lottery and the Borough could not be able to dedicate units. In addition, the developer was not keen on it because what if you had nobody get them and then the unit would sit empty.

Councilman Quartello had to leave the meeting. He left at 9:05PM.

With no more public comments, Mayor Corigliano closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

RESOLUTION NO. R-127-24 AUTHORIZATION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR CERTAIN SPECIFIED PURPOSES: •Contract Negotiations



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Motion made by Council President Sweeney; seconded by Councilwoman Weible to approve the resolution, roll call taken; said motion passed unanimously. Action may or may not be taken after Executive Session.

Motion made by Council President Sweeney; seconded by Councilwoman Weible to end Executive Session and return back to the public meeting. Roll call taken; said motion passed unanimously. Councilman Quartello was absent from the vote.

RESOLUTION NO. 133-24 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE REIMBURSEMENT OF LEGAL FEES FOR NON-AFFIRMATIVE CLAIMS PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 59:10-4

Motion made by Council President Sweeney, seconded by Councilwoman Weible to approve the resolution. Borough Attorney Steve Warner stated that the title is amended to include "and Common Law" at the end and after the second Whereas clause after moral obligation add "and the discretionary authority."

Roll call taken; said motion passed unanimously.

With no further business, Councilwoman Sweeney motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Silva, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,


Nancy Bretzger, Borough Clerk