

LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL
CAUCUS MINUTES
August 13, 2014

Council President Tim Tighe called the meeting to order at 6:05 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 Todd Gordon; Councilman Brian Heun; Councilman Darren Matik; Councilman Ralph Paolone; and Council President Tighe.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Joseph L. Youngblood, Jr., City Solicitor; Vince Polistina, City Engineer; Hank Kolakowski, Public Works Superintendent; Anthony Strazzeri, CFO; Chick Kisby, Fire Chief; and Leigh Ann Napoli, Municipal Clerk.

2. Approval of Minutes Without Formal Reading

Councilman Gordon motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2014 Caucus meeting without formal reading. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved.

3. Mayor's Report

A. The Mayor advised of a Resolution on the agenda to hire two new Patrolman in the Police Department. They will be replacing the two Sergeants that will retire at the end of the month.

4. Councilwoman DeDomenicis

A. Public Works

1. Councilwoman discussed an Ordinance on the agenda amending the City Code on Solid Waste for designated recyclables. This amendment is to be consistent with the County.

5. Councilman Gordon

A. Engineering

1. Councilman Gordon advised of a Resolution on the agenda awarding a Contract for the rehabilitation of the Ocean Heights Pump Station. This is as a result of an inspection which found problems that need to be corrected immediately. The cost was included in the budget.
2. Councilman Gordon reported that there are still some outstanding issues with the South West Drainage Improvement Project. Discussions continue with a resident in that area and punch list items remain.
3. There are several issues with the Country Club & Delmar Avenue paving project that the City is working to have resolved.
4. Mr. Polistina reported that the South Jersey Gas Company has completed about half of their ongoing project and anticipates being completed with the gas main replacements by the end of the month. Mr. Polistina also reported that New Jersey American Water will be doing work in that area. He will soon be meeting with representatives from the gas and water companies to discuss final paving and restoration.

6. Councilman Matik

A. Public Safety

1. Councilman Matik advised of Resolutions to honor Sergeants Wayne Finnegan & Jim Olson on 25 years of employment with the City as well as their upcoming retirement at the end of the month.

7. Councilman Paolone
 - A. Revenue & Finance
 1. Councilman Paolone discussed a Resolution on the agenda rejecting the bid received for vehicle maintenance because it was too high.
8. Council President Tighe
 - A. Administration
 1. Councilman Tighe has made some revisions to the council committees and distributed an updated list. He reminded everyone that all issues pertaining to specific departments shall be handled by the Chair of the appropriate departmental committee. It is the Chair's responsibility to communicate issues and projects with the rest of Council as well as appropriate City departments. He believes there has been some confusion with others getting involved with matters that do not pertain to them.
 2. Councilman Tighe read a purchasing policy that has been in place for several years that states any purchase over \$1,000 needs approval from the respective Council Chair prior to being made.
 3. Councilman Tighe explained that he was under the impression that City Council only approved the Resolution for the School Resource Officer to support the City's grant application since Council only received the documentation that night. In review of the meeting minutes, it appears the Resolution was approved without any contingencies. As a result, Bob Previti, the Interim Superintendent for Mainland, assumed it did pass. However, Councilman Tighe did inform him that the approval was only if the City is awarded the grant. It was a miscommunication and needs to be undone.
 4. Councilman Tighe advised of a Resolution on the agenda honoring the Mainland Youth Lacrosse Club Eighth Grade Team.
 5. A Resolution is on the agenda authorizing a Raffle License to the EHT Home & School Association.
 6. Councilman Tighe distributed photographs presented by a resident complaining of parking by the Poplar Avenue Bridge while fishing. In review of the photos, there was no objections to the vehicles parked on the dirt along River Drive, only the vehicle parked on the inside of the barrier on the bridge on Poplar Ave. Councilman Matik will forward the complaint to the Police Chief for review.
 - B. Planning & Development
 1. Council President Tighe advised that the City received a request for approval of a temporary real estate sign for 501 W. Patcong Avenue. Councilman Tighe wants to review the site and will make a recommendation at the next Council meeting.
 2. Council President Tighe advised of a Resolution on the agenda awarding a Contract for an asbestos survey at 23 Elm Avenue and a Contract for asbestos removal at that location. Councilman Paolone discussed the ongoing costs associated with the demolition of this building, which now could total about \$55,000. He appreciates the City taking on this project, but would like to know if the City will recover these costs. He also asked if the State would deed the property over to the City and then let the City sell it. These ongoing costs have not been budgeted for in the 2014 budget and now money is being charged against the Planning Board's budget. Council President Tighe did ask Mr. Youngblood to call the State to see if they would deed the property to the City. Council President Tighe indicated that Councilman Paolone has a valid point. Councilman Beinfest also agrees, but believes the building is a hazard. Councilman Gordon also believes it is a public safety issue at this point. Councilwoman DeDomenicis indicated that the residents on Elm Avenue have complained about that property for years. It is unsafe. Councilman Paolone questioned the appraisal value of the lot. Councilman Matik believes it is assessed at about \$100,000. It is a safety issue and the building has to come down. The Mayor also believes it is a safety issue.

- Councilman Heun understands Council Paolone's concerns, but believes the building is a safety issue and needs to come down. Mr. Youngblood will contact the State to ask if they will deed the property over to the City. Council President Tighe agrees to move forward with the demolition and try to get the property transferred to the City. Councilman Heun agrees and indicated if the City gets the title to the property they can streamline the sale by selling to contingent property owners.
3. Council President Tighe discussed an Ordinance on the agenda for first reading to vacate a portion of Belhaven Avenue. This matter was presented to City Council several months ago. City Council referred the matter to the Planning Board for review and the Planning Board recommended the street vacation. The Zoning Board has also granted their approvals.
 4. An Ordinance is on the agenda for first reading authorizing a Right of Way Dedication to Atlantic County for the reconstruction of Cedar Bridge.
 5. Council President Tighe discussed the need for a Professional Services Contract for legal services to represent the City in redevelopment discussions. The discussions would entail both the Cornerstone and Bloom properties. The developers of the Bloom property will reimburse the City for these legal expenses. Councilman Heun motioned, seconded by Councilman Matik, to add Resolution No. 136 to the agenda authorizing same. All members of Council were in favor. Motion approved.
 6. The City was contact by the Atlantic County Health Department about positive mosquito samples for the West Nile virus in Linwood. The County has distributed notification to neighboring property owners in the area where the samples tested positive and has also published notification of same in the newspapers.

At 6:31 P.M., Council President Tighe called a recess.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC
Municipal Clerk