

**BOROUGH OF DUMONT
BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
DUMONT MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
MAY 2, 2023**

Meeting to Authorize Closed Session at 6:03 PM

The Municipal Clerk read the resolution for the Closed Session Meeting to discuss:

- Pending Litigation – Centrello v. Borough of Dumont
- Potential Litigation – Municipal Complex Construction
- Attorney-Client Privilege – Legal Advice regarding Borough Website
- Attorney-Client Privilege – Legal Advice regarding Teak Road

Council President Russell called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

Flag Salute, Moment of Silence

Sunshine Law: In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey, Notification of this Meeting has been sent to our Official Newspapers, posted on the Borough website and Notice posted at Borough Hall and filed with the Borough of Dumont.

Roll Call:

Council members: Aponte, Harvilla, Kelly, Morrell, Russell, Stewart – Present
Mayor Andrew LaBruno – Present

Also in attendance: Municipal Clerk/Interim Borough Administrator Jeanine Siek,
CFO Issa Abbasi, Borough Attorney Jared Geist, Borough Engineer Peter Ten Kate

Motion to accept the agenda as presented: Councilman Morrell

Second: Councilwoman Aponte; All in favor.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve the March 21, 2023 Executive Meeting Minutes: Councilman Kelly

Second: Councilman Morrell

Roll call vote: Council members Aponte, Harvilla, Kelly, Morrell, Russell, Stewart – yes

Motion to approve the April 4, 2023 Public Meeting Minutes: Councilman Harvilla

Second: Councilman Kelly

Roll call vote: Council members Aponte, Harvilla, Kelly, Morrell, Russell, Stewart – yes

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilwoman Aponte

- *Fire Department*

For the month of April, there was a total of 1 structure fire, 2 other fires, 2 mutual aid, 2 motor vehicle accidents, 11 fire alarms, 3 carbon monoxide incidents, 4 natural gas emergencies, 1 odor of burning, 1 appliance malfunction, 1 brush fire, 2 utility power line issues, 1 hazardous material incident and 1 utility water call, for a total of 464-man hours.

- *Recreation*

Little League and Girls Softball Opening Day was on April 15th. It was a successful event with attendance by the entire council and the mayor. All fields are in excellent condition. Track and Field has 97 participants with a season from April to June. Girls Volleyball season is from May 9th until June 9th. Men's Softball started season on April 3rd. The display case at Borough Hall will be displaying trophies and awards that recreation department programs have been awarded.

Councilman Harvilla

- *Library*

The last meeting was held on April 28th. At the last mayor and council meeting, authorization was given to advertise bids for the barrier-free improvements. Bids were opened on May 9th and on May 18th architects gave contractors a pre-bid walk-thru. The repair to the old auditorium emergency exit roof was completed on April 14th. Boy Scout Troop 64 will be doing a clean up of the library grounds on May 20th. Regarding library programs, ESL tutors continue to meet at the library and conversation class meets every Monday evening. On June 14th, an adult book club for adults with developmental and special needs will be starting. Other adult programs include Writer's Club, Afternoon Movies, and Library Cook Book Club. Children's and Young Adult programs include Dungeons and Dragons, Storytime, Family Movie Night, and Anime Club. The library summer reading program is titled All Together Now and will start of May 17th. Coffee with a Cop will be on June 15th from 1 pm to 2:30 pm. The Dumont Shade Tree Commission will give a presentation on Monday, June 26th. The CAIDC will be doing a Monday night presentation as well with a date yet to be determined. The library spring/summer concert series will be as follows, Country Comfort on May 17th, Carnaby Street on May 31st, the Kootz on June 21st, the Watchdog Blues Band on July 12th, Vera and the Force on July 19th and Beauty and the Grease Band on August 16th. Attendance for adult programs is up 33%, 520% for children's programs and 100% for young adult programs. Overall new registrations are up 54.05%. The next meeting of the Library Board of Trustees is scheduled for May 24th.

- *Cultural Affairs*

The last meeting of the CAIDC was held on April 6th. Discussion included April's Autism Awareness Month, May's Asian American Pacific Islander History Month, the June 9th Pride March, the Juneteenth library partnership event, the September 15th Latin Dance Night and initial discussion of celebrating Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and other culturally significant events. On Wednesday, April 19th, the CAIDC hosted Together We Thrive, an Autism awareness event at the Dixon Homestead Library. The event was attended by over 20 Dumont constituents representing the families of individuals with special needs. Councilman Harvilla was honored to meet with the families and speak with them on how the borough may better serve their needs. This month's CAIDC event is a celebration of AAPI history month and will include an art show at Borough Hall on Sunday, May 7th from 1pm to 3pm. The show will be showcasing the talents of our local AAPI artists, including young students from our school system. The next CAIDC meeting will be on Thursday, May 4th.

- *Department of Public Works*

There was a short meeting of the DPW Committee on Wednesday, April 26th. Councilman Harvilla met with Superintendent Schiraldi, Peter Ten Kate, and Council President Russell to discuss coordination of the Riverside Coop paving of Dance Blvd, Aladdin Ave., 2nd St., and the DPW lot. Care needs to be taken that paving does not impact the operation of the Swim Club over the summer. Paving should start in September or October. May 1st, Superintendent Schiraldi requested, via e-mail, the mayor and council approve the utilization of temporary services to

assist with work at some of the town parks, including removing sand from the sand pit at Memorial Park.

- *Board of Education*

There were two meeting of the BOE. One regular meeting on April 20th and the public hearing regarding the 2023-24 budget on April 27th. Current enrollment is as follows: the elementary schools with 1,799 students, the high school with 769 students. Total in district students are 2,568 plus 85 students out of district. In March, the BOE voted on a resolution approving the preliminary school district budget with total expenditures and appropriations of \$57,393,283. At the public hearing, Councilman Harvilla was surprised that there were zero in-person attendance. The next meeting of the BOE will be on Thursday, May 18th.

Councilman Kelly

- *Finance*

Councilman Kelly thanked Councilwomen Aponte and Stewart for their attendance at the weekly meetings to prepare the budget for its introduction. He also thanked CFO Abbasi and outgoing BA Chris Tully for all their hard work. The finance committee has met with department heads, committees and representatives of groups that service the town. All expenditures were reviewed with an eye to continue services and cut costs where possible. Challenges this year included a near 20% rise in health care coverage costs. The budget presentation and hearing will take place at the June 13th meeting.

Councilman Morrell

- *Police*

Councilman Morrell reported 1,756 calls for service; 96 medical calls, 33 fire calls and 5 commitments. There were 166 traffic summonses issued: 17 for parking and 149 for moving violations; 22 motor vehicle accident investigations; 15 burglar alarms responded to; 3 warrants were served; 1 car seat installed/checked; 1 case regarding animal cruelty; 7,568 miles traveled for patrol activities; 8 total arrests by detectives; 3 domestic violence, 3 simples, 2 borough ordinances, 1 warrant, 2 DWI, 9 domestic violence incidents investigated, 7 expungements, 26 firearm and 32 criminal cases investigated. The NJ Special Olympics Torch Run planning is underway and the event is June 9th. The police department is working with recreation to plan presentations for summer camp. The 2nd grade Adopt a Cop, 5th and 8th grade LEADs Program are being planned. The department is participating in Autism Awareness Month by wearing a pin and implementing the blue envelope program. Coffee with a Cop will be on June 15th at the library. Planning of the 2023 Junior Police Academy is underway.

Councilman Russell

- *Shade Tree Commission*

April 29th was Arbor Day, the most important event of the year for the Shade Tree Commission. Despite the weather, the event was a success. Council President Russell thanked the commissioners and volunteers for their hard work. The council president also thanked Councilwoman Stewart and Councilmen Harvilla and Kelly for supporting the event. Finally, Council President Russell thanked Scout Troop 64 and the DPW for preparing the planting for the Arbor Day tree. The next Shade Tree meeting will be Monday, May 15th.

- *Ordinance Committee*

A meeting will be planned for this week.

- *Joint Land Use Board*

There will be a special meeting on May 18th at 7:30 pm for the Bank of America property/Dunkin Donut application.

Councilwoman Stewart

- *Seniors*

There is an upcoming trip for the Seniors to Medieval Times on May 11th. Additional participants are needed. Councilwoman Stewart added that this year's award of honorary merit from the Shade Tree Commission went to Council President Russell.

Councilman Kelly added that the mayor and council meeting originally scheduled for 20th was rescheduled to June 13th because the auditors need to be there for the budget presentation and were not available on the 20th.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Geist reported a new lawsuit was listed on the agenda for the closed meeting – Centrello v. Borough of Dumont. No public comment can be made due to the closed nature but it is being worked on. Attorney Geist has been also working on transitioning from the outgoing borough administrator.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. Ten Kate reported there was Riverside Coop pre-construction meeting with the various towns that are part of the coop. Everyone met the contractor and talked about a schedule. As discussed earlier, it was decided to wait until right after Labor Day for paving because of the Swim Club. The contractor is willing to honor that request. Pricing was favorable and paving of Maple Avenue is being looked at. Even with paving Maple, the borough would still come in under the allotted amount. A final decision on Maple Ave. will be made by Mayor and Council. Mr. Ten Kate also met with the DPW superintendent regarding certain drainage issues in town. Regarding the county curb cut program for ADA ramps, the county has Knickerbocker Ave. on their horizon. One side is Cresskill and the other is Dumont. While cost of the curbs is completely reimbursable, the borough would have to lay out the money first. Mr. Ten Kate recommends the borough get the curb work done so the road can get paved. The engineer would go out with the county engineer and come up with the number of ramps that need to get done. A design would have to be generated. A county contractor would do the work. The borough inspects the work and certifies and then we are reimbursed. The DOT came up with the application for this year's local aid grants. They are due on July 1st. Councilman Kelly asked when the work on Knickerbocker would take place. Mr. Ten Kate believed the work on the ramps would take place this calendar year but he would have to confirm that. There is still an issue as to whether Dumont or Cresskill owns some of the area. Councilman Kelly stated that there is also an ownership issue as to Maple Ave. No determination has been made yet as to whether Bergenfield or Dumont has ownership of any part of Maple. Mr. Ten Kate believes the entire road is in Dumont.

General Order of Business

Motion to pass Resolution #23-142 – Introduction of the 2023 Municipal Budget: Councilwoman Stewart; Second: Councilman Kelly

Roll call vote: Council members Aponte, Harvilla, Kelly, Morrell, Russell, Stewart – yes

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 Council member or member of the public. Any item may be removed for further discussion or 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

#23-143 – Bills List *

#23-144 – Approval of Soap Box Car Race *

#23-145 – Approval of Seneca Avenue Block Party *

#23-146 – Approval of Richard Drive Block Party *

#23-147 – Approval of Cypress Road Block Party *

#23-148 – Budget EEO Compliance *

#23-149 – Approval of Memorial Tree Donation Application for Barbara Affrunti *

#23-150 – Authorization to Dispose of Surplus Borough Property through GovDeals *

#23-151 – Authorization of 100% Veteran Tax Exemption for Block 709, Lot 4 *

#23-152 – Authorization of 100% Veteran Tax Exemption for Block 323, Lot 4 *

#23-153 – Accept Eric Barker's Resignation from the Fire Department *

#23-154 – Establishment of Outdoor Dining Process *

#23-155 – Approval of Grant Street Café Live Entertainment Permit *

#23-156 – Hire Jason Francese as Part-time Electrical Sub-Code Official – *Pulled from Consent Agenda*

#23-157 – Appoint Jeanine Siek as Interim Borough Administrator *

#23-158 – Authorization to Advertise for Borough Administrator *

Councilman Kelly requested to **Pull Resolution #23-156** – Hire Jason Francese as Part-time Electrical Sub-Code Official from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

Public Comment - Consent Agenda Only

Motion to open to the public for Comments on Consent Agenda Only: Councilman Morrell
Second: Councilman Russell; All in favor.

1. Maryanne Russini, congratulated Jeanine Siek as Interim Borough Administrator. She inquired as to where the advertisement for Borough Administrator will be placed and for how long. The Borough Clerk stated the ad will be placed in the Record, on the NJLM website, the Ridgewood News and on the borough website. Attorney Geist stated the time frame as to how long the ad will be up for has not been determined but it is usually for three weeks. He explained that the position is now vacant and the town must go through the process to find a candidate. The mayor has 30 days to appoint the vacancy but the council would have to approve. After the 30 days, the council can nominate someone and approve. The new BA would have a new contract. It was clarified that the position referred to in pulled resolution 23-156 is not a new position.

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

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda: Councilwoman Stewart
Second: Councilman Kelly
Roll call vote: Council members: Aponte, Harvilla, Kelly, Morrell, Russell, Stewart – yes

Councilman Kelly suggested that the position referred to in Resolution 23-156 should be advertised before making an appointment. Mayor LaBruno stated that by not filling the position, there would be a backlog of work. Councilman Morrell agreed with Councilman Kelly and believed that waiting a couple of weeks would not do any harm. He also added that the council only received information about this resolution on Thursday to be put on Friday's agenda and that they need more time to consider. Councilwoman Stewart added that Mr. Francese has been doing the work since February on a per diem basis so if we hold off, Mr. Francese could continue to work on a per diem basis.

Motion to Table Resolution #23-156 – Hire Jason Francese as Part-time Electrical Sub-Code
Official: Councilman Morrell; Second: Councilman Kelly
Roll call vote: Council members: Aponte, Harvilla, Kelly, Morrell, Russell, Stewart – yes

Public Comment - General Comments

Motion to open to the public for General Comments: Councilman Morrell
Second: Councilwoman Stewart; All in favor.

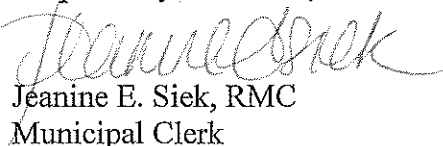
1. Maryanne Russini, inquired as to the status of the booth for the books and if it was going to be put out. Mayor LaBruno said the booth is at the DPW but he believes it needed to be retrofitted so the books would not get wet. Ms. Russini asked if there was severance pay to Chris Tully. Attorney Geist stated that the entirety of the agreement was in the resolution. The severance is 3 months pay based on the contract Mr. Tully had and state law and these terms are in the resolution. Ms. Russini stated she was happy outdoor dining was approved.
2. Bruce DeLyon, agreed it was a difficult budget to put together, and reviewed the budget in detail and made comments on multiple sheets in the budget.

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

Motion to Adjourn: Councilwoman Stewart
Second: Councilman Morrell
All in favor..

The meeting ended at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jeanine E. Siek, RMC
Municipal Clerk