

**LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
November 23, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Ralph Paolone called the meeting to order at 6:13 P.M., noting that the meeting had been advertised in compliance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

FLAG SALUTE:

Councilwoman Stacy DeDomenicis led the flag salute.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Darren Matik; Councilwoman June Byrnes; Councilwoman Stacy DeDomenicis; Councilman Eric Ford; Councilman Todd Gordon; Councilman Matt Levinson; Councilman Todd Michael; 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

Councilman Ford motioned, seconded by Councilwoman Byrnes, to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2021 Regular meeting without formal reading. All members of Council were in favor. 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.

- 30-2021** A Resolution authorizing the cancellation of taxes and refund of a tax overpayment for Block 110 Lot 1.01 located at 4 East Glenside Avenue in the City of Linwood
- 182-2021** A Resolution scheduling the 2022 Reorganization Meeting of the Common Council of the City of Linwood
- 183-2021** A Resolution authorizing and scheduling paid Holidays for Calendar Year 2022
- 184-2021** A Resolution authorizing the refund of various tax overpayments made by Corelogic Mortgage
- 185-2021** A Resolution authorizing an Agreement for Shared Emergency and Non Emergency Dispatch Services for the municipalities of the City of Linwood and the Township of Egg Harbor
- 186-2021** A Resolution authorizing participation with Atlantic County Government in applying for a LEAP Implementation Grant

Council President Paolone asked if any member of Council would like to remove any items from consent. Nothing was removed. Councilman Levinson motioned, seconded by Councilman Ford, to approve Resolutions No. 30, 182-186 of 2021. All members of Council were in favor. Motion was approved.

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST: \$1,307,161.84

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. (The bill list is attached as Exhibit A)

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

Jill Ojserkis, Mainland Regional High School Board President – Mrs. Ojserkis thanked the Mayor and Council for reaching out to the High School regarding the student who was injured on Route 9. She asked them to do everything they can, consistent with their powers, to work with the stakeholders to make it safer to cross New Road by the High School. She knows this is something the Mayor and Council have been working on in the past.

Lisa Bonanno, 921 Oak Grove Avenue, Linwood – Ms. Bonanno is concerned about the accident involving the Mainland student on Route 9. She would like to advocate for a traffic light on Route 9 by the High School. The pedestrian light there is not sufficient. She asked the Mayor and Council to do what ever they can to get a traffic light there as the priority should be student safety. She asked if a traffic study has been done there in recent years and if Senator Polistina would still be the City's Engineer now that he has been elected to the Senate.

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 Matik – The Mayor acknowledged Senator Polistina seated in the audience and advised that he would remain as the City's Engineer. He also advised that City representatives are meeting with representatives from the DOT on December 3 to discuss midblock crosswalks. The Mayor has asked a second time for a midblock crosswalk by the High School and was denied because it did not meet their criteria. The City will do everything they can to make crossing Route 9 safer and to get a traffic light.

Council President Paolone – Council President Paolone referred to the recent Press articles on a traffic light on Route 9 and indicated the public's perception is inaccurate. If it was up the City, there would have been a light there years ago. When Cornerstone was being redeveloped, the City made the installation of a traffic light a condition of their redevelopment agreement and would not issue a certificate of completion because the light was never installed. They sued the City and won. It was very expensive and the City did not get a light. The City continued to work with the developer to get a light. The DOT's criteria for a light are very restrictive. Another traffic study was done and the DOT still did not approve. The City's Engineer is now a State Senator, so hopefully the City will have better communication with the State. It was never that the City did not want the light. The City does and will continue to request one.

Councilwoman DeDomenicis – Councilwoman DeDomenicis thanked everyone for attending the meeting and wished everyone Happy Thanksgiving.

Councilwoman Byrnes – Councilwoman Byrnes thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Safety is always very important to the City. She grew up on Bartlett Avenue when Prudential was open where Cornerstone is located. It was dangerous crossing Route 9 then and traffic has increased. The City will do everything they can to make it safer. She announced a Menorah Lighting on November 29 at 7pm at the Arboretum and the Christmas Tree Lighting on December 7 at 6pm also at the Arboretum.

Councilman Michael – Councilman Michael extended his thoughts and prayers to the High School student who was injured on Route 9 as well as his family. The City will do everything they can to make it safer.

Councilman Levinson – Councilman Levinson advised that it is upsetting when a member of the High School gets injured. When Councilman Levinson was first on City Council, the City did fight for the light and will continue to do so. They will also communicate with NJ Transit for a better stop location to drop off students. The Mayor and Council want everything to be as safe as possible.

Councilman Ford – Councilman Ford lives in the neighborhood just north of Cornerstone. He was part of the group of City officials to get a pedestrian light on Monroe Avenue. It took four years. He understands the issues. A blinking light is a start. The City's hands are tied. They would love to have a traffic light, but the decision lies with the DOT.

Councilman Gordon – Councilman Gordon thanked the public for their comments. He echoes the comments from the Mayor and Council regarding the traffic light. Their priority is the safety of all students and residents.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to be addressed by Council, Councilman Levinson motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to adjourn at 6:32 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC
Municipal Clerk