

**BOROUGH OF DUMONT
BERGEN COUNTY, N.J.
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 22, 2021
6:30 PM**

Council President Stewart called the meeting to order.

Flag Salute, Moment of Silence

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 date, time and place of this regular meeting in the annual schedule and notice of regular meetings of this Governing Body. Such annual schedule and notice of regular meetings are posted at Borough Hall, was sent to *The Record* and the *Ridgewood News*, posted on the Borough website and filed with the Borough of Dumont.

Roll Call:

Council members: Chae, Englese, Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Stewart - present

Mayor Andrew LaBruno – absent

Also present: Borough Administrator Chris Tully, Borough Clerk Jeanine Siek, Borough

Attorney Marc Leibman, CFO Issa Abbasi

Motion to Accept the Agenda as presented: Councilman Chae

Second: Councilman Englese

All in favor.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the May 25, 2021 Public Meeting minutes: Councilman Englese

Second: Councilman Chae

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

MAYOR'S REPORT

No report

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council President Stewart welcomed everyone to the in-person meeting and looks forward to being here moving forward.

Councilman Gorman

- *Shade Tree Commission*

Twilight at the Gazebo begins July 7th with live music. The Councilman asked everyone to follow and like the Dumont Shade Tree on social media and check the Borough and Shade Tree websites for their newsletter for upcoming events.

- *Recreation Commission*

The next Recreation meeting will be July 14th.

Councilman Chae

- *Economic Development Committee*

The EDC would like to welcome some of the new businesses this year: Gladiator Electric, Strength from Struggle Training, Accurate Dimensions, Square Circle Boxing, Beautiful Life

Spa, Kona Ice Truck and coming soon, a new pet store on the corner of Washington and Madison. The EDC is looking for new members to serve on the committee. Please visit the Borough website, if interested.

Councilman Englese

- *Police Department*

There were 1,662 telephone calls for service, 77 telephone calls for medical reasons, 13 calls for fire and 10 calls for commitments in June. Patrol issued 37 traffic summonses - 4 parking and 33 moving violations. There were 0 DWI arrests. They investigated 18 motor vehicle crashes, responded to 19 burglar alarms, travelled 10,383 miles and 1 warrant was served. The Detective Bureau conducted 14 firearms investigations, handled 33 criminal cases, investigated 4 domestic violence incidents with 1 indictable arrest.

Councilwoman Rossillo

- *Ambulance Corps*

They passed their budget and served 61 calls this past month, bringing the total annual local calls to 546.

- *Board of Education*

Superintendent Triggiano officially retired. She wished him well in his retirement, and Dr. Poidomani much success in her new position as the Superintendent of Schools. The Councilwoman further extended her sincere congratulations to all Class of 2021 graduates.

Councilman Harvilla

- *Library*

The Board of Trustees held their meeting on May 26th and the library has successfully submitted their grant application requesting \$98,725 with a one-to-one Borough match. The Library is reopening June 7th and the search for a Director is moving forward. The Library Building and Grounds committee will be meeting June 30th to discuss the 5-year plan and the Library Board will review operating policies at the next meeting.

- *Board of Health*

At the June 7th meeting, they discussed the reappointments of John Monteverde and Kenneth Menezes, whose resolutions are on tonight's agenda. They also reviewed the March/April/May reports from the Bergen County Department of Health.

- *Beautification Committee*

They met on May 12th and discussed options, such as banners honoring our Veterans, new planters and seasonal displays for the center of town, Memorial Park and other key spaces.

Councilwoman Stewart

- *Stigma Free Committee.*

The Committee is looking for volunteers. She would like to see more done with this committee, such as in the schools, particularly during the times we have been experiencing.

- *Senior Services*

Joanna Wagner, a resident who used the Borough's senior services extensively passed away, and bequest the town of Dumont the balance of her estate in the amount of at least \$398,000. The donation will be used and dedicated by her will solely for senior services and activities.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Leibman reported that the Borough continues to investigate the broken sewer pipe underneath the CSX line. Our Engineer has been following up and received correspondence

from CSX. He will be speaking with the Borough Administrator about the possibility of filing a law suit.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Summer events, such as Movies in the Park hosted by the Dumont Community Group and Rock the Block, which are block parties throughout the community, information is posted on the Borough website and social media. The Borough is working with our Grant Writers to apply for a COPS Grant for two police officers and with our annual NJDOT grant award, we are moving forward with Bedford Avenue. The monopole is scheduled to be delivered on Thursday. There are new hires on the agenda this evening, Mr. Sherrow was hired as a full-time Construction Code Official and an Administrative Assistant for the Clerk/Administrator's Office. The Senior Center will be reopening very soon. The Borough met with our previous contractor regarding fixing the damage to Quackenbush Avenue, and our engineer Steven Marsich will discuss this further.

Steven Marsich, Special Engineer from T&M reviewed the bids received for Miscellaneous Road Improvements to Lafayette and Quackenbush Avenues received at 10am on June 15th. The Borough received four bids that were pretty close together, and the bid was separated into Base Bid A to mill and pave Lafayette and Quackenbush Avenues and Base Bid B to repair a trench that caved in on Quackenbush Avenue. The low bidder was Frank Macchione for both Base Bid A and Base Bid B. Since we're still negotiating with the contractor who did the original work on Quackenbush, we decided to leave both options on the resolution today to see if any progress can be made with the contractor over the next couple of weeks.

CFO Abbasi gave an update on the American Recovery Plan (ARP) Funds and stated that guidance was issued from the New Jersey Division of Local Government Services (NJDLGS) to all 565 municipalities on June 4th. The framework of the original US Dept. of Treasury guidance remains the same and he reviewed what the ARP monies can be used for. The CFO is in the process of completing the required forms for submission to NJDLGS for the first half of funds which is \$916,687.20. The CFO, Auditor, Administrator and Finance Committee will then discuss the best way to use the funds and recommend to the full Council.

General Order of Business

#21-154 – 2021 Budget Adoption

Motion to pass the adoption of the 2021 budget: Councilman Chae

Second: Councilwoman Englese

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

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

#21-163 – Approval of Coin Machine Permit Renewals *

#21-164 – Liquor License Application Renewals *

- #21-165 – Elks Conflict Liquor License *
- #21-166 – Approval of Knights of Columbus #1345 Casino Raffle Application *
- #21-167 – Anthony Schiraldi - Accept Resignation from Fire Department *
- #21-168 – Bryan Levitski - Accept Transfer to Hose Company 3 *
- #21-169 – John Monteverde - Appoint to Board of Health *
- #21-170 – Kenneth Menezes - Appoint to Board of Health *
- #21-171 – Paul Renaud - Accept Resignation as Construction Official*
- #21-172 - Robert Sherrow-Authorize Agreement as Temporary Construction/Building Inspector*
- #21-173 – Robert Sherrow - Hire as Full-time Construction Code Official/Building Inspector *
- #21-174 - William Paige - Hire as Rent Leveling Board Secretary *
- #21-175 - Bills List *
- #21-176 - Authorization of Award of Bid for Miscellaneous Roadway Paving Quackenbush & Lafayette Roads*
- #21-177 – Award of Quote to Budget Blinds *
- #21-178 – Approval of Grant Application for NJDOT Bedford Road Improvements Project *
- #21-179 – Karen Glass – Hire as Full-time Administrative Assistant *

Councilman Chae requested to pull resolution #165 from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

Motion to open to the public for Comments on the Consent Agenda Only: Councilman Englese
 Second: Councilman Chae

All in favor.

1. John Sansone, Beacon Street, said the building looks great and asked questions regarding charges for municipal complex through the bond, such as East West Electric, Goosetown, McGinley Flooring, T&M LSRP and blinds.
2. Mary Normoyle, Randolph Avenue, questioned charges for Interaction Insight, RSC Architects and Remington Vernick on the bills list. She asked who reviews the bills list and checks.
3. Lynn Vietri, Wilkens Drive, asked about the two different off-site storage charges on bills list, as well as a charge for Northeastern Interior Services.
4. Bruce DeLyon, Beacon Street, asked if the public will be kept apprised of the status of sewer repair project. He questioned the extra expenses on the bills list for the municipal complex and whether it was the construction manager, architect or any other professionals that are the responsible.
5. Maryann Russini, Roosevelt Avenue, questioned charges for Value Interaction Inside Corp and Macro Office on the bills list.

Motion to close to the public: Councilman Englese

Second: Councilman Chae

All in favor.

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda, with the exception of Resolution #165: Councilman Englese

Second: Councilman Chae

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

Councilman Chae stated he will have to abstain from voting on Resolution #165 since he is a current member of the Dumont Elks. Council President Stewart commented further by saying we are pulling it from the Consent Agenda because we have Councilmembers who are members of the Elks.

Motion to adopt Resolution #165 - Elks Conflict Liquor License: Councilman Englese

Second: Councilman Chae

Roll call vote: Council members: Englese, Harvilla, Rossillo, Stewart – yes

Chae, Gorman – abstain

ORDINANCES

1st Reading

#1588 Prohibiting the Operation of Any Class of Cannabis Business within its Geographical Boundaries and Amending Chapter 455 of the Borough Code

Motion to waive formal reading: Councilman Englese

Second: Councilman Chae

All in favor.

Council President Stewart stated it's a revenue source that does not bring a lot of negatives with it. She went to a cannabis dispensary and she said it was very clean, neat and it was highly regulated.

Councilman Harvilla stated he is not opposed to the legalization of cannabis, but feels they should err on the side of caution because it's a complex environment that is rapidly evolving. He feels that shelving it at this time, allows them time to assess the situation. He feels the opportunity will always be available for the Borough to benefit on the revenue from any substance of recreational use if and when the time comes.

Council President Stewart would like to see the Borough benefit from the revenue of cannabis sales before other surrounding towns.

Motion to pass on 1st reading: Councilman Englese

Second: Councilman Chae

Roll call vote: Council members Chae, Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo – yes

Stewart – no

Public Comment - General Comments

Motion to open to the public for general comments: Councilman Englese

Second: Councilman Chae

All in favor.

1. Mary Novoa, E. Madison Avenue, thanked the Council for passing Ordinance #1588 and agrees with the ordinance.
2. Mary Normoyle, Randolph Avenue, asked if the Asplint landscaper is still behind the funeral home and about the special labor counsel charge on the last bills list. Are there contracts for Police Chief and DPW? She inquired about the status of the Building Dept. lawsuit and if there's a time constraint? She asked about livestreaming and if we are negotiating with Bennett.

3. Jennifer Grom, Hickory Street, commented on Ordinance #1588 and that she feels we should not ban this. She also commented on girls' softball using Twin Boro Field and it was great, and she would like to see the project at Twin Boro Field done by opening day next year. She recommends having someone who plays softball help design the project.
4. DeLyon, Beacon Street, commented on the amount of the budget adoption resolution and compared Dumont's tax rate to other municipalities. He discussed tax increases and debt service. He feels his services stay the same. He asked is someone could look into accessibility to the Borough website. He commented on questions being answered, OPRAs and spending.
5. Lynne Vietri, Wilkens Drive, asked why payments are sent certified. Thanked the Council for Ordinance #1588 and agrees in holding off on the sale of cannabis. Will softball hut revenue be shared? She asked why library was closed on Friday for Juneteenth but open on Saturday. She asked if Mayor is serving on Community Group. Have splash park plans been submitted to County Health agency for inspections, as well as Green Acres?
6. John Sansone, Beacon Street, asked about the crane to remove the trailers. He commented on residents coming to the meetings to speak and would like more questions answered.
7. Naomi Fox, Shadyside Avenue, commented on the hole in the road on Quackenbush Avenue. She would like to see ideas such as splash park and amphitheater be voted on by the community.
8. Maryann Russini, Roosevelt Avenue, asked if Bennett, RSC Architects and Remington Vernick been paid in full, and if there any more municipal complex bills? She questioned the sink hole on Quackenbush and which account the \$50,000 Recreation payment for crossing guards came from. She commented on park improvements and upgrades to the fields and playground equipment. She would like to see an increase in activities.
9. Jim Savage, Howard Street, feels we're paying for sins of items not done earlier. We're making investments in the infrastructure of our town, it's a net win. He thinks the splash pad and band shell are nice.
10. Tom Kelly, Beacon Street, commented that he was glad to hear deliberation among Council on the Cannabis ordinance tonight. He would like to see more resolutions and items handled this way. He stated he is worried about the tax burden and feels we should be conservative in spending. He asked who the contractor is fixing the hole on Quackenbush Avenue.

Council President Stewart stated there have been public presentations and they have met with the Recreation Commission on Gina's Field. The amphitheater has become this issue. This is the initial conversation on a concept in improving Memorial Field. This was a suggestion made to us. There's no plan to build an amphitheater, but it was preliminary because we wanted to get the public involved in the conversation early. Sometimes on social media, a statement is made and it's accepted by some people as the truth when it's not. Look at the real estate market in the past six months, it's the hottest town in Bergen County. People are not looking at the debt service, they are looking at the credit rating.

The Borough Administrator answered various questions asked by residents regarding the bills list and explained that any added costs were encumbered when the Borough went out to Bond last year. There are still bills and costs that the Borough is looking over carefully and

expeditiously. Sometimes we don't get quotes until months later and sometimes we take issue with some of the bills coming forward and we ask questions until we come to a proper resolution. Asplint is still behind the funeral home. Special Counsel bills would not have a lot of detail because it is privileged information. He will look into issues with the Borough website which is controlled by an administrator who handles the web services, but the Borough does not have the ability nor does it try to block anybody. The library controls its policies about closures. There is no parking allowed on Quackenbush Avenue on the day school side of the street and the Borough has worked expeditiously to try to solve this issue. The Borough believes it's the responsibility of the contractor who did this work, but the Borough also had an Option B in our recent bid that went out and will pay the costs if the contractor will not fix it within a certain timeframe. The Borough has no intention of moving forward with an amphitheater. A concept plan was released on social media that was required for the Borough to move forward on a grant application. With any park project we work with our committee members, our volunteers, our Recreation and we have public meetings. There have been two meetings on Gina's Field. The Borough worked on DeLong Avenue last year, worked on Washington Avenue for infrastructure improvements, we are doing Lafayette, Quackenbush and Grant Avenue this year, we just submitted an application for Bedford, we want to move forward on Prospect and Virginia. We're improving Gina's Field and moving forward with the Memorial Park improvements because bonding was so low, and we have parks equipment there that is so old and that is the premier park of the community. The amphitheater was simply a part of a concept plan per the recommendation of our engineer when applying. It's not the final plan. The public will see the plan that the Borough wants to move forward with. For anyone who knows the county grant process, you're likely to get less than half of what you apply for.

The Borough Attorney answered that there is no limit for how long a lawsuit can go on regarding the Building Department lawsuit, and COVID has made everything go slower. He is not the attorney handling the lawsuit. The last conversation he had with them was they were finishing depositions and preparing to file motions for summary judgment.

Councilman Harvilla stated he respects all those who come to engage in a democratic process. He's heard a few individuals indicate they believe the Council as collective body have some negative view of those in our constituency who post opinions that are opposed to our own. The Councilman stated that all of your opinions matter and they review all of this material that comes out every 2-4 weeks. He stated that no one up here ran for office because we thought this was an easy job, we did it because we choose to do the heavy lifting for all of our constituents, and try to establish the greatest good for the greatest number. The Councilman spoke that as a taxpayer, sometimes taxpayers end up on the short end of the stick, and not everyone in town pays taxes or has a voice. But that is what makes this Borough amazing, it is all of us. He questions the concept that some believe in some way, shape or form that everything the Council does has some nefarious intent. It does not. He feels it's counterintuitive that anyone would actually believe that we fellow taxpayers would try to price ourselves out of this town. The Councilman stated he's incredibly proud of this town, and has an immense amount of respect for every single one of residents whether they agree with him or not. He further stated he will represent everyone who agrees with him or doesn't agree with him, with equal veracity.

Councilman Gorman followed up on Ms. Vietri's question saying everything is the same regarding the hut. As per the engineer, with the presentation of Gina's Field, everything was cleared with Green Acres.

Motion to close to the public: Councilman Englese
Second: Councilman Chae
All in favor.

Closed Session

Municipal Clerk Siek read the resolution to enter Closed Session to discuss:
Sale of Public Property

Motion to close the meeting to go into closed session: Councilman Englese

Second: Councilman Chae

Roll Call Vote: Council members Chae, Englese, Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Stewart-yes

Following closed session, motion to adjourn: Councilman Englese

Second: Councilman Chae

All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Jeanine E. Siek, RMC
Municipal Clerk