



Borough of Swedesboro Council Meeting
Swedesboro, NJ 08085

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 2, 2010
Approved on AUGUST 16, 2010

A regular meeting of the 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 present.

Mayor asked for everyone to join in the saluting of the flag and to remember Bob Park a long time Swedesboro resident and volunteer who passed away this week.

Mr. Weeks moved to approve the minutes of August 2, 2010, seconded by Mr. Casella. Vote all yes.

Mayor Fromm did not have any opening comments.

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

No one from the public spoke at this time.

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

CORRESPONDENCE

(2) Applications for the NJ State Firemen's Association for membership application. Mr. Zappala moved to accept the applications, seconded by Mr. Casella. Vote all yes.

Letter from Angelo Falciani addressed to Mayor and Council. Clerk briefly outlined the letter. The matter is being taken to court with a court date on the 17th. The original court date was on 8/3/10, rescheduled for 8/17/10.

REPORTS

Tax Collector outlining what was collected for July.
W/S outlining what was collected for July.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance- Tax Bills were mailed today. Mayor asked everyone on Council to be consistent in making sure that people know what this council did to control the taxes. The mayor did write a letter to the residents and it was inserted with the tax bills. Mayor Fromm read the letter out loud to the members of Council and those in attendance.



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Mr. Zappala stated that he sincerely hopes the residents read and absorb this letter. Mayor again reiterated that he is proud of what council did for the budget.

Public Works- Water Bills also went out last week and we have been getting some complaints. They are being handled as best as we can. The big issue right now is that there are a large number of water meters that have not been read since 2005 and are marked stuck in the book. Now that the meters are being read they are being charged for their actual water usage and it is a shock for some people. We are working through the issues.

Public works is doing a lot of things at one time right now more so that has been done in a long time and they are very busy. The water tower project is proceeding and should be getting drained down this week. The water situation continues to be more positive and we should be able to survive with just the odd/even number water usage. Mayor Fromm did comment on a situation at Borough Hall today when a resident complained that not enough information was provided on the odd/even water system. Mayor Fromm asked everyone to understand that the odd/even is calendar days.

Water meter project did run into a problem and there is a big meeting tomorrow involving all parties at 12:00 pm that should resolve any outstanding issues as far as getting all meters in the system. Once that is done we will be in good shape. When this is done people will be able to actually go on line or call Borough Hall to find out how much water they are using on a daily basis.

Mayor Fromm emphasized that we lost tens of thousands of dollars because of meters not being read over a lot of years and it is really hurting us and now people are going to be upset about it, however, we will be able to show them their actual usage.

The water well project started today and the test Boor Hole is being done at the intersection of Park and East and once they are done that they will send stuff to the lab and we will get into the design of the well and the piping and all of that. This is on schedule.

Mayor Fromm commented on the library project in a report from Stan today the progress is good, however, they almost lost a week because of the fact that when they took the vault out they realized that the vault was holding up the second floor. They are putting a steel beam across and they feel confident they will pick up the days that are lost.

The project at Turner and Mayhew will be approved this week and that job will be done in August. The repairs for Thompson estimates were received from the Engineer and we have given the engineer a purchase order for the job to go out to bid.



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The contractor and consultant were here for the underground storage tank removal projects both at Borough Hall and the Fire house and that will be going out sometime next week and should be complete in September.

Mayor Fromm asked Mr. Weeks if he was given a sweeping schedule today. Mr. Weeks stated that he was informed that it was going to start on 8/3/10. Mayor Fromm stated that they actually started today and Mayor Fromm will forward the information to Mr. Weeks.

Mayor Fromm stated that they are following the rules on the stop sign because it is public safety that you are to wait so many days after the ordinance has been adopted before the bags can come off, but hopefully it will be sometime later this week or early next week.

Mr. Weeks states that there appears to be confusion because the stop sign are not uncovered, but the words stop and the lines across the road are already there and people are stopping and there have been a couple near misses. In the future we should keep the word stop off the street until the signs are uncovered.

Mrs. Hale asked if anyone knew what was happening on Broad Street when they had it blocked off. Mr. Casella stated that a telephone pole near St. Joe's church as a result of the rainstorm was leaning in the street and Mr. Casella ran into Sheldon Lewis who had both sides blocked off. The light at Glen Echo was also blinking and they already contacted the County regarding this. The church was notified.

Public Safety-Mayor Fromm reminded everyone that National Night Out is this week. Mayor Fromm all talked to Chief Marino and there will be officers out on bicycles talking to people in the community. Mayor Fromm stated it is more a matter of coming out and talking to the neighbors and talk to the police and that a real effort should be made next year to actually do this thing the way we have been trying to do it for the last couple of years.

Mr. Casella stated that a couple of residents asked him over the weekend about the stop sign at 538 and Swedesboro/Monroeville Road making a right onto Glen Echo. The speed limit sign is not seen until you get closer to the county yard and would like to know if there is a way we could get a sign further in from the four way stop or a flashing yellow sign so that it is more visible.

Mayor Fromm asked Larry Haynes from the County Public works to address this issue for upgraded signage as this is a County Road. Mr. Casella did explain to Larry the location of this issue. Mayor Fromm stated that if the County could not do anything that perhaps the town would.



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Economic Development/Clean Communities- A meeting was held last Thursday and they went over the grant application for the 3rd Phase of the Streetscape. Most of the paperwork is in order. Mrs. Hale will be meeting with Stan so that he can file the application.

Mrs. Hale also stated that they went over what publication to advertise Swedesboro and where they will get the most bang for their buck and where they can get free advertisement for Swedesboro.

Mrs. Hale had nothing to report for Clean Communities.

Fire- Mrs. Gahrs stated that a meeting was held on July 23, 2010 to discuss the plan while the water tower is being worked on. The plan is in place and is in the process of being put in writing to deal with the possibility of low or no pressure in our fire hydrants. The backup plan is to use our tanker as well as other town's tankers. Sources of water to draw from were discussed i.e. the lake and will be included in the plan. The meeting also discussed safety measures for residents using flammable materials, barbeques, etc. and to be extra careful especially with the water situation.

Mayor asked when the letter would be received and Mrs. Gahrs stated that she would find out.

Garbage and Recycling- Nothing to report

Street Lighting/Public Celebrations-Mrs. Hale asked Mrs. Fromm to report on Swedesboro Day and also stated that the Jazz fest is moving along.

Mrs. Fromm commented that the planning for the day is moving along and they are looking for sponsorships and volunteers.

Parks and Recreation-a meeting is scheduled for Tuesday night 8/3/10 and new events are in the works i.e. field hockey clinic and possibly hosting a triathlon. Fundraising ideas are being discussed.

Mr. Zappala stated that the PNC Building will be coming down.

Board of Health- Mr. Casella wanted to recognize Mrs. Stewart for providing information on another resident who needed a fan. Board of Health meeting was last week and a couple of applications have come through. Mr. Spithaler reported that all the inspections did pass. Some members were on vacation and the meeting was cut short.

Environmental/Shade Tree-No meetings were held, however, Mr. Ayers will try to get an update on the status of the tree removal.



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Mayor Fromm stated that the tree on Weatherby was down.

School Boards- Mr. Zappala stated that the first regular meeting of Kingsway Regional will be held on 9/21/10. Mr. Lavender is the new superintendent for Kingsway and the new Superintendent for Swedesboro/Woolwich is Dr. Valeski. Mr. Zappala is not aware of any scheduled meetings. Mr. Weeks asked if her Mr. Valeski was the interim superintendent or permanent. It was reported that he is the new superintendent.

Census- Mr. Casella commented that the phone number for the census has been stopped as of July 30th. The Census bureau can still be contacted with issues for those who have not reported to census. Mr. Casella stated that someone was in his office last week asking questions and was doing a wrap up of the census in the area. Mr. Casella reminded everybody that the 2010 Census is important in order of a municipality to obtain Federal funds. Mr. Casella did mention that this year the census was in several different languages.

Reassessment- Mrs. Gahrs did not speak with Robyn, however, she is aware that they are doing call backs now.

Clerk went over some information for Mayor and Council and different issues were addressed.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Gahrs commented that she brought up the property on the bend where it was boarded up and wanted to comment that activity has been happening there and there has also been some activity on the back lot. Mrs. Gahrs wanted to thank Mayor Fromm if he did speak with the owner.

Mayor Fromm stated that he did speak with him, but felt that he was already ready to begin the process on his own.

Mr. Zappala does not have any further information about the flag poles or the quotes. He did contact the scout master of troop 13 and discussed some fundraising possibilities and they are willing to help with fundraising. Mayor Fromm stated that as far as the actual purchase of the pole the borough can handle, but it would be nice to get the boy scouts to work with us to fix up the area.

Mrs. Hale spoke to an engineer for Verizon and the towns that have the flags up on the poles are in violation. Mrs. Hale also asked the engineer for the new contact person for Verizon as it is looking quite shabby. The contact she used to call is no longer there.

Clerk stated that she did contact the two other towns that were mentioned in a prior meeting and did speak with the clerks.



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Mrs. Hale stated that Allan Coak, the County Landscape Architect did reach out and will be in town on 8/4/10 to take a look at the few projects around town and to come up with some designs for us. After that we will need to find out how to make the projects happen.

Mayor Fromm thanked Mrs. Gahrs for taking care of the situation over on Thompson Avenue.

RESOLUTIONS:

Clerk read the following resolution: R-90-2010 (Municipal Alliance) Mr. Weeks motioned to approve the resolution, seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Clerk read the following resolution: R-91-2010 (Change to Invest Monies/depositories) Mr. Weeks moved to approve the resolution, seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Clerk read the following resolution: R-92-10 (Change to Depositories/withdrawing funds) Mr. Weeks motioned to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. Zappala. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Mayor Fromm commented that the CFO is always looking for a way to better our money situation and he can take some of the money that is set up in the capital fund and redistribute. Our current bank is giving us an interest rate of .41 and this interest is .91.

Clerk read the following resolution: R-93-10 (Change to Cash Management Plan) Mr. Weeks motioned to approve the resolution, seconded by Mrs. Gahrs. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Clerk read the following resolution: R-94-10 (Extend 3rd quarter tax due date) Mr. Weeks motioned to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. Zappala. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Clerk read the following resolution: R-95-10 (Discretionary Aid Grant appl. Streetscape Phase 3) Mr. Weeks motioned to approve the resolution, seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Clerk read the following resolution: R-96-10 (Municipal Aid Grant appl. Streetscape phase 3). Mr. Weeks motioned to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. Casella. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Mayor Fromm explained the two different grants that we were going for are pertaining to the same project in the hope of getting some funds.



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Clerk read the following resolution: R-97-10 (Municipal Aid Grant for Shared Use Path Locke Avenue project) Mr. Weeks motioned to approve the resolution, seconded by Mr. Casella. Roll Call Vote-all yes.

Mayor Fromm stated that this application was put in before under CDBG for safe walkways and bike paths and now this program allows for combing the bike paths and sidewalks. The plan at that time was to do sidewalks by Locke Avenue Park up to the Walter High School and to connect all the schools if possible over to the Park.

Application for sick pay benefits for John Gangemi. Mr. Weeks motioned to approve sick pay if he has the time, seconded by Mr. Casella. Vote all yes.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Weeks asked about the new water bills and if there is a way on the water bill to indicate what is excess on the water usage. Clerk did feel that something was on the bill, but would look into it further.

Mr. Weeks also was asked by a resident how to go about changing the name of a road. A discussion ensued and it was decided that the first step would be for the individual to petition Mayor and Council and then it would go from there.

Mrs. Gahrs advised everyone that Mrs. Lorraine Twiss who is the store manager at Kings Things Christian Thrift Store is retiring and there is a luncheon on Wednesday 8/11/10 at 2:00 pm at Rode's Fireside. Mrs. Gahrs is asking that Mayor and Council present her with a proclamation acknowledging her volunteer services. Mrs. Gahrs also stated that anyone who would like to attend should contact Mrs. Gahrs.

Mayor Fromm stated that it is a great idea.

Mrs. Hale stated that the safe was removed from the library and she is starting to think of ideas on how to commemorate the library and sell as a fundraiser with the historical society. Mrs. Hale has a few ideas and is working with Edie. Mr. Rode is going to cut up the metal for her.

Mayor Fromm stated the builder was very cool about it and was willing to cut it up in certain spots and was very accommodating.

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

Public portion:



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Elaine Edwards-636 Auburn Avenue-talked about the fundraiser that is coming up on 8/21/10 from 11:00 to 5:00 pm. Mrs. Edwards asked permission to hand out the flyers. Mr. Weeks will put it on the website. Mrs. Edwards did hand out the flyers. Mrs. Edwards also asked about the signs advertising for Vacation bible school if she had the option to remove the sign.

Mayor Fromm stated that those signs are not supposed to be up and that public works should be taking those signs down.

Dennis Connolly-1700 Kings Highway-Commented that he has been trying for two years to stop the trucks turning from Kings Highway onto Chestnut Street crushing his sidewalks and grass.

Mayor Fromm asked who he made the complaint to. Mr. Connolly stated that he spoke with Dave Flaherty two years ago about the situation. Mayor Fromm advised him to contact the police. Mayor Fromm stated that he was not aware of this and problems cannot be fixed if they are not known about. Mayor Fromm stated that if he sees what trucks they are to notify the police. Mr. Connolly stated that there was a 53' truck that went up the street. Mayor Fromm did state that there is a major project going on. Mr. Connolly asked if there could be no right turns from Kings Highway onto Chestnut Street.

Mr. Connolly went onto comment about no right turns at the light in the center of town and Mayor Fromm pointed out that they are County roads and it was the County recommendation for the no right turn. Mr. Connolly asked who is going to pay for his repairs. Mr. Connolly also asked if a speed limit sign can be posted on that street.

Mayor Fromm did state it is a narrow road. The speed limit is 25 and it is a residential road and all residential roads are 25 mph. If this is a problem we can post the sign.

Mr. Connolly stated that Casworth trucks just about every Friday run over his curb and again Mayor advised him to contact the police. Mayor Fromm stated that the police are very quick to respond.

Mrs. Gahrs asked if the biggest problem was the trash trucks. Mr. Connolly stated that it was all the oversized trucks and stated his sidewalk is broke in three different spots.

We will contact the contractors and ask them to avoid running over the curb. Again Mr. Connolly recommended that they make a left turn onto Chestnut.

Mayor Fromm again advised him to call the police and to notify Borough Hall if it is a trash truck. We can call Casworth and get them out here and recommend that they change the route.



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Lucille Stewart-Richardson Avenue-asked how the water bill was computed since the new meters were installed. Clerk explained how the electronic reads were computed and explained that some bills did have to be read as not all accounts are on line as of yet.

Mr. Weeks did comment that the quarterly charges are billed ahead and the excess is for usage over 8,000 gallons in a quarter.

Mayor Fromm did go over the fact that the minimum rates were reduced and the excess rates would be higher. There is a significant decrease in the water bill for those who do not use a lot of water. The people who use excess are charged higher rates specifically to encourage people to stop using a lot of water.

Mayor Fromm stated that in Mrs. Stewart's case the bill should be less, but those who have not had a meter read in awhile are in for a shock.

The new system will be able to show people how much water they are using and wasting by letting things run.

Mrs. Edwards asked again about the classification in regards to the Richardson Avenue School.

Mayor Fromm stated that we were not able to put it into an existing classification, therefore we have to find a new classification and amend the ordinance and it something that we talked about, but the final thing needs to be done. Mrs. Edwards asked if this is part of a five year plan and Mayor Fromm stated that it is something that is being worked out now.

Alan Kiil-306 Vanneman Avenue- asked about the sidewalk from Locke Avenue to the school and asked if this was going up the High Hill side of Locke Avenue Park. Mayor Fromm stated that he would have to pull the plans. Mr. Kiil asked if there was any effort in getting sidewalks put in from the PNC Building towards Vanneman Ave.

Mrs. Hale stated that it was a grant that her and Mr. Weeks put in for safe walk to school and they were turned down. They were also turned down by CDBG, but they do keep trying for it.

Mr. Weeks stated that initially they want to connect the Clifford School over to the park, which is the closet way to hook up to the park for now and then from there connect the Park from Locke to Auburn to the Walter Hill School and get those kind of connections so the kids can get around. Mr. Weeks stated that the major problem right now is the traffic. Crosswalks would also have to be established.



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Helen Fromm-402 Weatherby Avenue-Mrs. Fromm was in touch with the school for Swedesboro day. Mrs. Fromm stated that the superintendent that was hired for the school is on a three year plan and that there is a meeting this Wednesday.

Mayor Fromm and Mr. Haynes went out front and listened to the manhole here and they will be addressing the real bad one in front of Daley's, but they are plugging away at them.

Dennis Connolly-1700 Kings Highway asked that in the Borough when a house is sold, a rental property changes or if there is a new tenant do they have to apply for a new CO.

Mayor Fromm stated that they did have to apply and that is the law.

Mr. Connolly was advised that Mr. Schmid does the landlord registration inspections and Woolwich Twp. does the CO inspections.

Mr. Connolly questioned if people are required to fix their sidewalks before they sell the property.

Mayor Fromm stated that in the past George Davis stated that our ordinance did not require the sidewalks be fixed before they changed hands. He used to try to get them to do it and most would, but right now our laws do not require that people do it. It is one of things that we need to change our ordinance and improve on.

Mayor Fromm stated that sidewalks would fall under property maintenance and the owner would have to fix it under that program, but under the CO program it is hit or miss if people are actually forced to fix the sidewalk.

All Borough officials should be carrying a form stating that there is a sidewalk issue and notify Dan Orbanus to address the issue. Mayor Fromm advised Mr. Connolly that if he knew of some sidewalks that were in bad shape to pass on the information.

Mr. Casella also stated that if he knows of an address that does not have a CO he can contact us to verify that a CO has been issued.

Mr. Casella motioned to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mr. Weeks. Vote all yes.

Mr. Weeks motioned to pay all duly authorized bills, seconded by Mr. Zappala. Vote all yes.

Mr. Ayers motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Zappala. Vote all yes.



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Meeting adjourned 8:23pm.

Tanya L. Goodwin, Clerk