



Borough of Swedesboro Council Meeting
Swedesboro, NJ 08085

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES of May 3, 2010
Approved on May 17, 2010

A regular meeting of Borough Council was held on the above date in Council Chambers with the Honorable Thomas W. Fromm presiding.

Mayor advised that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Mayor asked for a Roll Call of Council. All members were present.

A moment of silent prayer was followed by a flag salute.

Mr. Ayers moved to approve the minutes of 4/19/10, seconded by Mrs. Hale. Mr. Zappala requested that under new business second paragraph that a correction be made as it was not Mr. Zappala who stated that any questions regarding the budget be submitted, it was in fact the Mayor who stated that any questions should be submitted in writing. All in favor of approving the minutes with the above change, yes.

No opening comments were made by Mayor Fromm.

Mr. Weeks moved to open the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Zappala. Vote all yes.

Mrs. Gahrs had a question about opening to the public specifically with the new procedure as far as how we are going to keep track of the five minute time limit. Mayor Fromm stated that unofficially we will just use the clock, but we will have to get a timer if it becomes an issue.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Joseph Musumeci-Lake Avenue- Disappointed in the fact that it took four votes to reduce the individual speaking at the public portion of the meeting. He wanted to know specifically who made the motion and Mr. Weeks informed him that he was the one who made the motion. After asked by Mr. Musumeci why this motion was asked, Mr. Weeks commented that the motion was made in order to keep the meetings moving along and in an effort to avoid someone from grandstanding for 20-30 minutes about something that was already asked and answered. Mr. Weeks also stated that if there was an individual with a problem the governing body would recognize the fact that there needs to be more time allotted. Mr. Musumeci went onto state that he feels that he is being not fairly treated as compared to other businesses specifically Fish and Calatozzo and wants answers to his questions.

Mr. Weeks moved to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Zappala. Vote all yes.



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CORRESPONDENCE:

Mr. Ayers motioned to approve the N.J. State Fireman's Association Membership Application for Malinda Sims, seconded by Mrs. Gahrs. Vote all yes.

REPORTS

No reports were provided for tonight's meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance- Audit close out is scheduled for Wednesday, 5/5/10.

Public Works- Mayor Fromm commented that the old grocery store on Church Street is demolished, the electric box at the park is gone, the bridge is reset at the park. He asked the borough workers this week to check out a drainage issue at Leahy and Fow where the water is overflowing, Verizon was contacted to remove the phone booth on Kingsway, and the clerk provided an update that phone booth has been removed. The Welcome to Swedesboro sign has been fixed temporarily and we are looking into a new sign to see what the cost will be. The borough is working to fix a drainage issue on Franklin Avenue. The engineer is reviewing drawings regarding the issue on Thompson to see how we are going to fix that.

Mayor Fromm addressed Mr. Haynes who was in attendance about the manholes that are still a problem. Mayor Fromm asked for his help. Mr. Haynes responded that there are still about 4-5 manholes that are still a problem and on Wednesday night the County will be awarding a bid for the asphalt pick up and that is what they have been waiting for, the new contract.

Mr. Casella asked if they were going to redo the entire manholes.

Mr. Haines explained how they were going to fix the problem and how the problem occurred.

Public Safety- Mayor Fromm stated that he is having a meeting with the police, a business owner at the Old Delmonte property and some residents on Church Street, Thursday 5/6/10.

Mayor Fromm stated that he could not get any information, but heard there was some sort of a raid on Broad Street last week and that we will not be able to find out anything until the names are released.



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Mayor Fromm and Deputy Mayor Jim Lavender traveled to Trenton last week to testify before the Luarck committee about the police consolidation and that went well. There was a nice article about it in the Trenton Times.

Economic Development- There was a meeting held on 4/22/10 and they reviewed details about the upcoming Outdoor Living and Garden Show. The Blues Knight was a sell out and was a great event. Mrs. Hale thanked those who came out to support the event.

Mrs. Hale was approached by three new potential businesses that could be moving into town. They are trying to find the right spot.

Fire- Mrs. Gahrs had no news, however, Mayor Fromm stated that he sent Mrs. Gahrs an e-mail later today stating that we are going to need to push hard on the Homeland Security Grant Money available and that he would hope that the fire department goes after a new truck or something. Mayor Fromm stated that the information was passed on to him by Eric Voight.

Mayor Fromm also commented that Eric Voight passed on information to him that we were accepted into the process to get the FEMA money and we will get a percentage back from the snow storms.

Garbage and Recycling- Mr. Ayers is going to reach out to recycle bank to see if they would set up a booth as they did last year at the Outdoor Living and Garden Show to be available for the residents to ask questions.

Mr. Weeks reminded everyone that this is the first month that we start the twice a month metal collection, the first and third Friday of the month. Residents are asked to call Borough hall to schedule a pick up. The first few times if things are out there the guys will pick stuff up, but as time goes on we will just put out reminders that they will have to call and eventually the objects will not be picked up.

We do temporarily have a container at the Sewer Plant and once that is filled we will call for pick up, after that we will take it directly to the metal recycling center and we are getting a good price.

Mr. Ayers also stated that there is supposed to be a notice in the Newtown Press reminding residents to call Borough Hall.

Street lighting/public celebrations- Mrs. Hale announced that Memorial Day Services are going to be held on 5/31/10 and the Business Association is starting to work on the Christmas Parade.



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Mrs. Gahrs stated the Memorial Day Service is on 5/31/10 at 10:30 am at the Woolwich Fire House.

Parks and Recreation-Fun day is scheduled for 5/22/10 and there is a meeting being held on 5/4/10 for the final preparations and Mr. Zappala stated it will be a fun day.

Mrs. Hale remarked that when she attended the Little League Ceremony there was not enough trash cans at the park and there was trash everywhere. Mrs. Hale asked Mr. Zappala to see about possibly purchasing a few more trash cans to put around.

Mr. Casella asked if recycle bank might want to donate recycle cans and Mrs. Hale suggested that somebody from parks and recreation contact them.

Movie night is scheduled for Friday Night at Locke Avenue Park.

Planning Board- There is a meeting scheduled for 5/10/10 and there is some business on the agenda.

Board of Health- Mr. Casella stated that the fuel tank on General Harker has been removed. There was a meeting last Monday and an issue was discussed about a duplex on Broad Street that is having problems with infestation on one side affecting the other side. Mr. Orbanus has sent letters both registered and regular mail to the owner. The County is aware of it and they were the ones who contacted us.

Mr. Orbanus commented that as of the 30th the letter his letter was done and a citation will be written after he verifies that nobody has heard anything from Mr. Driver.

Mayor Fromm stated that Dan can do his thing for the property maintenance, but it seems like the County Board of Health seems like they are just saying there is nothing they can do. Dan usually addresses the outside, but this is an inside health issue.

Mayor Fromm asked Larry Haynes if he could help as well since the County Health Department came out and stated that there is an obvious infestation problem with rats, roaches, etc. Are local health department should be piling on pressure as the neighbors are being impacted.

Mr. Ayers stated that perhaps they could put traps outside as a temporary solution. Mayor Fromm asked for all hands on deck in solving this situation.



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Mayor Fromm asked about an e-mail that he received about a business that has come to Bob Schmid having to do with tattoos, but not a normal tattoo parlor. Mayor Fromm stated that we passed an ordinance and that it is very restricted. She is a registered nurse and it is more for permanent cosmetics.

Mayor asked clerk to look up the ordinance to make sure we have compliance.

Mr. Casella asked the Clerk to contact Woolwich to see if they have something in place for this type of business as Mrs. Gahrs seems to think there is a similar business in Woolwich.

Environmental/Shade Tree- April meeting for environmental was canceled and Shade tree did not meet.

Mr. Ayers stated that he has some friends in Elk and Clayton and both places have an ordinate amount of mosquitoes and wanted to make people aware that if there is a bad area that there is a mosquito commission that can be contacted.

Mr. Casella also commented that there was quite a bit reported on the Northern side of the County that go a lot more rain and that the County is very busy, but to give them a call.

Mr. Haynes reported that from April of last year to approximately the same time this year, there was 9 calls last year and this year over 1,000. It is bad and they are handling calls as best as they can. The number to call is 307-6400, Highway Division Public Works. They will set up a date and inspect your property prior to spraying. Mr. Haynes outlined the process and the conditions in which spraying can/cannot be done.

Mr. Ayers asked if he knew of any products that can be used, Mr. Haynes was not aware of anything other than briquettes.

School Board- Mr. Zappala and Mayor Fromm met with the Mayor's from East Greenwich, South Harrison, and Woolwich to plan the course of action with the schools. On the 28th they met with the Swedesboro/Woolwich School Board and not much was resolved.

Mayor Fromm stated that there was a meeting scheduled for 5/6/10 at 4:30 with the County Superintendent and then a meeting with Kingsway on Thursday. Mayor Fromm stated that since it is such a bad situation this year that in addition to meeting with the school boards that it was asked for a special meeting with the County School Superintendent to talk about things that they are not prepared to talk about yet, but things that are going to change the landscape a little bit since the system in place now is not sustainable anymore.



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Mr. Casella asked if everyone received information about the school budget process being held at GCIT.

Mayor Fromm stated that when he was at the Luarck meeting in Trenton after the meeting they cornered the State Treasurer's Chief of Staff and started to explain what is going on down here. The borough and township are doing everything right, but are still getting the shaft when it comes to school funding and somebody needs to pay attention. Mayor Fromm asked if she would come down here and meet with us and the schools and she agreed and the meeting is scheduled to include representatives from Swedesboro, Woolwich and the school systems. Mayor Fromm also reached out to a representative from the Governor's office who also stated they are willing to look at our books and situation.

Mayor also commented on the fact that a 2.5% Cap would not be a good thing for Swedesboro on the budgets because of things that are unknown coming into the following years.

Mayor Fromm stated that we did a great job on the budget, but as he told the committee we got penalized for it because it raises the bar.

Mayor Fromm stated that a .46 cent increase in not acceptable to our residents.

Census- Mr. Casella asked the Clerk try to obtain information more specific to Swedesboro, but unfortunately we have not gotten information back. A general map was provided to Mayor and council outlining county participation and the county is at about 80%. Once the information is obtained it will be addressed.

Mayor Fromm stated that he saw in the paper that they are getting ready to go door to door.

Reassessment- Mrs. Gahrs stated that the assessor provided a sample letter and was advised that one town is holding up the works. They are waiting for their tax map to be approved by the State and once that occurs the letters will go out. They are asking the state to allow the other four towns to proceed with the letter.

Mayor Fromm announced that the new satellite library is opened and thanked everybody who helped with the transition.

Mayor Fromm got an e-mail from the engineer today stating that there was one piece of paper he was waiting for and then construction will start.



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OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Weeks announced that the water meters are being installed. The installer was very nice and professional and that it only took about 8 minutes to complete. The installer stated that they were generally having a good response, but was having some problems with landlords.

Mayor Fromm mentioned that the installation is about 50% complete and is on schedule. They are getting ready to install the antennas.

Mrs. Gahrs stated that the lake letter is still being looked at. Mrs. Gahrs checked with other towns as to what they are doing; some don't do anything, some are County lakes or privately owned. Mrs. Gahrs and the clerk will compile a letter with the approval of all before sending.

Mrs. Gahrs also wanted to know about something that was brought up at the last meeting about the tax abatement for the auto spa.

Mayor Fromm stated that we found out that there was no ordinance completed as it should have been. We have discussed this with the solicitor and he will have an ordinance ready for the next meeting to introduce. It is a legally binding agreement, but we need to memorialize it through an ordinance.

Mrs. Hale asked about the street sweeper and street cleaning schedule and asked that Mr. Simmerman do a schedule and forward to Mr. Weeks so that he could put it on the website.

Clerk stated that Mr. Simmerman did state that the leaves are being collected and that he will have his men start cleaning the storm drains. Clerk state that she was informed that the broom of the sweeper is broken, but once fixed they will start cleaning.

Mrs. Hale also asked if there was any additional RCA Funds. The clerk stated that she was not aware of any funds that have come through, but was advised to give out the applications and provide them to Mr. Conklin and if funds become available he will proceed.

Mayor Fromm asked if we received the final payment from Woolwich as we were supposed to get that the first meeting in May.

Mayor Fromm asked for a more definitive schedule to clean out the storm drains and clean the streets so the schedule can be posted. The public has to be notified so that they can move their cars.



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Mayor Fromm stated that he spoke with Mr. Simmerman at length about this and also spoke with the County for a schedule as to when the County roads will be done.

Mrs. Hale also wants to know who is responsible for the grass in the gutter line as there are a few streets around town that are horrible.

Mayor Fromm asked if she was referring to in the road itself and again he had a long discussion with Mr. Simmerman. Mayor feels the worst street is Water Street. It is our responsibility and it needs to be addressed.

Mayor Fromm asked that if anybody sees areas that are in need to notify us so that we can address the issue.

RESOLUTIONS

- Clerk read the following resolution (R-60-10 Changing the Custodian of the Petty Cash Fund).
Mr. Weeks moved to adopt the resolution, seconded by Mr. Ayers. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Mr. Casella did have a question as to whether the clerk can sign the resolution or if this would be a conflict. He was informed by the Mayor that this was not an issue the clerk is only attesting his signature on the resolution.

- Clerk read the following resolution (R-61-10 Permission to hold wine tasting at the Outdoor Show).
Mr. Weeks moved to adopt the resolution, seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Mr. Zappala did bring it to everyone's attention that the resolution states 2009 and the correction will be made.

ORDINANCE – PUBLIC HEARINGS

A public hearing is to be held tonight on Ordinance (0-7-10 ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE ENTITLED "SALARY ORDINANCE 1976 BOROUGHS OF SWEDESBORO" WHICH WAS ADOPTED AT A REGULAR MEETING OF BOROUGH COUNCIL ON MARCH 15, 1976.) Mr. Weeks moved to open the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Casella. Vote all yes. The meeting was opened to the public however no one from the public spoke for or against the ordinance.

Mr. Zappala moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Weeks. Vote all yes.



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Mr. Weeks motioned to adopt ordinance 0-7-2010, seconded by Mr. Casella. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

A public hearing is being held tonight on Ordinance (0-8-2010 ORDINANCE AMMENDING ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK). Mr. Weeks moved to open the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Casella. Vote all yes.

No one from the public spoke for or against the ordinance.

Mr. Weeks moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Ayers. Vote all yes.

Mr. Weeks moved to adopt Ordinance 0-8-2010, seconded by Mr. Ayers. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

ORDINANCE – INTRODUCTION

Clerk introduced Ordinance (0-2-10, AN ORDINANCE VACATING AND EXTINGUISHING ALL PUBLIC RIGHTS IN, ALONG AND THROUGH A PORTION OF ALLEN STREET IN THE BOROUGH OF SWEDESBORO, COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY ORGININALLY ADOPTED ON OCTOBER 3, 1995).

Mr. Weeks motioned to introduce the ordinance with a public hearing on 5/17/10, seconded by Mr. Zappala. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Mr. Ayers moved to approve sick pay benefits for William Goodwin, seconded by Mr. Casella. Vote all yes.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Weeks stated that the neighborhood watch met with Mr. Orbanus and Mr. Schmid regarding questions they had about how to report violations of property and potential rental violations. It was discussed at length that people should file complaints through the clerk's office. Neighborhood watch will be actively filing complaints about landlords not keeping up with the property and will be seeking help from the Board of Health to help get them to clean up their act.

If anybody has a problem contacting borough hall about a rental property directly residents can contact the neighborhood watch directly or send an e-mail to the website.

The neighborhood watch meetings are the second Wednesday of the month @7.00 pm.



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Mrs. Hale asked Mr. Orbanus to address a property on Kings Highway that has a dog house in the front yard and to check the ordinance to see if this a violation.

Mrs. Hale also stated that there are numerous signs that are around town that cannot be read and asked that the clerk contact Mr. Simmerman to compile a list and to start the process of replacing these signs.

Mrs. Hale also stated that the shore traffic has started and that traffic was backed up down Franklin Street. People were doing U-turns at the Dam and this is a safety hazard.

Mrs. Hale was informed that there was a parade yesterday and that caused a significant back up.

Mrs. Hale read an article about energy savings from PSE&G customers, but Atlantic City electric is not mentioned. Mrs. Hale is inquiring if there is such a program for the Atlantic City Electric customers.

Mayor Fromm stated that our Lawyer Jeff Surenian for COAH was given an honor for his work on COAH.

Mayor Fromm stated that on the website there needs to be a general statement regarding water meter installation, advising people to check their meters for leaks and to address the water charges. A lot of people have not had functioning meters for awhile and could be in for a shock when they get their next bill. Those who do not respond to Henkel's and McCoy to schedule the installation of the meter will have the water shut off until installed.

Mr. Ayers asked if the new system is able to track the leaks and notify people on the bill if there is a potential problem.

Mrs. Hale asked if rental units have meters for all units or just one of the units.

Mayor Fromm talked with the meter installer and he is giving various reports to Mr. Simmerman.

PUBLIC SESSION

Mr. Weeks moved to open the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Casella.
Vote all yes.

Carol Gahrs-110 Thompson- asked if in the process of the school budget does all four towns have to be in agreement with the cuts before submitting to the school board.



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Mayor Fromm stated that the four Mayors and liaisons are on the exact same page since all budgets have failed.

Mayor Fromm stated that in a situation a couple of years ago Swedesboro came to the conclusion that we were done and not willing to cut the budget anymore and that brought the negotiations to an end.

Mrs. Gahrs asked if there was a certain percentage of reduction allowed to specifically go for i.e. 5%, 10%, etc.

Mrs. Gars asked about the County Assessment program specifically if this would eventually lead to individual towns letting go of their assessor.

Mayor Fromm stated that ultimately it will be a County program, but there will be hours for people to see the tax assessor to go over appeals, reval, etc.

Mr. Haynes did comment that it is a pilot program.

Mr. Weeks did go over the process for the school budget as it relates to the towns.

Marge Dombrosky- thanked Mayor/Council/Clerks office etc. for everyone's help with the satellite library.

Marge also stated that if there is a problem with noise to let her or her staff know.

Marge also stated that she was in contact with the Census Bureau and the library does have census forms.

Helen Fromm-Weatherby Avenue encouraged everyone to fill out a petition to help the library fight the proposed cuts to library funding.

Mr. Casella moved to close the public portion of the meeting, seconded by Mr. Weeks. Vote all yes.

CLOSING BUSINESS

Mr. Weeks moved to pay all duly authorized bills, seconded by Mr. Ayers. Vote all yes.

Mr. Weeks moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Ayers. Vote all yes.

Mayor Fromm adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.
