

**BOROUGH OF DUMONT
BERGEN COUNTY, N.J.
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
MAY 24, 2022
6:30 PM**

Council President Rossillo called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

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 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, The Record and Ridgewood News and Facebook.

Roll Call:

Council members: Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Russell, Stewart: Present
Mayor: Andrew LaBruno: Absent

Motion to accept the agenda as presented: Councilman Harvilla
Second: Councilwoman Stewart
All in favor.

Motion to pass **Resolution #22-167** – Appointment of Councilmember to Fill Council Vacancy:
Councilwoman Stewart
Second: Councilman Gorman
Roll call vote: Council members: Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Russell, Stewart – yes

Assemblyman Robert Auth administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed Councilwoman Denise Wrightington to fill the Council vacancy.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the April 7, 2022 Executive Meeting minutes: Councilwoman Stewart
Second: Councilman Russell
Roll call vote: Council members: Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Russell, Stewart – yes
Wrightington – abstain

Motion to approve April 26, 2022 Regular Meeting minutes: Councilwoman Stewart
Second: Councilman Russell
Roll call vote: Council members: Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Russell, Stewart – yes
Wrightington – abstain

Motion to approve April 26, 2022 Closed Session Meeting minutes: Councilwoman Stewart
Second: Councilman Gorman
Roll call vote: Council members: Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Russell, Stewart – yes
Wrightington – abstain

ENGINEER REPORT

Mr. Dunlea of Neglia Engineering stated he issued his report in advance of tonight's meeting for the Governing Body's review. Bids were received under the Riverside Cooperative for the 2022 paving program, which includes Chestnut Street, Highwood Drive and Garden Street. The documents are under review, and the project will begin in the summer. The amount of the bid was \$250,257.40, which was less than the estimate since we received favorable asphalt prices. For the Virginia Avenue and Bedford Road roadway improvements project, the DOT approval was received for Bedford and the Borough will open bids for the project on June 8th. The goal is to get Bedford Road paved before the 5K in September.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Gorman

- *Recreation*

The next recreation meeting is Wednesday, June 1st.

- *Police*

There were 1,640 calls for service, 100 medical service calls and 32 fire calls. There were 60 traffic summonses issued, 21 motor vehicle accident investigations; 22 burglar alarms responded to; 1 warrant served; 5 street lights and 2 decorative lights non-functioning; 1 car seats installed.

Councilwoman Stewart

- *Fire Department*

There were 356 man hours and 32 calls for service, including 1 fire, 6 mutual aid calls, 2 motor vehicle accidents, 2 carbon monoxide incidents, 9 fire alarms, 8 natural gas emergencies, 1 odor burning, 1 appliance malfunction and 2 utility/water issues.

Councilman Russell

- *Shade Tree Commission*

They held a very successful tree planting and planted thirteen trees.

Councilman Harvilla

- *Library*

The Library Board of Trustees next meeting is tomorrow evening, May 25th.

The Councilman welcomed Councilwoman Wrightington, and thanked the other two candidates, Bill Bochiccio and Tom Kelly for interviewing for the role.

- *Finance Committee*

Resolution #158 is the adoption of this year's municipal budget, and will be preceded by a budget presentation and public hearing. He thanked the Borough professionals, CFO Abbasi, BA Tully, Auditor Vinci and their teams, as well as the Department Heads and staff, the Mayor and Council, including former Councilwoman Novoa, for their input and feedback during the drafting and finalization of this budget. They wanted to ensure a stable platform moving forward, and through the alignment of very thoughtful line item reductions, analysis and realignment of specific capital project balances and strategic utilization of cost saving programs and grant opportunities, and use of \$762,000 in American Rescue Plan funds, we offset some limited proactive line item increases. The Borough has achieved a budget with the impact to the average home will be an additional \$7 per month. The Borough will maintain its high level of service to its constituents, repave 7-8 roads, including Bedford, Chestnut, Colonial, Garden, Grant, Highwood and Virginia with a high probable addition of Dixon; complete improvements to three of largest multi-use fields and parks: Gina's Field, Twin Boro and Veterans Memorial Park; make significant improvements to the Dixon Homestead Library; maintain the fleet of Borough

vehicles, as well as continue robust operational support for the Police Department, DPW, volunteer firefighters and ambulance corps. and all other Borough departments that are vital to the operation, maintenance, safety and welfare of the residents. There will be a reserve that includes conserving \$1 million in American Rescue funds.

Council President Rossillo

Thanked Councilman Harvilla for all of his hard work with this year's budget process.

- *Board of Education*

The next meeting is Thursday, June 16th, and the BOE has launched their new website with a lot of useful information. The school system in Dumont is exemplary.

ATTORNEYS REPORT

Mr. Leibman stated he is working on more ordinance revisions. The Engineer did a nice job putting the zoning map together, and it is coming along. Some of the features in the overlay zone need to be defined a little more clearly. He is discussing it with the Borough Planner.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Mr. Tully met with the contractor at Gina's Field. The cement will be poured in two weeks and they are waiting on a date for playground surface. The project is expected to be finished mid to late June, as well as the Memorial Park project, before summer camp begins. The demo is complete and cement will be poured this week. He thanked the Cultural Affairs Committee and Tony Como for all their hard work on the AAPI Art Work Show. It was a great success and the next event is the Pride Flag raising planned for the evening of June 10th. The Borough is in the beginning stages of planning for Memorial Day ceremony and parade, as well as Rock the Block on June 18th and July 16th. Movies in the Park will be held every Thursday in July. He is waiting for the finalized numbers for the emergency projects on Dixon and Depew. There should be a resolution on next month's agenda. The Borough is interviewing for open positions in Finance and the DPW. Mr. Tully has reached out to Suez several times regarding this year's road program, so they can inspect lines for lead ahead of roads being paved. The PSE&G project continues and they have been encouraged to put out better noticing to the community. He is also working on a community message to the public. The Borough is also working on a number of ordinances, and updating tax maps, the master plan and a revaluation in the next couple of years. He will also meet with Finance this summer to discuss the Capital Bond that was budgeted for, and the website is being fine tuned and should be up and running in June.

Council President Rossillo invited CFO Abbasi and Borough Auditor, Gary Vinci to present the 2022 Municipal Budget.

PRESENTATION OF THE 2022 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Mr. Abbasi thanked the Finance Committee for creating this prudent budget, with the work of Councilman Harvilla, former Councilwoman Novoa, Administrator Tully, Mr. Vinci and his staff and the Department Heads and staff at Borough Hall.

Mr. Abbasi presented the 2022 Municipal Budget. (Presentation is available on the Borough website)

Public Hearing

Motion to open to the public for comments on the 2022 Budget Hearing Only: Councilwoman Stewart, Second: Councilman Russell
All in favor.

1. Bruce DeLyon, Beacon Street, reviewed numerous items from the 2022 municipal budget and asked questions on specific sheets on the budget. He commented on debt service and increases in certain line items.
2. Maryann Russini, Roosevelt Avenue, commented on the number of employees and asked what the health department is and recreation. She remarked about the increase in taxes, and asked if presentation could be posted to website.
3. Michael Sullivan, Andover Avenue, stated the presentation was great and would like to see it on the internet with an explanation or summary.

Motion to close to the public: Councilwoman Stewart
Second: Councilman Gorman. All in favor.

General Order of Business

#21-157 – Amendment to 2022 Municipal Budget

Motion to pass the Amendment to 2022 Municipal Budget: Councilman Harvilla

Second: Councilwoman Stewart

Roll call vote: Councilmembers Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Russell, Stewart – yes

Wrightington – abstain

#21-158 – Adoption of the 2022 Municipal Budget

Motion to pass the Adoption of the 2022 Municipal Budget: Councilman Harvilla

Second: Councilman Gorman

Roll call vote: Councilmembers Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Russell, Stewart – yes

Wrightington – abstain

#22-159 – Self-Examination of 2022 Municipal Budget

Motion to pass the Self-Examination of 2022 Municipal Budget: Councilwoman Stewart

Second: Councilman Harvilla

Roll call vote: Councilmembers Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Russell, Stewart – yes

Wrightington - abstain

The Municipal Clerk read the 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

#22-160 – Bills List *

#22-161 – Authorization of Cancellation of May 10, 2022 Meeting *

#22-162 – Authorization of Veteran Tax Exemption – Block 201, Lot 9 *

#22-163 – Authorization of Veteran Tax Exemption – Block 710, Lot 6 *

#22-164 – Accept Application from Tomasz Zebrowski as Probationary Firefighter *

#22-165 – Authorization of Estimated Tax Bills *

#22-166 – Permanent Police Status - Officer Jonathan Decen Rogers *

Public Comment - Consent Agenda Only

Motion to open to the public for Comments on Consent Agenda Only: Councilman Gorman

Second: Councilman Russell

All in favor.

1. Mary Normoyle, Randolph Avenue, had various questions regarding the bills list, and where the items were charged.
2. Bruce DeLyon, Beacon Street, asked numerous questions about charges on the bills list, including JCT and Edmunds.
3. Maryanne Russini, Roosevelt Avenue, commented on charges for the Record on the bills list and the fence charges, as well as other bills list questions. Asked if Twin Boro Field is finished and where is money being charged to.

Motion to close to the public: Councilwoman Stewart

Second: Councilman Russell

All in favor.

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda: Councilwoman Stewart

Second: Councilman Russell

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

Wrightington - abstain

The CFO stated that a resident who passed away last year donated almost \$400,000.00 to the Senior Center to offset the cost to taxpayers for recreation programming at her request. Edmunds GovTech is the financial software system utilized by the Borough that handles everything such as OPRA requests reports, bills list, tax payments, dog/cat license fees, etc... The Bergen Record was sold to Gannett and the billing department is outsourced, so it is not uncommon to vet out the invoices before paying them.

Councilwoman Stewart added that each of the events at the Senior Center which are being largely financed by the bequeathal from Joanna Wagner have approximately 140-150 people attending each party. They are people who have not been out of their homes in a really long time.

Mr. Vinci stated the gross revenues for the PILOT are estimated to be about \$435,000.00, but as part of the PILOT laws, 5% of the PILOT fees are to be paid to Bergen County. The land is also on the tax rolls. By statute, the developer is allowed a credit for paid taxes. When you deduct both of these items, it is very close to the \$400,000.00 that is budgeted this year as a revenue.

Public Comment - General Comments

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

Second: Councilman Russell

All in favor.

1. Judy Parker, Susan Drive, Closter, NJ, owns the property at 62 Washington Avenue. She commented on flooding at the cottage in the back of her property and maintenance of grass strip between her property and the Borough's parking lot. She stated a car drove into her parking lot from the municipal lot, and requested a fence be installed. Ms. Parker also commented on the utility pole being installed by the street.

2. Dan Monte, Second Street, asked who oversees projects in town, such as the Gina's Field project. He feels the playground equipment is not being installed true and level. He spoke to the Recreation Director and site supervisor. He asked that the Engineer check it.
3. Bruce DeLyon, Beacon Street, asked what the unexpended bond fund is and questioned the total of the consolidated principal amounts of the bonds. He reviewed the 2022 municipal budget and concerns over increasing costs of utilities, fuel, pension, salaries, benefits, etc... Dr. DeLyon feels the need to reduce services and cut back personnel.
4. Mary Normoyle, Randolph Avenue, asked which engineers work on the projects in town, and about cost estimates for the water intrusion at library. She asked about the meeting postponement being posted on the website, and for an update on the building department law suit.
5. Maryanne Russini, Roosevelt Avenue, thanked the Administrator for his email response regarding the cost of the building. She also had questions about the phases of Memorial Park, and the Open Space announcements.

Motion to close to the public: Councilman Gorman

Second: Councilman Russell

All in favor.

Council President Rossillo thanked the Mr. Abbasi and Mr. Vinci for the presentation this evening, and Councilman Harvilla for all of his hard work on the budget.

Councilman Harvilla stated there is no perfect budget, and there will always be differing opinions. This Council has inherited this home, and are left finding ways to fund this home while keeping the Borough's infrastructure in working order, maintain public safety and make sure all critical programs in this Borough move forward in a way that is maintainable and sustainable. They are all constituents and pays taxes. Department Heads do not present frivolous budgets. It is what is necessary to maintain roads, equipment, staffing, day to day operations. Originally, it would have been almost a \$340 increase for average home, but the Finance Committee went line by line and negotiated with every department, cutting budgets where they could. They could have used more ARPA funds, but it would have put them in a position where they had to increase taxes even more next year. Last year's budget increase was about \$200 per average household. Getting it down to \$80 per average household, including things out of the Borough's control like County and library taxes was a herculean task. And yet, significant funds were set aside for next year to maintain some level of parity with this year. There will also be significant down turns based on decreases in what the Borough will be paying for bonding. That gives the Borough three years of stabilization and opportunity to look at ways to bring in revenues outside of taxation. Residents feel very differently about redevelopment. It is very hard to make everyone happy. The Councilman stated he hears the residents concerns and shares many of them. They are not unaware of them and the cost of the Borough, as well as increasing costs. He clarified a comment from a previous meeting where a resident asked if he was referring to "attorneys". Councilman Harvilla explained that what he did say was "entities" not "attorneys", and the comment was "to ensure that those entities are operating cohesively to support economic development". He further remarked that the \$55,000 for commercial grade washing machines is for the Fire Department, which was requested by the department to clean their turn out gear due to the high risk of carcinogens. Councilman Harvilla provided his email address for any further questions.

Administrator Tully stated the Valley Promotions bill was from a Clean Community grant at no cost to tax payers. Maintenance and DPW will perform watering of the grass area. East West Electric was for a repair on the second floor. Councilman Harvilla provided a good explanation on how decisions were made regarding the budget. The Borough Attorney line item change was due to the OPRA Counsel being moved to Special Counsel. BCUA & health insurance increases are out of the Borough's control. Buildings and Grounds increase is related to last year's emergency from IDA which is incorporated into this year's budget. The gas increase is due to the current climate and the Borough projected as best as we can. JCT Solutions bill is to move our voicemails directly to emails to make sure we better capture any messages left. Twin Boro maintenance cannot be taken out of a capital ordinance or bond because it is not related to a project. Anything regarding maintenance comes out of a general line item. The dugouts are part of the broader repair, and the Borough will now look to do further upgrades on the opposite side of the field. The Borough will maintain the Borough property along the parking lot. PSE&G is aware of the utility pole issue. The Borough Engineer is looking into the playground equipment being level, and anything that needs to be addressed will be. The Borough's project engineers are RVE at Gina's Field and Phase 1 Memorial Park, T&M started the basketball court and Neglia Engineering finished it. The Borough is still waiting for the full insurance payback regarding last year's flood. The three phases at Memorial Park it is based on the three phases the Borough applied for BC Open Space. Phase 1 is currently ongoing and is for playground equipment which has not been updated in nearly 25 years. Phase 2, the Borough was awarded \$96,000 last year and is for general improvements including walkways. Phase 3, the Borough just applied for and is primarily for a water feature. The Borough will form a concrete plan based on the amount of money it receives from the County. Next year, there will be a capital ordinance for Phase 2 and 3 at Memorial Park.

CFO Abbasi stated the budget was a six-month work product that began around Thanksgiving when Department Heads received an email to start preparing their budgets. The Administrator and Finance Committee reviewed it, and then they met with the Department Heads. The Auditor and staff reviewed it as well with the Finance Committee. The Borough budgets for the whole year in the first half of the year, with a 3-year, sometimes a 6-year look back. That is why there are budget transfers at the end of the year. There is an additional full-time employee budgeted for Finance as it is the back bone of the municipality. The Borough receives two to three quotes for any purchase as an internal control. Celebrations line item appears to increase, but it is actually a decrease since 2020.

Councilman Gorman congratulated Councilwoman Wrightington, and he looks forward to working with her. He thanked Councilman Harvilla, Councilwoman Novoa, the CFO and all of the professionals for all of their hard work on the budget. With Memorial Day weekend upon us, the Councilman thanked all of the Veterans who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and remind everyone the parade is May 30th. The details can be found on the Borough website.

Mr. Tully stated the cancellation for the May meeting was on the notices section of the Borough website.

Mr. Leibman stated there has been a motion pending to reconsider the summary judgment that was previously denied for over 30 days on the Building Department law suit. He also offered to

meet Ms. Parker after the meeting, as he provided his business card in September and had not heard from her.

Council President Rossillo congratulated Councilwoman Wrightington and said she looks forward to working with her.

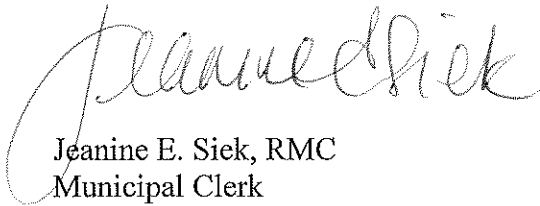
Motion to adjourn: Councilwoman Stewart

Second: Councilman Harvilla

All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeanine E. Siek". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Jeanine E. Siek, RMC
Municipal Clerk