

**LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
January 17, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Eric Ford called the meeting to order at 6:13 P.M., noting that the meeting had been advertised in compliance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

**FLAG SALUTE:**

Councilman Adam Walcoff led the flag salute.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Darren Matik; Councilwoman Blair Albright; Councilwoman Stacy DeDomenicis; Councilman Matt Levinson; Councilman Todd Michael; Councilman Adam Walcoff; and Council President Eric Ford.

Absent: None

Also Present: Joseph L. Youngblood, Jr., City Solicitor; Vince Polistina, City Engineer; and Leigh Ann Napoli, Municipal Clerk.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES WITHOUT FORMAL READING**

Councilwoman Albright motioned, seconded by Councilman Michael, to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2023 Regular meeting and the January 1, 2024 Reorganization meeting without formal reading. Five members of Council were in favor with one abstention by Councilwoman DeDomenicis. Motion was approved.

**RESOLUTIONS**

Council President Ford explained that former Councilwoman June Byrnes resigned on December 31, 2023 after being elected to the Board of County Commissioners. Pursuant to the Municipal Vacancy Law, the municipal party of the republican party (because Mrs. Byrnes was a member of the republican party) was to present names to City Council to fill the vacancy. One name was submitted, Ken Kelly.

**30-2024** A Resolution appointing Kenneth Kelly to fill the vacancy on Linwood City Council created by the resignation of June Byrnes

The City Clerk read Resolution No. 30 of 2024 by title only. Councilman Walcoff motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Albright, to approve Resolution No. 30. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved. The Mayor administered the Oath of Office to Ken Kelly.

**42-2024** A Resolution honoring the 2023 Linwood Panther JV Football Team

The City Clerk read Resolution No. 42 of 2024 by title only. Councilwoman Albright motioned, seconded by Councilman Walcoff, to approve Resolution No. 42. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved. The Mayor read and presented the Resolution to the coaches and team.

**ORDINANCES**

**1 OF 2024** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 263 VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC, ARTICLE I GENERAL REGULATIONS, SECTION 263-4 PROHIBITED PARKING; STOPPING OR STANDING OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF LINWOOD AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES HERETOFORE ADOPTED, THE PROVISIONS OF WHICH ARE INCONSISTENT HEREWITH.

The City Clerk read Ordinance No. 1 of 2024 by title only. Councilwoman Albright motioned, seconded by Councilman Levinson, to approve Ordinance No. 1 for first reading. A roll call vote was heard with seven in the affirmative. Motion was approved.

**2 OF 2024** AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR AND ESTABLISHING SALARIES, COMPENSATION AND SALARY RANGES OF OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF LINWOOD, AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES HERETOFORE ADOPTED, THE PROVISIONS OF WHICH ARE INCONSISTENT HEREWITH.

The City Clerk read Ordinance No. 2 of 2024 by title only. Councilman Levinson motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Albright, to approve Ordinance No. 2 for first reading. A roll call vote was heard with seven in the affirmative. Motion was approved.

### **RESOLUTIONS WITHIN CONSENT AGENDA**

All matters listed under item, Consent Agenda, are considered to be routine by City Council, and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. Any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of Funds and any item requiring discussion will be removed from the Consent Agenda and discussed separately. All Consent Agenda items will be reflected in full in the minutes.

- 31-2024** A Resolution honoring Michael P. Ware
- 32-2024** A Resolution authorizing the promotion of Joseph P. Olden to the position of Foreman in the Linwood Public Works Department
- 33-2024** A Resolution awarding the Contract to Offshore Carpet Cleaning, LLC for Janitorial Services
- 34-2024** A Resolution awarding the Contract to R.W. Brown Landscaping Co., LLC for a Fertilization Program for City owned properties for the City of Linwood
- 35-2024** A Resolution approving a Change Order with Premier Computer Services with regard to Information Technology Network and Support for the City of Linwood
- 36-2024** A Resolution approving Change Order No. 1 -Final with AJR Masonry, LLC with regard to the Linwood City Hall ADA Ramps
- 37-2024** A Resolution authorizing the hiring of Marybeth Campanale as a Substitute School Crossing Guard for the City of Linwood
- 38-2024** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License, #2024-03, to PTO Linwood
- 39-2024** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License, #2024-04, to PTO Linwood
- 40-2024** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License, #2024-05, to PTO Linwood
- 41-2024** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License, #2024-06, to PTO Linwood
- 43-2024** A Resolution authorizing execution of a Third Amendment to the Interlocal Services Agreement with the Egg Harbor Township Municipal Utilities Authority
- 44-2024** A Resolution approving temporary signage for Linwood Hockey
- 45-2024** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Bingo License, #2024-03, to NAACP Mainland Pleasantville Inc
- 46-2024** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License, #2024-07, to Mainland Crew Association

Council President Ford asked if any member of Council would like to remove any other items from consent. Councilwoman DeDomenicis removed Resolution No. 32 of 2024. No other items were removed. Councilwoman Albright motioned, seconded by Councilman Walcoff, to approve Resolutions No. 31, 33-41, 43-46 of 2024. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved.

The City Clerk read Resolution No. 32 of 2024 by title only. Councilwoman Albright motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve Resolution No. 32. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved. The Mayor and members of Council congratulated Mr. Olden. Councilwoman DeDomenicis recognized and congratulated Mr. Olden.

### **APPROVAL OF BILL LIST: \$4,118,248.78**

Councilwoman DeDomenicis motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Albright, to approve the bills for payment. A roll call vote was heard with seven in the affirmative. Motion was approved. (The bill list is attached as Exhibit A)

### **MAYOR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS**

"Usually, I make this speech during the reorganization of the government which happens during the first seven days of the new year. This year, this Council came together at 9:30am on Jan 1<sup>st</sup> to do the people's business. I believe that this is a recurring theme within this government that the residents come first, and nothing gets in the way of providing attention and services to this community. It's with that attitude and sense of responsibility that I am humbled to be able to work every day with City Council, City Hall employees, Police, Fire and Public works. I am especially lucky to work with the numerous Volunteers who give of themselves every day on various boards, within

**MAYOR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS (continued)**

the institutions of this City. One of the most important functions of my job is working with the Police force which I get to do with Councilman Michael and Chief Cunningham. This year we were successful in adding two part-time Class II Officers which I am sure you have seen out on the bikes patrolling the bike path amongst other areas. Calls for Service and other police activities reached 40,000 calls for service this past year. Even with that volume we in Linwood very much believe in community policing and all our officers have been out there attending and running many events including; Pizza and reading with our elementary students, Santa visits, helping with the Senior Luncheons, Helmet awareness assemblies, adult gun safety classes, Trunk and treats, and other charitable events. All of which culminates in their annual National Night Out, which is always well attended. We also hosted the first of many town hall meetings to address resident concerns in town and also programming geared towards our seniors with an elder fraud presentation with the FBI and County prosecutor's office. The Construction Office was led by Jim Galantino our Construction Official as well as Angela Marshall who serves as TACO/Zoning Officer with her assistant Donna McBride have been busy as our City has seen some extra growth this year. We had 10 New Single-Family homes and 15 permits issued for additions in 2023. What might seem to be a small number is an incredible amount of work in addition to issuing UCC permits and collecting Zoning and Municipal Fees. The newly instituted collecting of COAH fees on single family homes spearheaded by Council-President Ford helped to offset the costs of implementing some of our COAH responsibilities. Our esteemed Fire official Tom Flynn and his Deputy Nick LaRotonda took the department to new heights completing 633 inspections for the year and raising revenue to its highest level ever. The great news out of the Tax Assessor Diane Hesley's office is that real estate prices are rising, and tax appeals are very low. Our added assessments in 2023 brought in nearly 250,000.00 in taxes from new construction projects which will lead to increased revenue to offset future tax increases. We had similar good news as our Tax Collector Silvia Washington and new assistant Tonya Fortina have our collection rate at 99.24% which is always superior. We would like to remind all our Seniors that you can qualify for the Senior Tax Freeze which allows qualifying seniors to freeze their tax amount with the state and be reimbursed for any amounts over the frozen amount. The Public Works Department under the magical Councilwoman DeDomenicis had some changes this year with the retirement of 38-year assistant director Mike Ware. We thank him for his service. The department is still being led by Chip Jones and assistant Joe Olden. Besides the everyday jobs of crack sealing, pothole filling and fixing, cleaning of City roads, leaf collection and helping to beautify the City for the holidays the guys took on the restoration of the Memorial at All Wars memorial. They also refurbished the building at our Arboretum. We would like to welcome Mike, Ryan and Kyle to the PW team. Chip and his crew are amazing, and we thank them for the little and big things they do every day for the residents. We are lucky to have a Fire Department that will come out in any kind of weather to assist residents and even sometimes non-residents who are injured on the City's roadways. To help the Fire Department in its ability to help residents, City Council authorized the purchase of a new fire truck to replace an aging unit. The Department is led by Captain Jay Loder and Volunteer Fire Chief Marty Walley, and we thank them for their service and responding to 220 calls for service. The Leadership of Council President Ford and Councilwoman Albright were instrumental in the completion of many projects throughout the City. Our City Engineer Jen Heller who we rely on every day and allows us unfettered access to her basically 24 hours a day. This year we undertook many projects throughout the entire City including the resurfacing of Franklin Boulevard from Cheltenham Ave to Landing Lane which was funded by a grant from the NJDOT in the amount of \$319,000.00. We are also paving Oak Ave, Barr Ave and Highland Ct which will be completed in the early spring. This year saw many projects completed, ADA ramps at City Hall, purchased a bathroom trailer for the Poplar Ave Park, renovated the Pump station near Mainland, and installed automated doors at the Library. Some previews for 2024 include a new Field House at All Wars Memorial and probably the most ambitious project to date, the complete reengineering and revisioning of All Wars Memorial Park. The Library is another area which we completed a beautiful new Playground for the 0-5 set. We would like to thank Maria Moss for her many years of service to the Linwood Library. We again would like to thank our resident Jim Allen for his very generous donation to the library. The Historical Society celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Leedsville school House this summer, which was very well attended. I would personally like to thank the Recreation Board who do not get enough recognition led by Bill Albright and Park Director Colleen Kaufelds and special recognition of Howard Rush a long-time member who retired at the end of the year. The City Clerk's Office and Finance Office are run with upmost professionalism, and I thank CFO Anthony Strazzeri and our Deputy Clerk and Planning Board Secretary Mary Cole for the great work they do every day. Our Auditors, Leon

### **MAYOR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS (continued)**

and Carol, made sure we are doing everything correct and again had nothing to report during the audit. City Solicitor Joe Youngblood, now in his 47<sup>th</sup> year, is always a guiding force on our decision making. This brings me to our City Clerk Leigh Ann Napoli who I like to call the "Glue". She was instrumental in writing a grant for the improvements at Poplar and Seaview docks which was awarded to the City from The Frank Stewart Trust for \$140,000. She was able to procure a Recreation Improvement Grant for 50,000 for improvements at All Wars Memorial. We also were successful in receiving grants from the American Rescue Plan Firefighter grant to purchase a commercial sized washer and dryer as we all as NJ Dept. of Agriculture grant to treat for spotted lanternflies. She also helped us get authorized a flashing pedestrian beacon agreement signed with the State for Mainland High School students to cross safely. This year we said goodbye to our friend and now Commissioner June Brynes which is a win/win for us and the County since she will still be fighting for our residents. We welcome our newest member Councilman Kelly and I am extremely proud to serve with him and I know he will be an asset to this Council. I see our State Senator Polistina back in his old engineering chair and would like to let everyone know how lucky we are to have him as our Senator, nobody works harder than he does for the Residents of Linwood and the entire County. In closing. I would like to thank all our Council Members, including Councilmen Levinson and Walcoff who put in way more time than they ever thought but work diligently every day for the residents. Also, all the board members and volunteers who give so much time to the City. I also would like to thank my wife, Brett, and my two boys (well they were boys when I started) Zach and Xander, for allowing me to do this job and serve the residents of this great City."

### **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Council President Ford opened the floor to the public for discussion on any topic.

Seeing and hearing no members from the public wishing to be heard, Council President Ford closed the floor.

### **FINAL REMARKS BY COUNCIL**

Councilman Walcoff – Councilman Walcoff commended the Mayor on his speech. It is great to hear all the accomplishments that occurred this past year. He welcomed Councilman Kelly and congratulated Mr. Olden.

Councilwoman DeDomenicis – Councilwoman DeDomenicis wished everyone a Happy New Year. She noted that it is nice to see the Public Works employees in attendance. They do a great job for the City. She also commended the Mayor on his speech.

Councilwoman Albright – Councilwoman Albright thanked the Mainland High School students for filming the meetings. She congratulated the Mainland Football Team. She congratulated Joe Olden on his promotion. She welcomed Councilman Kelly and is looking forward to working with him. She also thanked the Mayor for his comments.

Councilman Michael – Councilman Michael congratulated the Mainland Football Team, Mr. Olden and welcomed Councilman Kelly.

Councilman Levinson – Councilman Levinson commended the Mayor on his speech. He agrees that a lot gets done in Linwood. Everyone works very hard and he is proud to work with everyone. He congratulated Mr. Olden, noting that he is a hard worker and the promotion is well deserved. He also welcomed Councilman Kelly.

Councilman Kelly – Councilman Kelly thanked everyone for their comments and is looking forward to serving on Council. He commended the Mayor on his speech and congratulated Mr. Olden on his promotion.

Council President Ford – Council President Ford congratulated the Linwood Panthers. He also congratulated Mr. Olden, noting that he does a great job. He thanked all the members of the Public Works Department. He also welcomed Councilman Kelly. He commended the Mayor on his speech, and noted that the Mayor is very passionate about Linwood.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to be addressed by Council, Councilman Levinson motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to adjourn at 6:44 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC  
Municipal Clerk