

LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL
CAUCUS MINUTES
July 12, 2017

Council President Ralph Paolone called the meeting to order at 6:02 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; Councilman Darren Matik; and Council President Ralph Paolone.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Joseph L. Youngblood, Jr., City Solicitor; Vince Polistina, City Engineer; Chief Doug Carman, Police Department; Captain John Hamilton, Police Department; Chick Kisby, Fire Official; and Leigh Ann Napoli, Municipal Clerk.

2. Approval of Minutes Without Formal Reading

Councilman Beinfest motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon, to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2017 Caucus meeting without formal reading. All present members of Council were in favor with one abstention from Councilman Ford. Motion was approved.

3. Mayor's Report

A. The Mayor reported that the Redevelopment Committee met with the new property management company of the Cornerstone to discuss the sign package approved in the Redevelopment Agreement. The company is attempting to get some new signage for the tenants. The Mayor advised that they will meet again soon and report to Council at a later date.

4. Councilman Beinfest

A. Neighborhood Services

1. Councilman Beinfest advised of a Resolution on the agenda honoring the 2017 Citizen of the Year George Butrus.
2. Councilman Beinfest reported that members of the Recreation Board are presenting the 2017 Scholarships at the regular meeting.
3. Councilman Beinfest discussed a Resolution authorizing the Alliance Agreement with Atlantic County.

5. Councilwoman DeDomenicis

A. Public Works

1. Councilwoman DeDomenicis reported that the Public Works Department has been performing various tasks, including cleaning up sight obstructions, overgrowth, and maintenance of the Pet Cemetery.

6. Councilman Ford

A. Planning & Development

1. Councilman Ford advised of Resolutions on the agenda refunding unused escrow funds for dumpster permits.
2. Councilman Ford discussed a Resolution on the agenda authorizing a temporary banner for the Alcove Center.
3. Councilman Ford advised of a Resolution appointing Dennis Sharpe as the Subcode Fire Official.
4. Councilman Ford advised of a Resolution appointing James Cotton as the Subcode Plumbing Official.
5. Councilman Ford advised of a Resolution refunding an overpayment of construction permit fees.

7. Councilman Heun

A. Public Safety

1. Councilman Heun discussed the possibility of prohibiting jumping off bridges in Linwood. The Central Avenue bridge is owned by the County and the County does prohibit jumping. Mrs. Napoli is looking into ownership of the Poplar Avenue bridge to make sure Council has the jurisdiction to do so. The Egg Harbor Township police are also looking into the matter. Council discussed putting up a sign in the meantime as a deterrent.
2. Councilman Heun discussed a Shared Services Agreement with Mainland Regional High School for a Class III Special Law Enforcement Officer. Under the terms of the Agreement, Linwood would hire the Officer, who must be a retired Officer in good standing. The Officer will be armed. Will not receive benefits, and will not be in the Union. The High School will reimburse the City for the salary and half the workers compensation and liability insurance costs. The insurance costs to the City will be about \$1,600 per year. Councilman Heun explained that there will also be payroll taxes that could be shared with the High School. Mark Marrone, Mainland Superintendent, reported that the Linwood Police Department responded to calls at the High School 109 days this past school year out of 180 day school year. This Special Class III Officer would work only in the school and be able to respond to those calls immediately rather than one of the other officers on duty. Mr. Marrone explained that the Officer would also be present to help educate the students and build relationships. Councilman Ford discussed the number of calls, noting that a dedicated Officer at the school would free up time from the regular Officer on duty. Council President Paolone discussed various school shooting incidents, noting that having an armed Officer in the school who can respond immediately would be a benefit. Councilman Gordon noted that even though the school will be reimbursing the school, there is still a cost to the taxpayer from Mainland's budget. Councilman Heun advised that in order to provide for the title of Special Class III, Council would have to amend the City's Salary Ordinance and Resolution. Councilman Matik motioned, seconded by Councilman Ford, to add Ordinance No. 8, amending the Salary Ordinance to include the title for Special Class III Officer, to the agenda. All members of Council were in favor. Motion approved. Councilman Matik motioned, seconded by Councilman Ford, to add Resolution No. 132 to the agenda to amend the Salary Resolution to include the title Special Class III Officer. All members of Council were in favor. Motion approved.

8. Councilman Matik

A. Revenue & Finance

1. Councilman Matik advised that Jim Ferguson, Atlantic County Counsel, will be at the regular meeting to discuss the County's lawsuit challenging the Casino PILOT law.
2. Councilman Matik discussed a Resolution on the agenda approving a Memorandum of Agreement with the Teamsters Local #331. The current contract expired on December 31, 2016. This Agreement extends those terms until December 31, 2017.
3. Councilman Matik advised of a Resolution authorizing facsimile signatures with OceanFirst Bank, the City's official depository.
4. Councilman Matik discussed that the City may not get the new tax rate from the County in time to send out the tax bills, so there is a Resolution on the agenda to extend the grace period. He also announced that Linwood will be receiving \$155,000 less in school aid.
5. Councilman Matik also discussed a potential new buyer for the Revel in Atlantic City and how taxes paid on that casino will benefit the County tax rate.

9. President Paolone

A. Administration

1. Council President Paolone discussed a proposed amendment to the Atlantic County Water Quality Management Plan to expand sewer service to allow for the construction of a single family home on Poplar Avenue, Block 82, Lot 7. City Council discussed this issue the first time the hearing was scheduled back in January. June Dix, the Chair of the Zoning Board, spoke at a City Council meeting and advised that the City should not take a position in this matter. The Mayor sent a letter to the County opposing the amendment and City Council took no action. The Environmental Commission members are present tonight and are asking City Council to pass a Resolution opposing the amendment. Bill Purdie, Chair of the Environmental Commission, explained the history of the applicant seeking the amendment and how they went to DEP for the dock. The Commission's position is that the land in question was never supposed to be developed. That it was purposely left out of the sewer service area. He discussed parts of the City's Master Plan and Environmental Resource Inventory to support their position. The Environmental Commission also sent a letter opposing the amendment. Jim Rutala informed Council that if the City does not take a position, the County will assume that the City is in favor of the amendment. There is a public comment period until August 3. It would then go to the Freeholder Board for a vote. Mr. Rutala reiterated Mr. Purdie's comments about the land being purposely excluded when the housing plan was done for the City. COAH is coming back and this could be an issue for the City. He discussed the development of the Crossings and how that development impacted the City. The Commission has worked very well with the City to purchase open space. He suggested having the City buy the lot in question as a solution. Mr. Youngblood advised that the attorney for the applicant did threaten litigation. Warren Stillwell, an attorney representing the property owners, discussed the application and asked the City not to adopt a Resolution at this time. Discussion ensued on the application. Council President Paolone asked if Council wanted to pass a Resolution. Councilman Matik discussed looking for open space funds to buy the property. Councilman Matik motioned, seconded by Councilman Heun, to add Resolution No. 133 to the agenda opposing the amendment. Five members of Council were in the affirmative, Councilman Gordon was in the negative and Councilman Ford abstained. Motion approved.
2. Council President Paolone advised that the Municipal Consent Ordinance for Verizon is on the agenda for final reading.
3. Council President Paolone advised of Resolutions on the agenda authorizing Raffle Licenses to the Women's Center, Our Lady of Sorrows, and the Arc of Atlantic County.

At 6:53 P.M., Council President Paolone called a recess.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC
Municipal Clerk