

LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL
CAUCUS MINUTES
February 28, 2018

Council President Paolone called the meeting to order at 6:06 P.M., noting that the meeting had been advertised in compliance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

1. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Rick DePamphilis; Councilman Elliot Beinfest; Councilwoman Stacy DeDomenicis; Councilman Eric Ford; Councilman Todd Gordon; Councilman Brian Heun; and Council President Ralph Paolone.

Absent: Councilman Darren Matik.

Also Present: Joseph L. Youngblood, Jr., City Solicitor; Vince Polistina, City Engineer; Anthony Strazzeri, CFO; Chief Doug Carman, Police Department; and Leigh Ann Napoli, Municipal Clerk.

2. Approval of Minutes Without Formal Reading

Councilman Ford motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2018 Caucus meeting without formal reading. All present members of Council were in favor with one abstention from Councilman Beinfest. Motion was approved.

3. Mayor DePamphilis

A. The Mayor reported that the Planning Board met on Monday and referred back to Council the designation of the Country Club as a Rehabilitation Area. The Mayor discussed the need to appoint members to a Rehabilitation Committee. Tim Tighe and Councilmen Ford and Matik are members of the Club so the Mayor would like to avoid any conflicts. He would like the committee to consist of the Mayor, Councilman Heun and Council President Paolone. He asked for a Resolution confirming the appointments to be added to the agenda. Councilman Heun discussed the designation of a Rehabilitation process and the tools that will be provided to help develop the property. Councilman Heun motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to add the Resolution to the agenda. All present members were in favor with one abstention by Councilman Beinfest. Motion was approved. Councilman Beinfest noted that he is a social member of the club and will also not vote on any matters pertaining to the property.

4. Councilman Ford

A. Planning & Development

1. Councilman Ford discussed the idea of consolidating the Planning and Zoning Boards. This matter was discussed in November, and with additional openings on the boards, Council brought it back to the agenda. The boards are composed of volunteers. The Chair of the Zoning Board does a great job. There are two openings and one member with a family issue that makes attendance difficult. The Chair struggles to get a quorum sometimes. In addition, a member of the Planning Board just resigned. This might be the right time to consolidate. The cost savings is minimal. Both Chairs are good at what they do. The members of the board do a great job and enjoy it. Council President Paolone discussed the other towns that have done it and how there is not a lot of business going on in Linwood at this time. June Dix, Chair of the Zoning Board, doesn't believe it should be a financial decision. If the board is consolidated, someone will lose a job. That person hasn't received a raise in four years, along with three other employees not covered under the statutory protection. She believes the two boards are distinct. The Zoning Board is packed with professional and qualified individuals. If the boards are combined, she hopes Council is selective with the appointments as they have been with the Zoning Board and continue to interview candidates as she has done. The members should be able to read site plans and applications. She believes it could work with the right individuals, but she would hate to see someone lose a job. Roger Steedle, Chair of the Planning Board, agrees that the costs would be negligible. He discussed the role of the Planning Board, noting that Linwood is a built out community. They have just completed one of their roles, which was the re-examination of the Master Plan. City

Council will now review and promulgate the provisions of the plan. The Board will continue to play a role in those revisions. He discussed the resignation that was recently received and noted that he does sometimes have a hard time getting a quorum. He is not sure about the benefits of a combined board. Mr. Steedle believes Council should get input from its planners to generate development. Councilman Ford discussed when he sat as an Alternate Member of the Zoning Board, he would frequently have to vote as attendance was an issue. He believes a combined board is a no brainer. He discussed having a subcommittee of Council review and discuss this further. The Mayor understands that if you look at the last two years with little business for the boards, it would make sense to combine the boards. However, that has not always been the case. Several years ago the Planning Board would have two or three applications at one meeting, which would last three hours. If you add Zoning Board applications to that, two meetings a month might be needed. That would make it more difficult to get volunteers. Council President Paolone discussed the problem the boards are having getting members to meetings. He remembers when former Mayor D'Amato discussed the same thing. He believes if they can't get the volunteers, the boards should be consolidated. Mrs. Dix noted that they are struggling to find people to serve. Councilman Gordon has the same concern as the Mayor. That the boards could get busy again. Discussion ensued on the combination of the boards. Council President Paolone asked everyone to consider what has been discussed. At the March 14, 2018 meeting, Council should either introduce the ordinance to combine the boards or appoint new members.

5. Councilman Gordon
 - A. Engineering
 1. Mr. Polistina advised that the specifications for the new roof at the Historical Society building are just about complete and the project will go out to bid in a week or two.
6. Councilman Heun
 - A. Public Safety
 1. Councilman Heun discussed a Resolution on the agenda authorizing emergency repair work in the Linwood Police Department by Seaboard Building & Restoration Inc. The work was due to a water leak. Insurance will cover the costs.
 2. Councilman Heun discussed a street light request for Harvard Lane. Letters were mailed out to the residents and two objections were received and two residents, besides the resident requesting the light, are in favor. Chief Carman looked at the area and determined that there is a safety concern and the light would be beneficial. The committee is recommending the installation of a light and once the cost estimate from the electric company is received, a Resolution will be added to the agenda.
7. Councilman Matik
 - A. Revenue & Finance
 1. Mr. Strazzeri discussed the Resolution authorizing the rollover of an existing school note.
 2. Council President Paolone reported that Linwood received \$2,150 from the 2017 Atlantic County Municipal Joint Insurance Fund Safety Incentive Program.
8. Council President Paolone
 - A. Administration
 1. Council President Paolone advised of Resolutions on the agenda authorizing Raffle Licenses to CASA, the Muckdogs, AtlantiCare, and Betty Bacharach Rehabilitation Hospital.
 2. Council President Paolone advised of Resolutions on the agenda authorizing Bingo Licenses to the Muckdogs and AtlantiCare.

3. Council President Paolone discussed the list of properties that Jim Rutala put together for the Blue Acres Acquisition Program. Councilman Ford would like to prioritize the list as these properties would come off the tax rolls. Mr. Polistina noted that the philosophy of the program is to take private property and make it public. Council agreed to review the list in more detail and discuss again at the next meeting.
4. Council President Paolone advised that the Mayor reported that the Planning Board referred the Rehabilitation Area back to City Council. He discussed the Resolution on the agenda designating same.

At 6:55 P.M., Council President Paolone called a recess.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC
Municipal Clerk