



MAYOR & COUNCIL
THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE,
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 29, 2024



The regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone was held on Tuesday, October 29, 2024 and began at 7:01PM.

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: Councilwoman Murphy, Councilman Quartello, Councilwoman Sueta, Council President Sweeney, Councilwoman Weible and Mayor Corigliano

Absent: Councilman Silva

Also present were: Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk/Administrator, Alex Fisher, Esq., representing Borough Attorney Steve Warner.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments

OLD BUSINESS

●Tennis Courts

Councilman Quartello spoke on the concept plan that Borough's Engineer, Bill Ryden provided the Council and the 2 layout plans for the tennis courts. Layout A would be putting the tennis courts in place of the far sided baseball field at the Municipal Building, making room for two tennis courts and 2 pickle ball courts and leaving the basketball court. Layout B would be over by the Schoolhouse Trail Park. Councilman Quartello is leaning towards Layout A.

Councilwoman Murphy stated she likes Layout A; however, she would like to see a cost comparison on this versus keeping the old ones and fixing them up. She does not think putting them over by the Schoolhouse Trail is a good idea. There will be too much maintenance in trying to maintain them with all the leaves and such.

Councilwoman Sweeney agrees with Councilwoman Murphy and her comments about the Schoolhouse Trail location.

Mayor Corigliano agrees that the Schoolhouse Trail is not a good location. He also agrees that they should evaluate all costs as far as repairing what the Borough has versus full replacement. He asked about a hitting wall.



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Councilman Quartello did speak with Nancy Bretzger and there is a space adjacent to the curb by the playground that is open and could be suitable for a hitting wall.

Borough Administrator Nancy Bretzger will follow up with Bill Ryden to get pricing for new versus old.

Councilwoman Sueta agrees that putting it by Schoolhouse Trail is not a good idea. She likes Layout A for all the reasons mentioned.

The consensus of the Council is either Layout A or renovating Komline Park where the tennis courts currently are. Bill Ryden will put the specs together for comparison and it can go out to bid earlier in the year so they will be up and running for the next upcoming season.

NEW BUSINESS - none

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION/APPROVALS

- An Ordinance for the protection of Borough of Peapack and Gladstone trees

Councilwoman Murphy stated that the State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection is requiring certain size towns to have a Tree Removal Ordinance. The state was requesting it to be active by May 2024. The gist of the Ordinance is to control tree removal and have replacement guidelines to reduce stormwater runoff and pollutants associated with heavy tree removal. The state has provided a template for this Ordinance. It has some basic minimal standards that the Borough must meet. The Borough's Engineer, Bill Ryden has reviewed the template. She said by adopting this, the Borough would want to deter tree removal on both public and private properties. The Ordinance has guidelines that if you do remove trees what will be required to replace them. She has looked at some other local municipalities' ordinances and they are all pretty similar. The state is also recommending that the Borough create a Tree Removal Permit. Some towns use their Zoning Officials, some use their Department of Public Works and some use a designated person, for example Bernardsville has a Tree Conservation Officer. Once the Ordinance is introduced, the Land Use Boards reviews it, then NJDEP has to reevaluate it to ensure any changes to the template provided meet those minimal standards. The State also recommends coming up with a Tree Escrow account.

Councilman Sweeney asked what the fines would be if we did not pass this to the satisfaction of the DEP? What would the repercussions be?



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Borough Attorney Steve Warner said he is not aware of what the penalties would be. He recommended the Council use Bernardsville's model because it has passed. He also suggested that if the Borough uses their own version they should run it by DEP first before introducing it. This is a requirement that all Tier A and B's (now A's) for stormwater permitting purposes. He said he will have to do some research on penalties but he knows there will be penalties. This is a requirement.

Council President Sweeney asked if funds in the Tree Permit Escrow fund be used to offset hiring someone to manage this. This is an unfunded mandate coming down from the state.

Borough Attorney Steve Warner stated he is not aware of any towns doing that. He said the goal is to utilize the funds for planting of trees in other locations than the subject site.

Councilwoman Murphy stated this ordinance is intended for a developer who brings a development plan to the Land Use Board and is planning on removing a bunch of trees. This would be a guideline for the Land Use Board to use for developments.

Mayor Corigliano cited the example that if a homeowner decided to clear a large area of trees from their yard and it created a run off, this ordinance would address this issue.

Discussion ensued.

It was decided that Borough Attorney Steve Warner and Councilwoman Murphy will work on this and come up with another draft.

- An Ordinance of the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone amending and supplementing Chapter XXIII, Land Development, Articles III and IV, regulating land disturbance and lot Grading

Councilwoman Murphy said this is in a similar category as the previous ordinance discussed. This ordinance has to do with land disturbance and lot grading sometimes referred to a deep slope ordinance. The Environmental Commission, EC has looked at some local towns' deep slope ordinances. This would be the health of the soil, grading safety, etc. The EC put together a version of this land disturbance ordinance, brought it in front of council, pretty much everyone on council thought it was too cumbersome, too complicated, etc. The council went back to EC modified it and then gave it to the Land Use Board, they created a sub-committee and worked on it for the last several months. The version that Councilwoman Murphy is taking about tonight is the final version. This would be enforced by Borough's Engineer, Bill Ryden.



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Councilwoman Murphy explained this Ordinance would apply when you are developing/altering the land. This is another important ordinance that the Borough should have on its books. She feels the Council should move forward with this. The Land Use Board has already put their stamp of approval on it.

Nancy Bretzger Borough Administrator stated it would be introduced at the November 12th meeting and then adopted at the December 17th meeting.

Council agreed on that decision.

MINUTES

Councilman Quartello made motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on October 8, seconded by Council President Sweeney, roll call vote taken, said motion passed unanimously. Councilwoman Sueta abstained due absence of meeting.

ORDINANCES

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 1146-2024 *ORDINANCE FOR THE PROTECTION OF BOROUGH OF PEAPACK AND GLADSTONE TREES*

This ordinance was discussed and it was decided to table it.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 191-24 *RESOLUTION FOR MAYORAL APPOINTMENT FOR THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE TO THE HISTORIC COMMISSION*

RESOLUTION NO. 192-24 *RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO INCREASE STAFFING TO TEN (10) POLICE OFFICERS*

RESOLUTION NO. 193-24 *RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH SELLERS, ANDREW AND JUDITH TUCKER, FOR THE PURCHASE OF A FARMLAND PRESERVATION AGREEMENT*

RESOLUTION NO. 194-24 *AUTHORIZING BOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN HALLOWEEN SAFE PASSAGE EVENT NOVEMBER 1 AND 2, 2024*

RESOLUTION NO. 195-24 *RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A STIPEND FOR BRAD FAGAN FOR OBTAINING HIS RECYCLING COORDINATOR CERTIFICATION*

Motion made by Councilwoman Murphy for a consent vote on Resolutions No. 191-24, 192-24 and 194-24 and 195-24; seconded by Councilwoman, roll call taken, said motion passed unanimously.



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Motion made by Council President Sweeney to adopt Resolution No. 193-24 *RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH SELLERS, ANDREW AND JUDITH TUCKER, FOR THE PURCHASE OF A FARMLAND PRESERVATION AGREEMENT*; seconded by Councilwoman Murphy

Discussion

Councilwoman Murphy said the Borough has been working on this since 2019. This is the final step and it is very exciting. The Borough typically pays 20% for these projects but in this case all of the Borough's costs are being covered by Highlands money which is wonderful for the Borough. It is a beautiful piece of property.

Mayor Corigliano said credit goes out to the volunteers and Council members who worked on this. This is the fourth property that the Borough has acquired with virtually little outlay.

Borough Attorney Steve Warner said it is just a little shy of 35 acres with no municipal obligation. It is all funding from state, county and Highlands contributions. The appraised value of the rights increased in the interim but the seller capped the proceeds.

Roll call vote was taken, said motion passed unanimously.

BILLS LIST

RESOLUTION NO 196-24 Approval of Bills as signed and listed on the Bill Payment List Total Amount: **\$778,069.07**

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

Council Reports

Councilwoman Sueta said on Saturday, October 12th there was a water main break on the 10-inch force main that transfers all flow from Miller Lane to the New Jersey American Treatment facility. She said that the pipe is being examined to determine the cause of the break, DPW was notified and a case number was provided. The Bedminster Finance Department was notified to begin the purchase order process to secure funds to make vendor payments.

She spoke on the meeting with STAB that occurred on 9/25/24. She said as they discussed in March the Miller Lane pump station in Bedminster is deteriorating and is being repaired. She said that the Borough's contribution will hopefully be lessened because of sewer grants becoming available and with the expenses being shared between Far Hills and Bedminster.

Council President Sweeney explained that in respects to our share, Peapack is really the big dog in STAB because it is based on flow.

Councilwoman Sueta said the refund that the Borough has been anticipating should be received shortly and that will be \$21,403.00.



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Council President Sweeney referred to the report from the police committee. He told the Council that there are a number of items that they should start to become familiar with and start thinking about. A very important item right now is replacing the in-car cameras in the patrol cars. They are ten years old. One camera is no longer operational and there is concern that they are going to start to fail soon. The estimate they got from Watchguard/Motorola which is the same company they are using for their body cams is \$91,400 payable over a 5-year period. After that time period, the cost will be \$5,000 per year. It is estimated they have a 15-year life span. With the body cams, the state no longer requires the car camera but the car cameras actually pick up a whole lot more. They can be recording before the officer gets out of the car. Also, with the body cam when the officer is standing next to the car, the footage usually shows the top of the person's head not their body. It does not provide the same level of protection. The Police Department is requesting that this be put in the capital budget for 2025. In addition, there is also a request for flock cameras also known as ALPRs, Automatic License Plate Readers. He said Bedminster just got six of them. They received money from the County so he sent an email to the Borough Police Chief to have him explore that option. He said the Borough has one resident who is willing to donate one of these cameras. He explained that the advantage to these cameras is that they can be installed at different locations in town and an officer can be sitting in their car and be able to view all different locations from his car so technically he can be in more than one place at a time. These cameras also have artificial intelligence so for example if you need to search for a red sports car, you can ask the camera to search it and flock cameras have the ability to do that. These cameras would have been great to have when the Borough was having its rash of car thefts. The cost of each camera is \$4,000.00 a year to rent them. They are solar paneled.

There is also the potential for a resident to gift a 2-year-old Cadillac Escalade to be used as the Police Chief's car. With or without that gift, the Borough will need to think about replacing the Chief's car. It is a 2014 and has \$120,000 police miles on it. The transmission was just replaced. The idea was to give this vehicle to another department. If this gift comes through, the Borough needs to be ready to say yes or no in terms of accepting it.

Another issue he brought up is Jobs 4 Blue and certain modifications to the Ordinance. He stated that a lengthy discussion had already occurred with the Council on this. Jobs for Blue will hire our police officers to do jobs in other towns, they would get paid directly by Jobs 4 Blue who assume the financial risk. Jobs 4 Blue charges the contractor/vendor a 7% charge on top of what we have in our Ordinance. He has looked at other town's ordinances and did not find that they modified their ordinances to that affect however, our Borough Attorney from a legal standpoint does recommend that our Borough modify our ordinance. There was also discussion about the \$25 per hour administrative fee. Councilwoman Murphy suggests that it be capped at \$100. He asks the Council to start thinking about this for next year. He said Mendham Borough did this through a resolution. He favors the change being made by resolution and then it can be revisited at Reorganization every year in terms of what the Borough would be paying.



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Mayor Corigliano stated that he is the one that came up with the \$25 minimum rate and that is pretty much covering all of the Borough costs plus \$5 for administrative fees. He doesn't see that going away. He said this still needs to be worked on.

Mayor Corigliano stated some things that he has been working on.

The Highlands is moving along. He has been in contact with John Szabo. He is working on it and should have something back to us within 30 days.

The numbers have come out for Round 4 from Affordable Housing. The Borough is not yet ready to comment on them. There will be a meeting with professionals to review things.

He complimented Borough Administrator, Nancy Bretzger and her team about the recent newsletter that went out to all residents and the Borough received a lot of positive feedback on it.

Two weeks ago, he met with the Director of the New Jersey Transit regarding the condition of the Gladstone Train Station and rail yard. He is working with the Director to get the yard cleaned up.

He mentioned the New Jersey League of Municipalities in which he will be attending as well as a few others.

The hotel at Natirar, better known as Pendry Natirar opened up formally this past Friday night with a very nice ribbon cutting.

He said, as Mayor, he performed his first wedding ceremony this past Saturday night; he congratulated the couple.

He said the Borough had their arbitration with the PBA.

He has been very active with the other Mayors in the Somerset Hills on the Somerset Hills Safety Committee. One of the things that they have been discussing are flock cameras also known as ALPR's, Automatic License Plate Readers. Ten of them have been installed in Bernardsville's with the largest car theft problem in the area, 5 or 6 of them installed in Bedminster, supposedly Bridgewater is doing some, Far Hills maybe doing one or two and Peapack and Gladstone will be looking at some as well. They are very costly but work well. The Borough did a press release about it.

The Mayor said that someone was arrested in town last month from stealing money out of a landscaping truck. He said that out of the five towns, this is the first time that someone was charged under the Borough's safety ordinance. The good news is that the collective efforts from the Mayors and Police Chiefs of the five towns is that word has come back that more cases are being prosecuted than before. The Mayors and Police Chiefs are being heard.

Councilwoman Weible stated that the Borough had their Halloween Parade. There were about 100 participants. She said it was a success.



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Council President Sweeney stated that the Fire House had their open house immediately following the Halloween Parade and it was attended.

Mayor's Executive Summary

Mayor Corigliano stated the following:

Councilwoman Murphy will be reviewing the tree ordinance revisions.

Borough Administrator, Nancy Bretzger will be putting the grading ordinance on the November 12th Agenda.

Councilwoman Weible will coordinate with Matt Ghiretti in the Clerk's office regarding the Recreation Committee calendar on the website.

Public Comment

Anthony Melillo, 185 Main Street, Gladstone had some questions on the Tree Ordinance. Councilwoman Murphy will explore his questions.

Carol Lane, 1 Miller Lane, Gladstone expressed a concerned with the ordinance about the cost to replace trees. Homeowners might be more reluctant to take down dead trees because the expense to replace them could be exorbitant.

Mayor Corigliano stated that this was covered and it will be worked into the ordinance.

Councilwoman Murphy stated that it will be a balance for the homeowners and businesses.

Public comment ended.

Motion made by Councilwoman Murphy to go into Executive Session at 8:22PM, seconded by Councilwoman Weible, roll call taken; said motion passed unanimously.

Executive session ended at 8:38PM, with no further business, Councilman Quartello made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40pm; seconded by Councilwoman Weible, motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,


Nancy Bretzger, Borough Clerk