



**MAYOR & COUNCIL
THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE,
BOROUGH COUNCIL BUDGET MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 12, 2017**



The regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone was held on Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at the Municipal Complex, 1 School Street, Peapack, New Jersey and began at 7:30pm.

Mayor Muller called the meeting to order. Borough Clerk Nancy A. Bretzger read the Sunshine Notice "Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, Adequate notice of 2017 Meeting Dates was published in the Courier News and Bernardsville News on December 22, 2016, and posted at the Municipal Complex and the Borough Library. Action may be taken."

Mayor Muller led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call indicated the following present:

Present: Mayor Muller, Council President Suriano, Councilman Caminiti, Councilman Corigliano, Councilman Lemma, Councilman Simpson, Councilman Smith

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

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

Christopher Downing – 99 Main Street – Mr. Downing asked about a building on Main Street by the Holland Avenue intersection that was being rebuild. He stated that it looked as if the structure had been torn down and as a pre-existing, non-conforming structure, you can no longer build it back without variance approval.

Councilman Lemma asked Randy Bahr, Interim Administrator and Christopher Tietjen, Assistant Administrator to follow up with the Construction Official and Zoning Officer. They said they would speak with them.

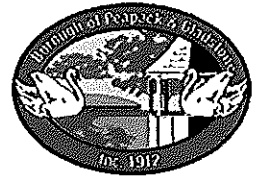
Ken Tiger - St. Johns Drive – Mr. Tiger stated that he is concerned where Verizon is placing the new poles. One has been placed on his property. He said that when he has spoken to Verizon they said that they do not have to allow other cellular services to use their poles. So, he asked if this means another carrier can come in and put another pole up in front of his property. Mayor Muller stated that the Council is aware and they are addressing the problems. Councilman Simpson spoke about the meeting the week before with Verizon. He also stated that Verizon did not clean up the mess that they left when they cut down some branches and they were trespassing on his property.

OLD BUSINESS

(none)



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NEW BUSINESS

Resolution No. 196-2017 A Resolution Appointing a "Officer-In-Charge" of the Peapack & Gladstone Police Department Upon the Retirement of Chief Gregory J. Skinner was read. Motion was made by Councilman Corigliano, seconded by Councilman Lemma.

Councilman Corigliano apologized for causing any confusion regarding this resolution. He stated that when he took over as the Police Chairman, he knew very little about chairing the committee so he met with the County prosecutor briefly to learn more. He explained that any direction to the Police Department comes from the Prosecutor office. Councilman Corigliano said that when the Council received the retirement letter from Chief Skinner he again reached out to the Prosecutor's Office and the Mayor, Councilman Lemma and himself met with Prosecutor Michael Robertson and Chief Detective John Fodor to seek their help. At that time, they offered to be the officer in charge (OIC) as well as perform an evaluation of the department. There would be no cost to the Borough for this and it was thought that a peer evaluation would be helpful. Councilman Corigliano stated that with respect to a rumor that is floating around, this is not a done deal, the Council will come to a vote on it tonight. He stated that he knows that when the prosecutor assists in running a department there is usually a problem with the department and he wanted to make it clear that they are not coming in because there is a problem with our Department. Councilman Corigliano stated that the Borough is very fortunate with our department, Chief Skinner has set up and has run a great department.

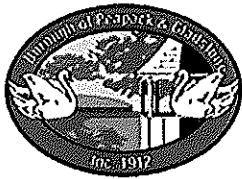
Councilman Corigliano reiterated that there is no story to tell, nothing is happening behind closed doors, there is no plan to not select a new chief from within our own department.

Councilman Corigliano read a document that was sent to him from the prosecutor's office as to what they will be doing as officer in charge. The Memo stated the following:

**Standard Operating Procedures
Budget
Property and Evidence Function
Scheduling Optimization
Internal Affairs
Personnel Files
Training Files
Equipment Inventory
Personnel Interview**

Council President Suriano stated that he wanted to clarify that at no time was there a quorum meeting in regards to this issue. Councilman Caminiti asked for clarification that we are not binding to take any suggestions that the Prosecutor's Office makes.

Mayor Muller stated that yesterday he met with the Police Department and laid out the Council plans to them. Mayor Muller pointed out that this is not only a look at the police department but a review of the Council as well. He also told a recent story from Mendham regarding a police settlement, and he stated that it is the Council's job to make sure that we choose the correct person as chief.



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Councilman Corigliano said that the final decision for the choice of the new Chief is solely with the Council.

Councilman Smith asked if this report will be made public, Councilman Corigliano stated that he is not sure there will be a written report.

Councilman Simpson asked why the resolution was not available to the public before the meeting. It was explained that a resolution that has not been approved by the Council is not a public document. Council President Suriano stated that there is a cleared understanding of what the intentions are from the memo that was received.

Councilman Simpson stated that he feels that anyone from the public should be able to ask questions about this resolution before it is voted on.

Councilman Simpson also stated that the process of appointing a new Chief should have been started 3 weeks ago. He said that the process of hiring a new Chief should be set in motion tonight. He stated that the Borough ordinance is clear on this subject. He said that nowhere does it speak to bringing in an outside agency. He asked if this taints the process, since we are no longer following what the Ordinance says. Mr. Bruder, Borough Attorney stated that placing an officer in charge from an outside agency is not stated. The selection of the new chief is what is bound by the Ordinance.

H Councilman Caminiti stated that this provides a good look at the standard operating procedures. He feels that at the end of this process the Council will come away with a good understanding of our Police Department.

Councilman Corigliano stated that this can take up to six months but probably less. He said that the officers in PBA negotiations say that they have nothing to hide. We will be selecting our new chief from within.

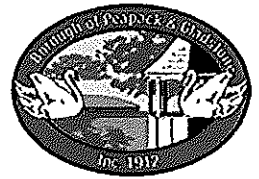
Councilman Lemma made a motion to open the resolution to public comment, seconded by Councilman Simpson. The Mayor asked Mr. Bruder if this was allowed. Mr. Bruder stated that if a motion is made it can be voted on.

Mayor Muller asked for a roll call, Councilman Caminiti, Councilman Corigliano, Council President Suriano voted 'NO' based on this would be setting a bad precedent and then the public would want to comment on any resolution that was up for approval, Councilman Lemma, Councilman Simpson, Councilman Smith voted 'YES'. Being there was a tie, Mayor Muller was asked to break the tie. Mayor Muller voted 'NO'. Therefore, the public was not able to ask questions before the resolution was voted on.

Mayor Muller asked for a roll call for Resolution 196-2017. Motion was passed with a 5-1 vote with Councilman Simpson voting no because he feels this was not done correctly.



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MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION/APPROVALS

2018 Budget

Council President Suriano the finance chairman stated that this is the first meeting for the 2018 budget.

Administration - Randy Bahr, Interim Administrator stated that the Administration's Budget will remain the same as last year.

The CFO stated that there is a line item under Administration for Police Testing the \$9,500.00 should be added to that line item. This amount includes two tests, the Chief and a Sergeant if needed.

Fire Dept. – Fire Chief and Deputy Chief explained that the total amount of their budget was remaining the same, but some of the amounts in the line items were changing. SCBA down to \$11,000 from \$13,000 - general maintenance will increase to \$20,000. A new line item will be created for Verizon Wireless Telecommunications with a \$2,500 budget since it is unique to this department.

The Fire Chief explained that the older engine #3 has significant rust on the doors. Older engine significant rust on the doors they have a quote to repair the doors at \$12,500 or replace the doors at \$26,000. He stated that they are in the process of receiving a new estimate because the original company is going out of business. This was decided this will be a capital item.

He also stated that as part of the capital budget this year he would like to replace mobile radios at \$27,700.00 which includes 6 radios and chargers to support them. He also stated that they are waiting on the final specs for the rescue truck.

OEM – Kingsley Hill stated that there were no changes to OEM budget.

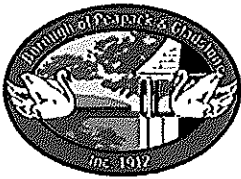
First Aid – Council President Suriano stated that the amount would not be changing anything from years past. The Council stated that the First Aid Squad does an excellent job.

Recreation – Diane Becker, Recreation Director stated that there is no change to the total amount of the budget, just to the allocations for the line items.

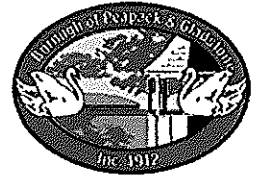
Police Dept.– The Chief and Sergeant said that the maintenance on the vehicles need to be increased to \$10,900 which is a \$400 difference. They are working on a new copier service contract – they need to increase the computer equipment line to add \$4,700. The Chief asked if office supplies would be pooled again as last year or if each department would have their own line item.

There was discussion amongst the Council and it was decided to keep the office supplies pooled. Each department will be allocated \$250 in office supplies. Each department will have \$250 in office supplies for extras.

Increase the cleaning of uniforms to \$1,600.00.



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Mayor and Council - There was discussion as to whether decrease the legal fees since some matters have been settled. It was decided to keep the line item at \$15,000 for COAH fees because there will still be fees for the settlement.

Planner – It was decided to keep the Planners line at \$5,000

Consultant - \$0

Clerks – The Clerk stated that the budget stayed the same except the amounts were allocated amongst the line items.

Legal – This was decided to stay the same as the past year.

Litigation/Tax – This was decided to stay the same as the past year.

Finance/administration – Increase in dues/licenses by \$400.00 as well as increase education to \$1,700 for Holly taking the QPA classes.

Council President Suriano said that the operating budget was finished and the salaries and Capital Budget can be discussed at another meeting.

Miscellaneous

Councilman Corigliano stated that he is hoping to plan another special meeting before the end of the year to bring the police contract for approval.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – 3 MINUTES PER PERSON – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

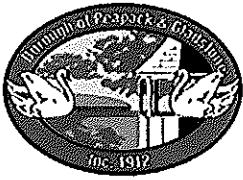
Sama Habibi – 8 Mosle Road – Mrs. Habibi stated that she was working on the pie contest and she ran into Anthony Damiano who was working on his own time to install the new furniture pieces in the Police Station. She stated that he explained that the pieces were donated to the department and he was making the fit. She said that the office looked like a professional office and she wanted to make the Council aware of this and that he did a beautiful job. Councilman Corigliano stated that the Council was aware of this and that it was mentioned at another meeting as well as the Mayor mentioned it in his gazette article.

John Skinner – 20 Pottersville Road – Mr. Skinner stated that his comments are his own. He asked if John Fodor would now be the Officer in Charge. He asked if hypothetically if the Prosecutors office came back and said that 3 new officers needed to be hire, will the Council take this into consideration. Councilman Corigliano said that the Council would have to consider any of their recommendations.

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Councilman Simpson, seconded by Councilman Lemma, that this meeting be adjourned at 10:13pm. This motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy A. Bretzger



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Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk