



**MAYOR & COUNCIL**  
**THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE,**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**APRIL 16, 2024**

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The regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone was held on Tuesday, April 16, 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 14, 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: Councilwoman Murphy, Councilman Silva, Councilwoman Sueta, Council President Sweeney, Councilwoman Weible and Mayor Corigliano

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

Absent: Councilman Quartello

**PUBLIC COMMENTS – 3 MINUTES PER PERSON – NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Doris Lynn, 2 Legend Hollow Court, Freehold Township, inhouse counsel with Animal Protection League of New Jersey and the League of Humane Voters of New Jersey stated that killing geese is an ineffective and cruel response to the issue. Killing is ineffective because as long as there is water and geese preferred vegetation, the geese will continue to be attractive to this area. She said, as you know, habitat modification using riparian buffers and meadows are the number one solution to permanently deter the geese. She mentioned some plants that are geese deterrents. She feels with the proper changes the geese would move out of the park and lethal methods could be avoided. She stated light turf, robin radar, sonic net, flock free sprays, hawk sonic system, bird control laser broadcast system are few non-lethal options. She said they are having great success in New Jersey with towns and entities implementing these solutions. She said they are available for a site visit and or presentation with their ecological landscape designer to discuss best options for this solution.

Doreen Fraga, Saddlebrook, NJ Special Projects Director with Animal Protection League of New Jersey, left a packet of information for the Council to review and an example of a riparian buffer done in Avon-by-Sea and they now are not having a problem. She stated they would love to come out for a site visit and go over what we already have in place and try to help us eliminate the geese.

Barry Braun, 63 Main Street, Peapack, NJ stated back in 2009 he began a decade long battle with Lyme's Disease and for half that time he was completely disabled. As he recovered, one of the things he did was walk in Liberty Park and sit and watch the ducks and the geese. This Park is very important to him because of the life that is there. It is a hub of life. He began to have new profound appreciation for life in general. He said the life in and around Liberty Park continued to go on as his life went on. He said they will forever share that bond.

Jacqueline Braun, 63 Main Street, Peapack, lives with her brother, Barry and her fiancé and she said they are good moral people. When she first read about this in the Bernardsville News she said all three of their stomachs dropped. She urged the Council to reconsider and listen to different options rather than gassing



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and killing the geese. She stated that she knew nothing about geese prior to this and during this past month did a crash course on geese. She explained the process of how these geese would be killed. She stated there are other options other than euthanizing.

Elizabeth Jonak, 7 Franklin Court, Bernardsville, stated she was very disturbed about the gassing of the geese and she urged the Council to reconsider killing them and consider Animal Protection League of New Jersey's generous offer to help.

Ken Jonak, 7 Franklin Court, Bernardsville, he is against the gassing of the geese and he asked if they can work with the Animal Protection League to find a non-lethal solution.

Ann Goldberg, 39-25 Knott Terrace, Fairlawn expressed her hope that the Council will not gas the geese but instead use non-lethal methods and work with the Animal Protection League of New Jersey. She has personally seen how habitat modification totally keeps the geese away.

Valerie Devin, 79 Norman Avenue, Lake Hiawatha, stated that the Council makes the decision to work with the Animal Protection League and to do something other than gas the geese. She has seen them and would just like them to be protected and not killed.

Lynn Perry, 59 Main Street, Peapack was appalled when she found out that this plan was being put into place. She loves Liberty Park and the animals that are there. She has never found the geese to be a nuisance even now when they are being protective of their nests and their mates. She said being a person of faith she believes we should care for all of Gods creatures. We are here to live with them side by side and to care for them and be good stewards for God's creatures.

Gail Kopp, 125 Colt Lane, Gladstone has a one-acre pond on her property. They feel the feelings with regards to the goose poop. What we have come up with what seems to work is a guy with a rake and he helps us out with that. An interesting observation that they have noticed over the 15 years is usually one pair will choose to stay and bring up babies and they will chase away all the other geese. They have had very good luck over the years with that. She said it would also be ineffective because when you kill this group of geese, another group will come in. There are lots of geese in the area.

Greg Skinner, 20 Pottersville Road, Gladstone, acknowledged how tough of a decision this must have been. The Borough has been wrestling with this issue for 10 years maybe longer. They have tried just about every method from hiring landscapers to making buffers and plant life, hired a company called Geese Police, a company that has dogs to get the geese away, have put animal statues up around the pond, wire fencing, geese repellent, and orange strobe lights that experts said was good. He said unfortunately none of that has worked and the Council has gotten to a point that something needs to be done.

Ruth Williams, Highlands Avenue, Peapack, agreed with what Greg Skinner said in that it is a very difficult decision that has been 10 years in the making. As someone who regularly uses the park, her husband runs every day in the park. She said it seems like a situation that does not seem to have a solution and the number of the geese and the activity of the geese has genuinely interfered with the quality of life as residents to be able to enjoy the park. She truly appreciates all the sentiments that have been expressed on behalf of animals. She knows that no one feels that it is a good idea to have to euthanize geese but as



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she listens to the comments, people from Freehold, Saddlebrook, Bernardsville, Fair Lawn, Lake Hiawatha only a handful of people from our area came to protest this decision. She thinks they respect this decision maybe not on a humanitarian level but they respect this decision as she does.

Susan Rubright, 14 Ridge Road, Peapack grew up in this town, her mother grew up in town; the park has been a very important part of her life, her mother's life. She understands the difficult decisions. She feels the Animal Protection League of New Jersey presented some nice options and she would want the council to consider their idea. She is a big supporter of natural landscape and working with the animals is what it is supposed to do.

Bonnie Trasino, Ramapo Way, stated that she is appreciative of the tennis courts we have but wanted to know if the Council could get new nets.

Mayor Corigliano stated that we are aware of the condition of the tennis courts. We have allocated in our capital budget renewing the tennis courts this year at their current location or possibly moving them to a more suitable location.

Mike Koppas, 25 Willow Avenue, Peapack supports the councils' decision to euthanize the geese and as he recalled he said they started talking about it last fall after having tried many things after the park reopened. He thinks it is a very good decision but a difficult one. In addition to the geese being in the park, he has seen them walking all around the town. They make a mess no matter where they go. He said euthanizing is not an easy decision but after hearing everyone and all the methods the Council has tried over last the 10 years, he and his wife support their decision.

Pete Engleman, Hillcrest Avenue, Gladstone agreed that it is a very hard decision. He said he has been googling geese and with global warming and them nesting longer and them not migrating as soon, the amount of poop that geese put out is unbelievable. There are so many toxins in goose poop and with dogs liking to lick things and children being curious and are especially vulnerable because of their immune systems developing, therefore we definitely need to get rid of the goose poop and it is a tough job to do. The park is not really usable the way we would like to use it. You can't have an Easter egg hunt there. The water is getting fowled, there is poop all over the benches. Something needs to be done.

Bill Simpson, 53 Mendham Road, Gladstone stated that he has been in the park during the past 6 to 8 weeks and it doesn't seem to bad in there. He said in fact, it is quite clean. He asked if that is DPW's job or are there less geese? Is this something that happens seasonally?

Councilwoman Murphy stated because of all the rain we have had it washes the poop away and DPW does go in there and clean up a bit. Prior to nesting they wander around town and are less focused with staying right by the water so they are more spread out. She said once they start nesting they will get closer and when they start molting they will stay in the water at night. There are about 25 to 30 resident Canadian Geese and it does fluxuate a bit. USDA did come out and that is what they counted. She said that she walks around town quite often and she usually see between 20 to 30 range.

Mr. Simpson asked how long do you think it will be before a new crew will move it?

Councilwoman Murphy stated in speaking with the USDA, they said that once this group of geese are deceased and not at the park, we do need to maintain the deterrents that we have already been doing.



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We would keep the flashing lights, they flash all day and night and this disturbs their sleep patterns. She said once a Canada goose is a resident in an area they become quite tolerant of some of these deterrents. We will continue to spray a goose repellent that is an organic material that has an odor that they do not like. USDA has said that if we continue with these deterrents, it is very unlikely that they will come back and if we do get one or two that come back they recommend getting the geese police, the dogs would come out right away. Once the current geese are gone, the idea is to go back in and repair the riparian buffer which these geese have destroyed after it was planted. She said the picture that was shown previously of the very nice 50' riparian buffer is nice however we are a small suburban park and we are not able to do a 50' riparian buffer but we do want to do as much of a buffer that we can with the space we have. We will do our due diligent and find out the best way to put some new grasses in there. She said there should be some height to a riparian buffer at a minimum it should be 2 or 3 feet high. All of the plants that we had in there were eaten by the geese. We tried lily pads in the pond to decrease the surface area so they would be deterred from landing and those all died because of the really high nitrogen levels in the pond from the geese. Mr. Simpson stated it is a tough vote.

Stacy Andres, 88 Main Street, Peapack has lived in this area for 45 years and can live anywhere she wants. She said this is the countryside and the culture that goes with the country. She said most people who live here do want to live in a pristine central park kind of setting. She said this type of park is not where you will be meeting for Thai Chi, for example. It is not the culture of this area. If that is the culture you would like then you are totally rewriting this area and what this town is about. She is completely appalled and embarrassed as what she would call utter stupidity.

Camille DeCarlo, 353 North Rd, Chester said her husband and his family have been in the general area for over 60 years and originally that pond had very large swans. She wanted to know if there was ever an issue with the swans? They are larger, more aggressive, they poop bigger. Was there anything like this to kill the swans?

Mayor Corigliano stated that the swans were never killed. When they renovated the park, the swans were given away and as you have noticed they have not been replaced because of similar issues.

Ms. DeCarlo said that she was very surprised to hear about all the things the town has tried to do to keep the geese away.

Council President Sweeney stated that he has been in town for 25 years and 18 years on the Council and it has been an issue for 20 years. The superintendent of DPW in the early 2000's was fighting the battle.

Ms. DeCarlo feels that if they have been battling this now for 10 years and the solutions have not worked she said it would make sense to let the Animal Control League help you with some of the ideas they have given you and she sees that as a better solution than killing them.

Mark Engebreston, 35 Main Street, Peapack said his wife and he have been residents for over 35 years, raised four kids and he does remember when the park was in a condition where you could actually put a blanket down and have a picnic with your children so as hard as this is, and he has animals as well, he does know that he would put his kids before the animals when there is a problem. He feels this is a very difficult decision but he would like to see the park being used how it used to be when he raised his kids.



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Ed McGlynn, Patriot Hills Drive, Basking Ridge, NJ has lived in Somerset Hills since 1951. He no longer lives in this town, but he frequents Peapack-Gladstone and the park. He said someone tonight asked why we live here. He said it is a very nice area and he frequents the park very often. His first comment was he finds the method of what is being proposed to be rather abhorrent considering there are other ways to do it. The 2<sup>nd</sup> part is he does not think anybody can realistically expect that if you eliminate this flock of geese that others will not show up again. I find that incredulous to think the geese will not come back to a pond again. Will this be a perpetual thing every few years? He said if you really want to remove them, there are other more humane ways to do it.

With no more public comment, Mayor Corigliano closed the public comment section.

Mayor Corigliano read a prepared statement, reproduced as:

**Borough of Peapack & Gladstone**

**Borough Statement on Geese Remediation**

The Borough Council appreciates those expressing their opinion regarding the infestation of the invasive species of geese that have inhabited Liberty Park. Indeed, the infestation has been a vexing issue for the Borough for some twenty years now. It is not a new issue.

The Borough has tried every reasonable, humane effort to discourage these animals from occupying our Park. Some have worked temporarily, but none have provided a permanent solution. When the park was renovated, our landscape architect designed a riparian buffer for the pond but the geese ate the plantings – multiple times. After very careful consideration and with some reservation, we have opted to have the population of these invasive animals removed by the USDA. Despite hearsay to the contrary, the USDA solution gives the Borough the best chance of managing the infestation.

The Borough asks everyone to please remember the circumstances regarding our Park. The Park and its pond are not a natural habitat, but rather a fully man-made development. It is simply too small to support a population of up to 60 geese in a way that is compatible with safe and enjoyable use by our residents.

Remediation measures of these creatures is an accepted practice. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has stated that a manageable population of Canadian Geese in New Jersey is 41,000; the current population of these birds in New Jersey is estimated to exceed 70,000. There is clearly an overpopulation issue, which leads to the spread of disease and degradation of the environment. We also recognize that we will need to employ non-lethal deterrents once the entrenched population is removed.

But first and foremost, the nature of the birds that have inhabited Liberty Park are a safety risk to our community and this, very simply, is our concern. Their behavior and excrement are a threat to Park users, both human and animal. Further, they affect the water quality in the pond to the extent that the Borough needs to treat the water to prevent large algae blooms. It is unfortunate that these birds have chosen the Park to make their home, however their presence is simply incompatible with safety and enjoyment by our residents.



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**OLD BUSINESS**

- Library Renovation Update

Council President Sweeney stated that he, Councilman Quartello, Nancy Bretzger, Carol, and Meg Walters met with the County because the bids came in on the library project and the lowest conforming bid was \$630,000. We have a shortfall of at least \$60,000 to move this forward. The Friends of Library have exhausted their fund-raising efforts until we can actually put a shovel in the ground and show them that we are making progress. The recommendations of the property committee, Council President Sweeney, Councilman Quartello and Councilwoman Murphy is that we will come up with the difference someway.

Nancy Bretzger stated that they found some money by cancelling unused Capital items and hopefully they will be awarding the contract at the May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mayor Corigliano stated the money found will allow us to award the contract but the furniture is still an issue so we look to work with The Friends on that.

**NEW BUSINESS - none**

**MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION/APPROVALS**

Mayor Corigliano acknowledged National Librarian Day and Nicole Pascoe the librarian for the Peapack Gladstone Branch, who was in the audience.

**MINUTES**

Motion by Council President Sweeney to approve the Executive Session Meeting Minutes and the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 26, 2024, and the minutes from the Special Budget meeting on March 20, 2024 seconded by Councilwoman Murphy, roll call taken, motion passed unanimously. Councilman Silva abstained from vote from Executive Session Meeting and Regular meeting minutes on March 26, 2024.

**ORDINANCES**

**PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCE 1140-2024 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 23-58 ENTITLED "INSTALLATION OF IMPROVEMENTS OR GUARANTEES" OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE, COUNTY OF SOMERSET, STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO REVISE PERFORMANCE AND MAINTENANCE GUARANTEES AND ESTABLISH SAFETY AND STABILIZATION GUARANTEES**

Councilwoman Murphy motions to open the Ordinance for public discussion; seconded by Councilman Silva, roll call taken, motion passed unanimously.

Being no public comment, motion made by Councilman Silva to close the public hearing; seconded by Council President John Sweeney, roll call taken; said motion passed unanimously.



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Motion made by Council President Sweeney to adopt Ordinance 1140-2024, seconded by Councilwoman Murphy, roll call taken, said motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Corigliano stated that Ordinance 1140-2024 is adopted and shall be published by Title only in the Bernardsville News in accordance with the law.

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 1138-2024 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER XII, TITLED "FIRE PROTECTION AND PREVENTION" OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES SUBSECTION 12-1.8., TITLED "NON-LIFE HAZARD USES" AND SUBSECTION 12-1.9., TITLED "PERMITS"**

Motion made by Councilwoman Murphy to introduce the Ordinance; seconded by Council President Sweeney, roll call taken; said motion passes unanimously.

Mayor Corigliano stated that Ordinance 1138-2024 is now introduced and shall be published in summary in the Bernardsville News. The public hearing for this said ordinance shall be on May 14, 2024 at 7:00PM or shortly thereafter.

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 1139-2024 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 4, POLICE REGULATIONS, OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE, TO ADD A NEW SECTION 4-9 ENTITLED "RESIDENT SAFETY AND PROTECTION"**

Motion made by Councilman Silva to introduce ordinance 1139-2024; seconded by Councilwoman Sueta, roll call taken; said motion passes unanimously.

Mayor Corigliano stated that Ordinance 1139-2024 is introduced and shall be published in summary in the Bernardsville News and the public hearing for said ordinance will be on May 14, 2024 at 7:00PM or shortly thereafter.

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 1141-2024 AN ORDINANCE TO SET THE COMPENSATION OF THE MAYOR, BOROUGH COUNCIL MEMBERS, DEPARTMENT HEADS AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES**

Motion made by Councilwoman Murphy to introduce Ordinance 1141-2024; seconded by Councilman Silva, roll call taken; said motion passes unanimously.

Mayor Corigliano stated that Ordinance 1141-2024 is introduced and shall be published in summary in the Bernardsville News and the public hearing for said ordinance will be on May, 14, 2024 at 7:00PM or shortly thereafter.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION NO. 83-24 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE REAPPOINTMENT OF AN INTERIM MUNICIPAL COURT ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE SHARED MUNICIPAL COURTS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BEDMINSTER ("BEDMINSTER"), THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE ("PEAPACK-GLADSTONE"), THE BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE ("BERNARDSVILLE") AND THE TOWNSHIP OF BERNARDS ("BERNARDS")**

**RESOLUTION NO. 84-24 RESOLUTION AMENDING ARTICLE V-COMPENSATION AND COST REIMBURSEMENT, SECTION 5 STIPENDS (b) FIRE DEPARTMENT OF THE PERSONNEL POLICIES OF THE**



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*BOROUGH OF PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE*

**RESOLUTION NO. 85-24** *RESOLUTION AUTHORIZATING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A STORMWATER FACILITY MAINTENANCE AND EASEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN ESSEX FOX HUNT REALTY, L.L.C AND THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE*

**RESOLUTION NO. 86-24** *AUTHORIZATION FOR MILO CONSOLLA-KUTSUNA TO BECOME A JUNIOR FIREMAN OF THE PEAPACK & GLADSTONE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT*

**RESOLUTION NO. 87-24** *AUTHORIZING BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE TO CONDUCT A SELF EXAMINATION OF THE 2024 BUDGET*

**RESOLUTION NO. 88-24** *RESOLUTION TO APPOINT CHRISTIAN W. CLARKE AS SEASONAL BOROUGH DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS LABORER*

**RESOLUTION NO. 90-24** *RESOLUTION AUTHORIZATING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET AND THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE FOR CURB ESTENSIONS AND ADA COMPLIANT CURB RAMPS ON MAIN STREET (CR 512) AT WILLOW ROAD*

Consent Agenda vote for Resolutions 83-24, 85-24 to 88-24, 90-24, motion made by Council President Sweeney, seconded by Councilwoman Weible, roll call taken, said motion passes unanimously.

**RESOLUTION 84-24** *RESOLUTION AMENDING ARTICLE V-COMPENSATION AND COST REIMBURSEMENT, SECTION 5 STIPENDS (b) FIRE DEPARTMENT OF THE PERSONNEL POLICIES OF THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE*

**Motion made by Councilman Sweeney to adopt Resolution 84-24; seconded by Councilman Silva**

**Discussion**

Councilwoman Weible questioned the wording of the stipend; Nancy Bretzger stated there is another section that has a higher amount and they are only amending the one section referenced. Roll call vote taken, said motion passes unanimously.

**BILLS LIST**

**RESOLUTION NO. 89-24** *Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List Total Amount: \$1,136,859.95*

Council President Sweeney made a motion to approve the Bills List, seconded by Councilwoman Murphy, roll call taken; said motion passes unanimously.

**Council Reports**

Only comment from Mayor Corigliano on finance. He said the Council will approve the budget at the May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting and he and Councilman Quartello will have a presentation.





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**Mayor's Executive Summary**

Council President Sweeney will follow up with Brad Fagen on the nets for the tennis courts and will advise Councilman Quartello about the condition of the tennis courts.

**Public Comments on Agenda items only.**

No public comments.

Mayor Corigliano thanked all the residents who attended the meeting.

With no further business, Council President Sweeney made a motion to adjourn at 7:55pm, seconded by Councilman Silva, roll call taken; said motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

*Nancy Bretzger*  
Nancy Bretzger, Borough Clerk