

LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL
CAUCUS MINUTES
August 11, 2010

Council President Donna Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:03 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 Matt Levinson; Councilman Alex Marino; Councilman Ralph Paolone; Councilman Tim Tighe; and Council President Donna Taylor.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Joseph L. Youngblood, Jr., City Solicitor; Steve Mazur, Dixon Associates; Hank Kolakowski, Public Works Superintendent; and Leigh Ann Napoli, Municipal Clerk.

2. Approval of Minutes Without Formal Reading

Councilman Beinfest motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2010 Caucus meeting, without formal reading. All Council members were in favor with one abstention by Councilman Marino. Motion was approved.

3. Mayor's Report

A. The Mayor introduced Mary Ellen Cetrone as the Mayor for the Day.

4. Councilman Beinfest

A. Neighborhood Services

1. Councilman Beinfest discussed a Resolution on the agenda in support of the City's application to the New Jersey Historic Trust for a Capital Improvement Grant for the Historical Society Building.

5. Councilwoman DeDomenicis

A. Public Works

1. Councilwoman DeDomenicis reported that Public Works continues to perform their summer services. They are beginning to maintain the fields for football season. They continue painting crosswalks and updating signs throughout town. The Seaview Landing road project was completed on July 23. They will be constructing new signs at the Arboretum advising people to walk their bikes through the Arboretum.

6. Councilman Levinson

A. Engineering

1. Councilman Levinson reported that the Hemlock Drainage Improvement project is ongoing.
2. Councilman Paolone questioned that now that the state law requires drivers to stop for pedestrians instead of yield, if signs through town and lights on Shore Road should be red instead of yellow. Mr. Mazur indicated that the signs through town have been changed to red, but the lights on Shore Road are warning devices only. The only time the lights can be red are if they are used at stop intersections. Councilman Paolone is concerned that people will not stop because a yellow light means slow down.

7. Councilman Marino

A. Revenue & Finance

1. Councilman Marino reported that revenues to date are better than anticipated.
2. Councilman Marino and Councilman Tighe met with a company regarding solar upgrades. He will now reach out to the schools for possible shared projects.
3. The City now has a tax rate. The percentage of collections to date is just over 50%. This is lower than last year due to getting a tax rate so late.

8. Councilman Tighe

A. Planning & Development

1. Councilman Tighe reported that he toured the Krumm property and viewed the stockade fence that separates the private property from the City's property. He suggested putting up a split rail fence to replace the old one and extend it between the two properties as requested by the Sharpes.
2. A Resolution is on the agenda authorizing an escrow refund with regard to a street opening permit.
3. The Planning Board referred a small wind ordinance to Council for review. Councilman Tighe asked everyone to review the draft to discuss at a future meeting.
4. The Mayor and Council were copied on a letter from Jim Galantino regarding the construction at Mainland Regional High School. Councilman Tighe asked that everyone review the correspondence.
5. Councilman Tighe referred to a letter regarding the Frank H. Stewart Trust grant opportunity and asked everyone to think of a potential project. He also referred the information to the Environmental Commission.
6. Councilman Tighe witnessed a fire response down the street from his house. He commended the efforts of the Fire Company and specifically Mr. Kisby on his professionalism.
7. Councilman Tighe discussed an Ordinance on the agenda to amend the Redevelopment Plan. He would like to introduce the ordinance tonight so that the matter can be referred to the Planning Board as required by law. He and the committee have spent a lot of time on the amendment, which still needs a little work. This is a very important document for the City. The goal of the plan is to work as a tool for development. The property looks great. The developer has submitted a concept plan for additional development. Several goals of the amendment are to incite the development of two new buildings, the installation of a traffic light, the development of the southern buffer, and to preserve the northern buffer. Mr. Mazur indicated that he had a conference call with the developer and their engineer today regarding the traffic signal. They intend to schedule a meeting with DOT and Mr. Mazur as soon as the amendment is introduced. Councilman Paolone questioned what the City's basis for denying construction permits if the DOT does not approve the traffic light. Mr. Mazur advised that DOT never denied a traffic signal only the location of the signal. Councilman Paolone indicated that the buffers are supposed to be preserved. He would like something in writing indicating if trees and shrubs are removed what exactly must be added in their place so the residents that came to Council know that Council supports them. He would like the language of the amendment to indicate that the amendment is contingent upon the light being installed not just approved. This is the City's opportunity to get what was promised. Councilman Tighe indicated that he would like to introduce the Ordinance tonight so that the matter can be referred to the Planning Board. The Board will have changes for the amendment as will Council. The Ordinance may have to be reintroduced at a later date. However, he wants to begin the process so that this can move forward. Councilman Marino agreed that the language should be stronger, but agrees with starting the process. Councilman Paolone understands the process, only he would like the amendment changed before it is referred to the Planning Board. He knows that the redevelopment committee has worked very hard and appreciates their efforts. He intends to vote no on the Ordinance tonight as it is written now.

9. Council President Taylor

A. Administration

1. Council President Taylor advised of an Ordinance on the agenda for final reading setting the fees for copies to five cents for letter size or smaller and seven cents for legal size or larger. This is as a result of a court case and final legislation.

2. Council President Taylor discussed a Resolution on the agenda authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License to the EHT Home and School.
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10. Mr. Youngblood
 - A. Mr. Youngblood indicated that now that the City has the shared service for dispatch services with Somers Point, the City does not employ dispatchers any longer. The police secretary was in the same Teamsters union contract as the dispatchers. However, since there cannot be just one person in a contract, the Teamsters have agreed to shift that position to the blue collar contract for bargaining purposes. A Resolution authorizing the change is on tonight's agenda.
 - B. Mr. Youngblood discussed the Separation Agreement for Chief Baker that was approved at the last Council meeting. There is a request to modify the language for it to be construed as an employment contract as well as a separation agreement. Councilman Tighe motioned, seconded by Councilman Beinfest, to approve the modification. All members of Council were in favor with one abstention by Councilman Marino. The motion was approved.

At 6:49 P.M., Council President Taylor called a recess.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC
Municipal Clerk