

**BOROUGH OF DUMONT
BERGEN COUNTY, N.J.
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 21, 2020
6:30 PM**

Administrator Tully explained that the meeting will be open to the public for comments. We appreciate your patience at this unprecedented time.
Roll Call to make sure the Mayor and Council are on the call. Also on the call are CFO Abbasi and Borough Attorney Leibman.

Council members: Chae, Englese, Gorman, Manna, Rossillo, Stewart-present
Mayor Andrew LaBruno-present

Mayor LaBruno called the meeting to order.
Flag Salute. The Mayor asked for a moment of silence for all those affected by this horrible virus.

Sunshine Law: The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey have been satisfied by the inclusion of the time, date and location of this public meeting of the Governing Body by means of communication equipment, N.J.S.A. 10:4-8(b) on the Borough website, Borough Hall and Facebook.

Roll Call:

Council members: Chae, Englese, Gorman, Manna, Rossillo, Stewart-present
Mayor Andrew LaBruno-present

Motion to accept the agenda as presented: Councilwoman Rossillo
Second: Councilman Chae
All in favor.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the February 4, 2020 Executive and Closed Session minutes:
Councilwoman Rossillo
Second: Councilman Chae
Roll call vote: Council members Chae, Englese, Gorman, Manna, Rossillo, Stewart-yes
Motion to approve the March 26, 2020 Public & Closed Session minutes: Councilwoman Rossillo
Second: Councilman Chae
Roll call vote: Council members Chae, Englese, Gorman, Manna, Rossillo, Stewart-yes
Motion to approve the April 7, 2020 Executive Session minutes: Councilwoman Rossillo
Second: Councilman Chae
Roll call vote: Council members Chae, Englese, Gorman, Manna, Rossillo, Stewart-yes

Mayor LaBruno said that this pandemic is testing all of us. It is affecting our finances in a way that was once unimaginable. He has spoken to residents who worried they would not be able to pay their taxes on time. Unfortunately, the Borough cannot change the date

the taxes are due. If payment is late, the taxes become delinquent and remain delinquent until such time as all unpaid taxes, including liens and interest, have been satisfied. The New Jersey League of Municipalities sent an email with their opinion on municipalities changing delinquent property taxes. The Governing Body can adjust the amount interest charged as a penalty for non-payment. The current penalty is set high as allowed under State law. We can and should reduce this fine so that taxpayers don't suffer these punitive penalties because they are in the hospital or unemployed. They should be able to redeem their tax liens for a reasonable amount and 18% over \$1500 is not reasonable in this current environment. Determining the proper percentage and logistics to implement this is not an easy task. It requires due diligence and proper research. Edmunds, our finance vendor, sent correspondence stating that they have been in contact with the State on the NJLM interpretation of the law. This is currently under review by the DCA and the Tax Collectors and Assessors Association. The correspondence further stated that municipalities may adopt resolutions that adopt different rates but the changes would have to be managed outside of the Edmunds system software. We would like to investigate and provide our residents with a long-term solution that will assist those in need, help during this public health crisis and also be responsible for the operations of our borough. At the end of the day, taxes equate to services and we want to make sure residents continue to receive our borough's vital services at this time. The Mayor said he will be creating a committee consisting of himself, Council President Stewart, Councilman Manna, CFO, Tax Collector, Attorney and Administrator and asked that they recommend a strategy for our taxpayers moving forward. A report should be ready by the next Council meeting. Mayor LaBruno said that Administrator Tully and CFO Abbasi are great additions, especially at this very difficult time.

Administrator Tully stated that in light of the current public health crisis the Borough of Dumont, with the support of the Governing Body, instituted a number of changes within Borough operations and workforce. Dumont was one of the first municipalities to take action by closing and limiting access to borough properties, instituting modified work hours and recently transitioning to working remotely when possible. We believe that measures taken to ensure social distancing provided a safe environment for our employees and residents. We are managing to provide vital borough services despite the changes. We appreciate everyone's patience and cooperation during this time. He would like to thank the generosity of our residents for supporting our neighbors by contributing to our borough food bank. We encourage tax payments be made online or by mail. Payments will also be accepted through the mail slot of the Borough Hall front door-no cash payments will be accepted through our mail slot. Payments to Court will also be accepted through the mail slot and again, no cash will be accepted. Be sure to identify your violation number. If you require a receipt, kindly provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Payments can also be made online. As far as the Building Department, there are details on our website-dumontnj.gov. Currently, they are accepting CCO's only at this time. S&P recently assigned a AA long-term rating to Dumont due to our strong budgetary performance, strong institutional framework, overall low debt and our budgetary flexibility. We will be introducing the budget at our next Council meeting.

Review of Consent Agenda Items: All items with an asterisk are considered to be non-controversial by the Council and will be approved by one motion. There may be further discussion prior to the vote upon request of a member of the public or a Council member. Also, any item may be removed for further discussion or for roll call vote in which case the item will be removed and considered in its normal sequence as part of the general order of business.

RESOLUTIONS

#20-106 Bills List *

#20-107 Bus Stop Changes for New Jersey Transit *

#20-108 Jesus Aleman-Toledo-Accept Application to Fire Department *

#20-109 John Murray-Accept Application to Fire Department *

#20-110 Adoption of Non-CDL, Non-DOT Drug Testing Policy *

Motion to open to the public for Consent Agenda items: Councilwoman Rossillo

Second: Councilman Chae

All in favor.

1. Lili Binney asked why we are paying bills from 2019 and questioned the fee of \$80,419 for T&M. LSRP services for \$46,000 the Municipal Building, \$18,600 for DPW remediation services and \$4,000 for environmental services. When will the T&M report for Gordon Avenue be ready?

2. Bruce deLyon, Beacon Street, asked when the new Municipal Building will be operational, are we under budget, have we spent money on change orders. He received a response today but didn't have time to read it. He feels that the public not being able to ask questions is ludicrous.

Motion to close to the public: Councilwoman Rossillo

Second: Councilman Chae

All in favor.

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda: Councilwoman Rossillo

Second: Councilman Chae

Roll call vote: Council members Chae, Englese, Gorman, Manna, Rossillo, Stewart-yes

Motion to open to the public for general comments: Councilwoman Rossillo

Second: Councilman Chae

All in favor.

1. Mary Normoyle, Randolph Avenue, asked for the soft costs for the new building (furniture, computers, etc.), the status of the removed radio tower, the PILOT attorney's conclusion and when we can expect the PILOT money to come in,

2. Lili Binney asked the status of the Building Department lawsuit. She said the additions to the website are much appreciated.

Motion to close to the public: Councilwoman Rossillo

Second: Councilman Chae

All in favor.

Councilman Gorman announced that the Shade Tree Commission will be celebrating Arbor Day this Saturday at 1:00PM through their Instagram page.

Motion to adjourn: Councilwoman Rossillo

Second: Councilman Chae

All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Susan Connelly, RMC
Municipal Clerk