

**LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
March 9, 2016**

**FLAG SALUTE:**

Councilman Brian Heun led the flag salute.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Tim Tighe called the meeting to order at 6:24 P.M., noting that the meeting had been advertised in compliance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Rick DePamphilis; Councilwoman Stacy DeDomenicis; Councilman Todd Gordon; Councilman Brian Heun; Councilman Darren Matik; Councilman Ralph Paolone; and Council President Tim Tighe.

Absent: Councilman Elliot Beinfest.

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 DeDomenicis motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon, to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2016 Regular meeting without formal reading. All present members of Council were in favor with one abstention from Councilman Paolone. Motion was approved.

**PRESENTATION**

**32-2016** A Resolution honoring James Rutala

The Clerk read Resolution No. 32 of 2016 by title only. Councilwoman DeDomenicis motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon to approve Resolution No. 32. All present members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved. Mayor DePamphilis read and presented the Resolution to Jim Rutala. The Mayor and members of Council thanked and commended Mr. Rutala.

Linwood Public Schools Budget Presentation – Teri Weeks, the School Business Administrator, and Dr. Michelle Cappelluti, Interim Superintendent, presented a Power Point presentation on the 2016-2017 school budget. (Attached as Exhibit B) The proposed budget provides for a tax levy at \$0.0. Councilman Matik discussed the proposed budget which will result in a possible deficit of \$462,597 for the 2017-2018 budget. He asked Dr. Cappelluti and Mrs. Weeks how that will be addressed. They implied that more cuts would have to be made, which would include full time staff and discussed the different components of the budget. Councilman Paolone discussed the difficult time with the number of homes that are abandoned and for sale in Linwood, and understands why the Mayor asked for a zero tax increase. He also discussed the decline of the student enrollment. Council President Tighe opened the floor to the public for discussion on the school presentation. Donna Michael Ziereis – 721 Shore Road, Linwood – Mrs. Ziereis is a member of the Linwood Board of Education. She addressed Council as a resident only, not a board member. She respects the economic conditions, but is concerned about the school's fund balance and the impact for next year. She is also concerned about the staff reductions. Jason Goldstein – 1 Harvard Lane, Linwood – Mr. Goldstein thanked the Mayor and Council for their efforts. He moved to Linwood for the schools. He is not in favor of the proposed staff cuts and will pay more in taxes to keep them. He encouraged Council to look at other options. Emily Ryan – 30 Asbury Avenue, Linwood – Ms. Ryan is also not in favor of the proposed staff cuts. Tom Parente – Atlantic County – Mr. Parente is the father of one of the teachers that has received a layoff notice. He read a prepared statement in support of keeping the teachers. He is also in support of a two cent tax increase and explained that he was an auditor for many years and the importance of maintaining a fund balance. Seeing and hearing no other members from the public wishing to be heard, Council President Tighe closed the floor.

### **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.

- 37-2016** A Resolution authorizing the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute a Settlement Agreement and Release on behalf of the City of Linwood with Lafayette Utility Construction Company, Inc.
- 51-2016** A Resolution authorizing a Change Fund for the City Clerk's Office
- 52-2016** A Resolution closing the meeting of March 9, 2016
- 53-2016** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License, #2016-04, to the Betty Bacharach Rehabilitation Hospital Auxiliary
- 54-2016** A Resolution awarding Non-Competitive Contracts for Professional Services to the following: Vincent Polistina as Planning Board Engineer; Thomas R. Thornton as Zoning Board of Adjustment Engineer; and Michael J. Fitzgerald as Zoning Board of Adjustment Solicitor
- 55-2016** A Resolution authorizing the award of a Non-Fair and Open Contract to Willis F. Flower as Planning Board Solicitor
- 56-2016** A Resolution honoring Dr. Frank Rudnesky
- 57-2016** A Resolution honoring David Hieb
- 59-2016** A Resolution approving a Change Order No. 4-Final with Lafayette Utility Construction Company with regard to the Southwest Linwood Flood Control Drainage Improvements in the City of Linwood

Council President Tighe asked if any member of Council would like to remove any items from consent. Nothing was removed. Councilman Gordon motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve Resolutions No. 37, 51-57, 59 of 2016. All present members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved.

### **APPROVAL OF BILL LIST: \$221,825.18**

Councilman Paolone motioned, seconded by Councilman Matik, to approve the bills for payment. A roll call vote was heard with six in the affirmative, and Councilman Beinfest absent. Motion was approved. (The bill list is attached as Exhibit A)

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

Council President Tighe 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 Tighe closed the floor.

### **FINAL REMARKS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

Mayor DePamphilis – The Mayor thanked everyone for attending the meeting and expressing their concerns. The budget is still a work in progress.

Councilwoman DeDomenicis – Councilwoman DeDomenicis also thanked everyone for attending and those that expressed their opinions. She agreed these are tough times and that the budget is a work in progress. She also advised that additional crushed concrete was placed on Seaview Landing to support the roadway and more crushed shells have been ordered for additional repairs.

Councilman Gordon – Councilman Gordon thanked Jim Rutala for his many years of dedication and commitment on the Planning Board. His knowledge and experience will be missed. He discussed the proposed school budget and difficult economic times. Councilman Gordon thanked Mrs. Weeks for the presentation and knows that the City and school will continue to work together for a solution.

Councilman Paolone – Councilman Paolone does not know what the future brings for Atlantic County or Linwood. He does not want to see anyone lose their jobs. He would like to explore the class sizes further. The City's ratables are going down and the tax appeals have been increasing over the years. He discussed how those factors have impacted the City's tax rate.

Councilman Matik – Councilman Matik discussed the state laws that mandate how schools are funded indicating that it makes it impossible to not have a tax increase. He compared the little amount of state aid Linwood receives to the neighboring communities. The Mayor went above and beyond to get the schools and the City to look at a zero tax increase. Councilman Matik believes it's a good exercise to see if it can be done. They will continue to work hard to keep the taxes flat or a small increase.

Councilman Heun – Councilman Heun thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He understands both sides of concern. As a member of the Board of School Estimates, he will continue to work hard along with the other members to do the best job they can.

Council President Tighe – Council President Tighe mirrored the comments of Councilmen Paolone and Matik. He also thanked everyone for their comments. He asked Dr. Cappelluti if Council could get a copy of last years' class sizes and the proposed class sizes along with the teachers' schedules. He would also like to see the minutes of instruction for the teachers. Dr. Cappelluti and Mrs. Weeks agreed to provide the material.

At 7:59 p.m., by authorization of Resolution No. 52 of 2016, Councilman Matik motioned, seconded by Councilman Paolone, to adjourn to closed session.

At 8:54 p.m., Council reassembled from closed session by motion of Councilman Todd Gordon, seconded by Councilman Heun.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to be addressed by Council, Councilwoman DeDomenicis motioned, seconded by Councilman Heun, to adjourn at 8:54 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC  
Municipal Clerk