

**LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
September 11, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Paolone called the meeting to order at 6:48 P.M., noting that the meeting had been advertised in compliance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

FLAG SALUTE:

Councilman Todd Gordon led the flag salute. Council President Paolone called for a moment of silence in observance of September 11, 2001.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Rick DePamphilis; Councilwoman June Byrnes; 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; Jen Heller, Engineer's Office; and Leigh Ann Napoli, Municipal Clerk.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES WITHOUT FORMAL READING

Councilwoman DeDomenicis motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2019 Regular meeting without formal reading. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved.

PRESENTATION

Marine Corporal/Linwood Patrolman Michael Fountas – Patrolman Michael Fountas is a member of the U.S. Marine Reserves and was deployed in Afghanistan from September 2018 through April 2019. He presented the City with an American flag that flew over his base while deployed as part of Task Force Southwest. Patrolman Fountas noted how grateful he is to the Police Department and the City of Linwood. Chief Carman thanked and commended Patrolman Fountas as did the Mayor and each member of City Council.

SWEARING IN

The Mayor administered the Oath of Office to Patrolman Eric Guanchez.

RESOLUTIONS

143-2019 A Resolution honoring Craig A. Camp

The Clerk read Resolution No. 143 of 2019 by title only. Councilwoman DeDomenicis motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon to approve Resolution No. 143. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved. Councilwoman DeDomenicis read and presented the Resolution to Mr. Camp. The Mayor and each member of City Council extended their congratulations.

ORDINANCES

16 OF 2019 AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF REAL PROPERTY WITHIN THE CITY OF LINWOOD FROM VST CAPITAL, LLC AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES HERETOFORE ADOPTED THE PROVISIONS OF WHICH ARE INCONSISTENT HEREWITH.

The Clerk read Ordinance No. 16 of 2019 by title only. Councilman Matik motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon to approve Ordinance No. 16 for first reading. A roll call vote was heard with six in the affirmative and one abstention by Councilman Ford. Motion was approved.

17 OF 2019 AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SALE OF USED VEHICLES IN THE CITY OF LINWOOD.

The Clerk read Ordinance No. 17 of 2019 by title only. Councilman Matik motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon to approve Ordinance No. 17 for first reading. A roll call vote was heard with seven in the affirmative. Motion was approved.

- 18 OF 2019** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 3 of 2019, AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR AND ESTABLISHING SALARIES, COMPENSATIONS 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. 18 of 2019 by title only. Councilman Gordon motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis to approve Ordinance No. 18 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.

- 140-2019** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License, #2019-25, to Mainland Regional Football Boosters, Inc.
- 141-2019** A Resolution authorizing the hiring of Cheri L. Broschard as a Substitute School Crossing Guard for the City of Linwood
- 142-2019** A Resolution authorizing an Alliance Agreement with the County of Atlantic for a Drug Abuse and Alcohol Education and Prevention Program
- 144-2019** A Resolution authorizing the refund of a tax overpayment of the 2019 4th Quarter taxes for Block 103 Lot 2 located at 940 Oak Grove Avenue in the City of Linwood
- 145-2019** A Resolution confirming the appointment of Marian Jordan to the Linwood Environmental Commission
- 146-2019** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License, #2019-26, to the Alcove Center for Grieving Children and Families
- 147-2019** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License, #2019-27, to Gilda's Club South Jersey
- 148-2019** A Resolution awarding a Contract to Airpower International, Inc. for Air Compressor Maintenance for the Linwood Fire Department
- 149-2019** A Resolution authorizing the Municipal Solicitor to take appropriate legal action to file and prosecute a municipal tax lien foreclosure action with regard to property owned by Waltraud Fischer, located on Cleveland Avenue, Block 12, Lot 3 in the City of Linwood
- 150-2019** A Resolution approving temporary signage for the Linwood Farmers Market

Council President Paolone asked if any member of Council would like to remove any items from consent. No items were removed. Councilman Ford motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve Resolutions No. 140-142, 144-150 of 2019. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved.

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST: \$2,597,664.94

Councilman Ford 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. Motion was approved. (The bill list is attached as Exhibit A)

NEW BUSINESS:

Neighborhood Services Committee Report – Council President Paolone indicated that the report was presented during the Caucus meeting that was held in Council Chambers.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

Tina Leonard, 7 Dee Drive, Linwood – Mrs. Leonard has been a resident of Linwood for forty-three years. She is not in favor of a skate park in Linwood. She read from pages on the City's web site with regard to the City's parks system and the numerous recreational opportunities and events that are offered. She indicated that residents are

struggling to remain in and maintain their homes in Linwood due to the taxes. She discussed other projects in the City that need attention like the grounds of the Library and the Historical Society building. Those buildings play a key role in Linwood's history. She suggested having the question of a skate park voted upon by the voters.

Terry Calvi, 1020 Woodlynnne Boulevard, Linwood – Mrs. Calvi has been a resident of Linwood for forty-one years. She takes offense that there is a need to have something for every child. That is why people pay for things for their children, such as music lessons etc. Not as a burden to the tax payers. She talked about the condition of the Library and that the City should help to restore that property. She suggested spending money on what is needed first and if there is extra money then consider something new.

Lawrence P. Lhulier, Sr. 1300 Woodlynnne Boulevard, Linwood – Mr. Lhulier is confused that a committee was asked to do research on a topic and then everyone will not listen to them. He submitted data and statistics on skateboard parks to City Council in the past and mentioned the \$45 cost per square foot that was found on the Tony Hawk Foundation web page. It is very expensive. He feels it is a dereliction of duty to not act on a committee's recommendation. He discussed the liability and costs associated with the skateboard park. Mr. Lhulier served on the City's Planning Board for many years and discussed the section of the City's Master Plan that recommends only single use recreational facilities. He would like Council to make a decision on the skateboard park as soon as possible, noting that there are more important projects to consider.

Jack Verseput, 306 Poplar Avenue, Linwood – Mr. Verseput believes the money for a skateboard park can be used better elsewhere. He discussed an accident that occurred at his intersection, Poplar & Maple Avenues. One of the drivers was very seriously injured. He call 911. It took over twenty-five minutes for an ambulance to come and another ten to fifteen minutes for an EMT. He asked that City Council look into the 911 system to avoid delays in the future. He commended the efforts of the Police Department during the accident.

Kathy Miller 311 Melody Lane, Linwood – Mrs. Miller has been to all of the Council meetings for a year. Her goal is that the South Jersey Industries property remains as open space and does not include a skateboard park. She has previously presented Council with material on skateboard parks. She believes the Neighborhood Services Committee made a wise decision.

Ken Clifford, 109 East Avenue, Egg Harbor Township – Mr. Clifford respects everyone's comments about the skateboard park and suggested they look into alternative funding sources, such as donations.

Brian Cottrell 108 E. Patcong Avenue, Linwood – Mr. Cottrell collected records from the Ocean City Police Department from 2016 and noted only five police calls for the skateboard park. One was a missing wallet and the others were routine gate checks. He does not agree with the negative culture of skateboard parks. There are a lot of young families in Linwood and it would be good to have an increase in diverse recreation for residents. He also discussed raising money to help fund a park and suggested everyone observe the park in Ocean City.

Bob Boileau 2 Cedar Place, Linwood – Mr. Boileau is a former Councilman of Linwood. When a Council committee makes a recommendation, Council takes a straw vote on the matter to see where everyone stands. He hopes they vote on this soon. His street needs to be paved. If Council builds a skateboard park, this street moves down on the list. The roof on the Historical Society building is falling down. He doesn't understand how Council could justify a skateboard park with more important projects in the City. He hopes they do their due diligence.

Anthony Mavey, student at Mainland Regional High School – Mr. Mavey is in favor of a skateboard park. He is not involved in sports and did not have a lot of friends when he moved here. However, he made a lot of friends at the skateboard park in Ocean City and believes it would be great if Linwood had one.

Jen Sims 719 Cedar Place, Linwood – Mrs. Sims's husband is a skateboarder but she does not think that Linwood should invest in a park at this time. She just paid \$3,700 for extended day Kindergarten and discussed the additional funding that was lost to the schools.

Seeing and hearing no other members from the public wishing to be heard, Council President Paolone closed the floor.

FINAL REMARKS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Mayor DePamphilis – Mayor DePamphilis commended Councilwoman Byrnes and her committee. He agrees with the committee for all the reasons they stated. This is not the first time the City looked into a skateboard park. He does not think this is the best time for one. He agrees that Council should take a straw vote on the matter.

Councilman Gordon – Councilman Gordon agrees that Linwood is a great place to live and wants that to continue. These are not easy decisions. He is very conscientious about spending the City's money. He believes this is a worthwhile dialogue.

Councilman Heun – Councilman Heun congratulated Mr. Camp for his twenty-five years of employment with the City. He welcomed the City's new Police Officer and commended Patrolman Fountas on his presentation to the City.

Councilman Matik – Councilman Matik discussed the City's tax bill, noting that a very small portion is for municipal purposes. The largest component is the schools. He would like the process of the skateboard park to be a little easier. He did not see all the data and if it does cost \$450,000, he could see an issue with it. Councilman Matik indicated that the Library has approximately \$330,000 of the tax payer's money in the bank and does not spend it on the Library. He indicated that the Historical Society was supposed to be self-funding but it is not, and the City has to put a new roof on the building. The City is attempting to get grant money for the roof as the estimated cost is \$100,000. Councilman Matik indicated that full day kindergarten is a school board issue, not City Council. City Council no longer has a say on the school's budget. Councilman Matik addressed Mr. Verseput regarding the accident. He receives dispatch notifications. He indicated that it took fourteen minutes for the ambulance to respond because they were dispatched to Patcong Avenue instead of Poplar Avenue.

Councilman Ford – Councilman Ford likes to make a decision when he has all the answers. If there is a plan for the skateboard park he would like to see it. He cannot vote on something he has not seen. He agrees with Councilman Gordon on spending money. \$100,000 is a lot of money for a roof. If the City had a skateboard park, his kids would use it. Providing opportunities for kids is good. He was taken back on how Council was told they should react to the Neighborhood Services Committee's recommendation. Should he just agree with a committee's decision to spend \$3 million on a turf field? He would ask questions and hope that the residents would too. Councilman Ford commended Marine/Patrolman Fountas on his services and presentation to the City, noting the importance of not losing sight of September 11.

Councilwoman Byrnes – Councilwoman Byrnes thanked Mr. Verseput for his assistance during the accident. She, too, was at the accident. Multiple people called 911. She thanked all the residents who were there to help. They even had a nurse who stayed to help. The Police did a great job. The Neighborhood Services Committee chose not to spend money on a conceptual plan because they agreed the park was not a good idea for Linwood. Ocean City has a paid attendant. If Linwood did, the costs would increase. She wishes that Linwood had the ratables that Ocean City has. She thanked Patrolman Fountas for his presentation and congratulated Mr. Camp for his twenty-five years of employment.

Councilwoman DeDomenicis – Councilwoman DeDomenicis thanked everyone for attending and providing comments. As everyone can see, Council can agree to disagree. However, they always try to do what is best for Linwood. She again reiterated the three goals on the City seal; recreation, education, and family. She announced that the Mayor is celebrating his birthday and had everyone sing Happy Birthday.

Council President Paolone – Council President Paolone is disturbed that it took fifteen to twenty-five minutes for an ambulance to respond, noting that the national average response should be four to six minutes. He discussed the City's contract and the required run reports. He is sure this matter will be looked into. He agrees with Councilman Matik about the high costs for a new roof at the Historical Society building and how City Council no longer has a say on the school's budget. The voters took that away when they voted for an elected board. Council President Paolone indicated that the Neighborhood Services Committee and all of City Council has spent a lot of time on the issue of a skateboard park. They have tried to be as transparent as possible. This matter has been discussed for over a year. The issue was put into committee. They did their due diligence and made a recommendation. It is not uncommon that Council wants more information. That is a good thing. They want to make the right decision. The beauty of Council is the makeup of people with different professions. He applauds the committee's efforts and those of Council for wanting more information.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to be addressed by Council, Councilman Ford motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon, to adjourn at 7:59 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC
Municipal Clerk