

**LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
April 13, 2016**

FLAG SALUTE:

Councilwoman Stacy DeDomenicis led the flag salute.

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Tim Tighe called the meeting to order at 6:30 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; Councilman Elliot Beinfest; Councilwoman Stacy DeDomenicis; Councilman Todd Gordon; Councilman Brian Heun; Councilman Darren Matik; Councilman Ralph Paolone; and Council President Tim Tighe.

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

Councilman Beinfest motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2016 Regular meeting without formal reading. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved.

RESOLUTIONS

65-2016 A Resolution honoring the Third/Fourth Grade Girls Basketball Team

The Clerk read Resolution No. 65 of 2016 by title only. Councilman Matik motioned, seconded by Councilman Beinfest to approve Resolution No. 65. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved. Councilwoman DeDomenicis read and presented the Resolution to the team.

66-2016 A Resolution honoring the Fifth/Sixth Grade Girls Basketball Team

The Clerk read Resolution No. 66 of 2016 by title only. Councilman Beinfest motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon to approve Resolution No. 66. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved. Councilwoman DeDomenicis read and presented the Resolution to the team.

67-2016 A Resolution honoring the Seventh/Eighth Grade Girls Basketball Team

The Clerk read Resolution No. 67 of 2016 by title only. Councilman Beinfest motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon to approve Resolution No. 67. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved. Councilman Heun read and presented the Resolution to the team.

68-2016 A Resolution honoring the Belhaven Girls Basketball Team

The Clerk read Resolution No. 68 of 2016 by title only. Councilwoman DeDomenicis motioned, seconded by Councilman Beinfest to approve Resolution No. 68. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved. Councilman Heun read and presented the Resolution to the team.

The Mayor and each member of Council congratulated the teams.

ORDINANCES

3 OF 2016 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 Clerk read Ordinance No. 3 of 2016 by title only. Councilman Matik motioned, seconded by Councilman Beinfest to approve Ordinance No. 3 for first reading. A roll call vote was heard with seven in the affirmative. Motion was approved.

4 OF 2016 AN ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK

The Clerk read Ordinance No. 4 of 2016 by title only. Councilman Beinfest motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis to approve Ordinance No. 4 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.

- 69-2016** A Resolution for Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva Awareness
- 72-2016** A Resolution authorizing a refund to the Linwood Nursery School with regard to a Bingo License application fee
- 73-2016** A Resolution authorizing a change in the Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) Plan
- 74-2016** A Resolution authorizing settlement with the County of Camden of claims filed against the City of Linwood for Police Officer training related expenses
- 75-2016** A Resolution confirming the Mayoral reappointments of Joann Scannell and Judd McLaughlin to the Linwood Board of Education
- 76-2016** A Resolution authorizing the City of Linwood to participate in the Atlantic County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program
- 77-2016** A Resolution authorizing payment by the City of Linwood of an additional \$2,000 as per the terms of a Municipal Shared Services Agreement

Council President Tighe asked if any member of Council would like to remove any items from consent. Nothing was removed. Councilman Beinfest motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve Resolutions No. 69, 72-77 of 2016. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved.

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST: \$304,365.41

Councilman Paolone motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, 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)

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

Paul D'Amato 6 Fischer Road, Linwood – Mr. D'Amato thanked the governing body for all their hard work. He also thanked the City Engineer, Solicitor, and City Clerk for their efforts. Mr. D'Amato discussed the differences between the City Council form of government and the Commission form of government. He asked City Council to embrace the idea of a change of government and to consider other ways to help maintain Linwood's most important asset, which is the education system.

Ava Cocchi 6 Wabash Avenue, Linwood – Mrs. Cocchi asked the Mayor and governing body to prepare a set of guidelines for notifying residents of openings on the school board. She does not feel the current makeup of the board is representative of the residents of Linwood.

Chrissy Swan, 324 Ocean Woods Avenue, Upper Township – Ms. Swan expressed her surprise and concern that City Council was considering something other than a zero tax increase when the schools were required to have a zero increase.

Alex Barrera 6 Crossing Drive, Linwood – Mr. Barrera indicated that his family moved to Linwood because the schools were second to none. Mr. Barrera moved his family to Linwood for the same reason and he asked Council to keep that in mind.

Seeing and hearing no other 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 their comments. He indicated that he appointed three new members to the school board last year, Judd McLaughlin, retired Judge Daryl Todd, and Michelle DeMorat. Mrs. DeMorat does have three children in the school system. The Mayor is surprised that someone would criticize the governing body about debating the budget process, when it's their job to look at all options.

Elliot Beinfest – Councilman Beinfest thanked Mr. D'Amato for his comments and thanked everyone for attending and speaking their minds.

Councilwoman DeDomenicis – Councilwoman DeDomenicis thanked Mr. D'Amato for his insight as well as the other members of the public who spoke tonight. She also discussed the City seal and the three values imprinted on the seal; education, family, and recreation. She believes they are and always will remain priorities in Linwood and Council will continue to work hard to do so.

Councilman Gordon – Councilman Gordon agreed with Mr. D'Amato that City Council should give the best value to the citizens and Councilman Gordon is open to any ideas. He is not looking to leave the City or the schools in any less condition than they are in now.

Councilman Paolone – Councilman Paolone indicated that he is serving on Council now because Mr. D'Amato told him to get active. He discussed the different budget options from going with a zero increase to a three cent increase and the number of tax appeals the City received as well as the effect of same. He also discussed the schools' budget situation and his concerns for losing teachers and coaches.

Councilman Heun – Councilman Heun thanked Mr. D'Amato for his comments. Councilman Heun serves on the Board of School Estimates and discussed what a difficult budget process it was. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The City received three hundred and fifty-five tax appeals. The City is receiving no help from the State. City Council is working on the budget. He hopes everyone continues to come out to the meetings.

Council President Tighe – Council President Tighe reported that the City received three hundred and fifty-five tax appeals which could be a loss of \$35 million. Council President Tighe compared the costs of the commission form of government in Margate to the council form in Linwood, noting the costs for a commission form are higher. Council President Tighe reported the results of the NJ public school rankings for 2016 with Belhaven at #14 out of 714 in the State and Seaview at #94 out of 1355. Council President Tighe believes Linwood schools are great and so are the parents. He reviewed the declining enrollment and increased staff figures over ten year period at the schools, noting that he understands some staffing is required by the state. He also discussed the school's Fund balance. Council President Tighe also reviewed the City's budget figures over the years and its declining employment numbers. He discussed the number of tax appeals over the years and the effect of the appeals on the budget. He agrees that Council should discuss different budget options as a healthy debate.

CLOSED SESSION

70-2016 A Resolution closing the meeting of April 13, 2016 for the purpose of discussing pending litigation in the matter of Carman & Hamilton v. the City of Linwood

The Clerk read Resolution No. 70 of 2016 by title only. Councilman Paolone motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon to approve Resolution No. 70. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved. The meeting was closed at 7:40 p.m. The regular meeting was reconvened at 8:01 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to be addressed by Council, Councilman Beinfest motioned, seconded by Councilman Paolone, to adjourn at 8:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC
Municipal Clerk