

LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL
CAUCUS MINUTES
July 13, 2022

Council President Ralph Paolone called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M., noting that the meeting had been advertised in compliance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

1. Roll Call

Present: Councilwoman Blair Albright; Councilwoman June Byrnes; Councilwoman Stacy DeDomenicis; Councilman Eric Ford; Councilman Matt Levinson; and Council President Ralph Paolone

Absent: Mayor Darren Matik; and Councilman Todd Michael.

Also Present: Joseph L. Youngblood, Jr., City Solicitor; Jen Heller, Engineer's Office; Anthony Strazzeri, CFO; Chief Steve Cunningham, Police Department; and Leigh Ann Napoli, Municipal Clerk.

2. Approval of Minutes Without Formal Reading

Councilwoman DeDomenicis motioned, seconded by Councilman Ford, to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2022 Caucus meeting without formal reading. All present members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved.

3. Councilwoman Albright

A. Planning, Engineering, & Development

1. Councilwoman Albright discussed an Ordinance amending the City Code to provide for a time line on abandonments of nonconforming uses. The Ordinance was reviewed by the Planning Board. A timeline for renewal was included. It will be an annual certification of conformity. The Ordinance will now go back before the Board before Council votes to introduce it.

4. Councilwoman Byrnes

A. Neighborhood Services

1. Councilwoman Byrnes advised of a Resolution on the agenda authorizing an Alliance Agreement with Atlantic County.

5. Councilwoman DeDomenicis

A. Public Works

1. Councilwoman DeDomenicis reported that the Public Works Department has been completing lots of summer projects.

6. Councilman Ford

A Planning, Engineering, & Development

1. Councilman Ford discussed an Ordinance on the agenda for final reading amending Chapter 205 Property Maintenance to comply with the amendments to the Shared Service Agreement with the Atlantic County Improvement Authority.
2. Councilman Ford advised of a Resolution on the agenda rejecting bids received for the East Patcong Avenue Pump Station Rehabilitation. The bids far exceeded the allocated budget amount for the project. The project will be re-bid.
3. Councilman Ford discussed a Resolution authorizing the City of Linwood to share costs with the NJDOT associated with the installation of Pedestrian beacons at the intersection of Route 9 and Patcong Avenue. These will be like the ones on Monroe Avenue and Route 9.
4. Councilman Ford discussed a request from the Linwood Country Club for temporary signage for the Fox Den. Temporary signs need Council approval. Councilman Ford motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to add Resolution No. 126, 2022 authorizing the signage for the country club. All present members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved.

6A. Planning, Engineering, & Development (continued)

Councilman Ford reviewed a proposal the City received for artificial turf at Memorial Park. The proposal includes costs for one field, two fields, and upgrading the current lighting to high efficiency LED. He suggested putting it to the voters in November. All Council agreed to put the question on the ballot. Council President Paolone noted that a turf field at the high school was defeated on the ballot in 2008. Councilwoman Byrnes asked what the life of the turf field would be. He indicated that it is warranted for eight years. Council debated whether to install one or two fields and the costs for same. They all agreed to installing one turf field. The proposal included costs to upgrade the lighting for the new field as well as upgrading the lighting for the entire park. They discussed the new LED lights and the efficiency of same. The existing lights are in need of an upgrade as several dark spots exist. Council agreed to upgrade the lights with one turf field for an estimated cost of \$2.6 million. Mr. Strazzeri discussed the affects a \$2.6 million bond could have on the City's budget. It might add 2.6 cents per year, but may still have no increase on taxes. Councilman Levinson indicated that he does not believe the lighting upgrades should be included in the referendum, only the turf field. The lighting needs to be done regardless and he wouldn't want a no vote to hinder those upgrades. After much discussion, it was agreed to include both the turf and lighting upgrades on the ballot. Councilman Ford believes this project would be an asset to the community and increase the value of the community. Council President Paolone discussed the hundreds of thousands of dollars that are spent each year to re-sod and seed the existing fields. Councilman Ford advised that the sports organizations indicated they would also help pay for the bond for a turf field. Councilman Ford motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Byrnes, to add Resolution No. 125 of 2022 to the agenda requesting the County Clerk to add the following question to the November ballot: "Shall the Common Council of the City of Linwood, in the County of Atlantic, New Jersey, install a multi-use artificial turf field at All Wars Memorial Park and upgrade the existing lighting to high efficiency LED lighting and issue general obligation bonds in the amount of \$2.6 million to finance the cost of such installation and lighting upgrades?" All present members of Council were in favor. The motion was approved.

7. Councilman Levinson

A. Revenue & Finance

1. Councilman Levinson advised of a Resolution authorizing the cancellation of 2017 preliminary taxes due to tax exempt status for 507 Wilson Avenue.
2. Councilman Levinson discussed the audit report and advised that a Resolution certifying review of the audit is on the agenda.

B. Councilman Levinson advised of a Resolution on the agenda authorizing a Closed Session meeting to discuss an employment issue.

At 6:54 P.M., Council President Paolone called a recess.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC
Municipal Clerk