

BOROUGH OF LAVALLETTE(minutes)
CAUCUS/REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
LAVALLETTE MUNICIPAL BUILDING
Monday, May 4, 2020-7:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Walter G. LaCicero, presiding

ROLL CALL: Council Members Borowski, Lamb, Zalom, Stogdill, Finter and Filippone

Also present: Phil George, Borough Attorney
Donnelly Amico, Municipal Clerk
Robert Brice, Borough Administrator
Christine Sierfeld, Chief Financial Officer
Robert Oliwa, Borough Auditor

READING OF THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT: Due to the coronavirus pandemic, this meeting was closed to the public physically and will be livestreamed via YouTube with comment period for the public. Notice of this remote meeting was posted on our website with instructions on how the public can connect to this livestream Council Meeting.

MOMENT OF SILENCE: The Mayor asked for a moment of silence for Amy Crivelli from West Point Island who passed away.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Councilman Finter led us in the Salute to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Caucus/Regular Meeting Minutes of April 6, 2020
Regular Meeting Minutes of April 20, 2020

A Motion to approve the minutes was made by Councilwoman Filippone. The Motion was Seconded by Councilman Lamb. Vote: Council Members Borowski, Filippone, Zalom, Stogdill, Finter and Lamb voted Yes. The Motion Passed.

REPORTS ACCEPTED AS SUBMITTED: (NO READING OF REPORTS)

- a) Construction Report for April 2020-Councilwoman Filippone
- b) Zoning Report for April 2020-Councilwoman Filippone
- c) Municipal Court Report for April 2020-Councilwoman Filippone
- d) Police Overtime Report for April 2020-Councilwoman Filippone
- e) Public Works Report for April 2020-Councilman Lamb
- f) Tax Account Report for April 2020-Tax Collector
- g) Revenue Transaction Report for March 2020-Chief Financial Officer

A Motion to approve the reports was made by Councilman Borowski. The Motion was Seconded by Councilman Lamb. Vote: Council Members Borowski, Filippone, Zalom, Stogdill, Finter and Lamb voted Yes. The Motion Passed.

ON CONSENT AGENDA/OFF CONSENT AGENDA, AND VOUCHERS:

RESOLUTIONS – ON CONSENT:

- 2020-126 authorizing the refund of a gazebo rental fee in the amount of \$200.00
- 2020-127 authorizing the refund of a gazebo rental fee in the amount of \$200.00
- 2020-128 authorizing that the budget be read by title only
- 2020-129 authorizing the execution of the NJDOT final quantities change order to the contract with Earle Asphalt Company for the Philadelphia Avenue road improvement project increasing the original contract price by \$5,729.75
- 2020-130 authorizing the extension of the property tax grace period to June 1, 2020
- 2020-131 authorizing self-examination of the budget
- 2020-132 authorizing the Lavallette School PTO's 50/50 off premise raffle draw to be rescheduled from April 24, 2020 at 7pm to May 15, 2020 at 1pm due to the Coronavirus pandemic
- 2020-133 appointing Mark Grogan as a Class I Special Police Officer at an hourly rate of \$11.00
- 2020-134 re-appointing Sharon Morgan as the Certified Tax Assessor for a term commencing July 1, 2020 at an hourly salary of \$19,074.00
- 2020-135 authorizing the execution of a shared services agreement between the Borough of Lavallette and the Lavallette Board of Education to provide a Police Safety Officer at the Lavallette Elementary School

A Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Councilman Lamb. The Motion was Seconded by Councilman Stogdill. Vote: Council Members Borowski, Filippone, Zalom, Stogdill, Finter and Lamb voted Yes. The Motion Passed.

RESOLUTIONS - OFF CONSENT:

There were no resolutions off consent.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

2020-136 Bills List in the amount of \$3,313,989.51

A Motion to approve the bills list was made by Councilman Lamb. The Motion was Seconded by Councilwoman Filippone. Vote: Council Members Borowski, Filippone, Zalom, Stogdill, Finter and Lamb voted Yes. The Motion Passed.

PUBLIC HEARING AND FINAL ADOPTION OF THE 2020 BUDGET:

The Mayor stated that Mr. Oliwa, our Borough Auditor along with Chrissa Sierfeld, our CFO are here tonight to discuss the budget and answer any questions.

Mr. Oliwa stated that due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Borough is most likely not receiving the State Aid of \$148,000 so we had to adjust the numbers a bit for this budget due to this pandemic crisis. The 2020 budget was introduced on April 6, 2020 and was advertised in the Ocean Start newspaper on April 17, 2020. This year the budget is self-exam. He stated he is very impressed with the surplus that the Borough has of 2million with last year being \$741,000. This is actually a very important asset because the Borough is financially strong going into this pandemic with uncertainties of what is to come, so this is a very positive strength. Last year was a stellar year, with the collection rate right now being 98%. This is actually a fantastic collection rate for any town to have. There was also a reval done last year which also gives us excess in taxes to replenish the surplus. A property with an assessment of 707,000 is now 876,000. Our budget has decreased from \$9,247,000 from 2019 to \$9,216,000 for 2020. Overall, the Borough is at its strongest financial strength to weather this pandemic.

Chrissa Sierfeld, CFO stated that the State budget has been delayed so depending on when that gets done, we might have to do estimated tax bills if the State cannot certify our tax bills.

Councilwoman Filippone questioned if we cannot open our beach this summer, since the beach revenue can only be for the beach appropriation, it would basically be a wash. We would know ahead of time, before the season would start if it was going to be slow.

Mayor LaCicero stated that our insurance company has stated that we cannot open just one beach so we could definitely face some loss of revenue but as Mr. Oliwa showed us tonight, the Borough is well prepared for anything.

The asked for a Motion to open the public hearing.

A Motion to open the public hearing was made by Councilman Finter. The Motion was Seconded by Councilman Stogdill. Vote: All of Council was in favor. The Motion Passed.

There were no comments from the public.

A Motion to close the public hearing was made by Councilman Lamb. The Motion was Seconded by Councilman Finter. Vote: All of Council was in favor. The Motion Passed.

Resolution 2020-137 Adoption of the 2020 Budget

A Motion was made by Councilman Stogdill to adopt the 2020 budget. The Motion was Seconded by Councilman Finter. Vote: Council Members Borowski, Filippone, Zalom, Stogdill, Finter and Lamb voted Yes. The Motion Passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Discussion on Clarification of Short Term Rental Prohibition

Mr. Brice stated that there have been a lot of phone calls with questions regarding what is considered short and long term rentals. We need to identify what we consider long and short term.

Mayor LaCicero stated that we banned the airbnb's right in the beginning of this pandemic because people were going through the online site to rent immediately in Lavallette to leave their home states to get away from their pandemic issues, such as New York, which at that time was in full force with the virus before we were. We did this to prevent out of towners coming into town at our off season because we wouldn't know if they were asymptomatic or had the virus. As far as our seasonal rentals for the summer, he would consider those long-term but we should let our Borough Attorney do a resolution that clarifies this issue. What people are looking for is to be able to get their refunds back on rentals they have deposits on if the beach isn't going to be open.

Councilwoman Filippone stated that we cannot ban hotels and motels at all.

Mayor stated that we will have a resolution on at the next meeting for clarification.

Council President Zalom stated that it doesn't look like we will be able to have our normal Memorial Day Services but was hoping to maybe do a remote one like we do with our meetings and just have Mayor, Council and our speakers so the public can watch it.

Mayor LaCicero stated that he had his Mayor's meeting the other day and we discussed the opening of our beaches and boardwalks. The Governor has basically left this up to the local officials as long as we still maintain the social distancing requirements. Seaside Park is opening their beach this week but not the boardwalk and they are requesting masks to be worn and maintaining social distancing. Brick is opening their beaches this weekend, Pt. Beach is opening theirs on the 15th. Whatever we decide, we need to understand that we don't have enough police for enforcement.

Councilman Lamb stated that this past weekend was already a mess with so many people. He doesn't even know how we would keep track of the social distancing with this many people. He thinks we should open our beaches this weekend but keep the boardwalk closed because this way the social distancing will be easier to maintain.

Councilman Finter stated that we should not put any garbage receptacles on the beach, this way everyone will have to carry it up to the boardwalk cans.

Mayor LaCicero stated that he thinks that would create a bigger problem because most people just leave their garbage.

Councilwoman Filippone stated that she didn't hear of any problems this weekend with any garbage.

Councilman Borowski stated that he doesn't see how even keeping the boardwalk closed is going to help enforcing the social distancing.

Mayor LaCicero stated that he has been getting a lot of calls to open up.

Councilwoman Filippone stated that the cases have just started to slow down.

NEW BUSINESS:

Councilman Borowski stated that Keith from Waves of Impact is looking to do his surf camp for the special needs kids and disabled vets sometime the last weekend in July or 1st weekend in August but he wants to wait to see what the Governor does closer to June before he applies.

Mayor LaCicero stated that he should still apply now and we will approve it contingent upon the Governor's regulations.

Mr. Brice stated that the Triathlon has been cancelled, soccer classes cancelled, the kayak rental guy is on hold for now. We also have to discuss the town wide garage sale which is supposed to be the first weekend in June.

Mayor LaCicero stated that we will discuss all of this issues at the next meeting.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Erin Brower, Ocean Front stated that she thinks we need open both boardwalk and beach but no garbage receptacles will become a big problem.

Susan Tropeano, 1000 Grand Central thinks we should open the boardwalk with masks and the beach with no masks.

George Voss, stated that this virus is far from over yet.

Jerry Skinner, 112 Magee Avenue thanked Mayor and Council for the street sign in memory of his brother, Donald Skinner.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Councilman Finter stated that everyone needs to fill out their 2020 census forms.

Mr. Brice stated that the deadline to fill out the census forms is October 31, 2020.

Mayor LaCicero stated that he will be getting more updates from the Mayors on the island. We all need to be open minded and understand that we are always capable of modify anything we approve or deny as soon as possible.

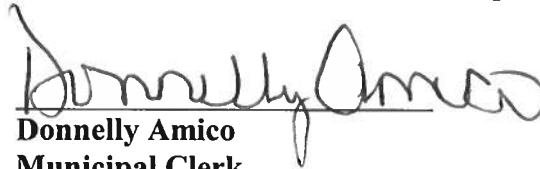
ADJOURNMENT:

A Motion to adjourn the Council Meeting was made by Councilman Lamb. The Motion was Seconded by Councilman Stoddill. Vote: All of Council was in favor. The Motion Passed.

The Council Meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

CERTIFICATION

I, Donnelly Amico, Municipal Clerk of the Borough of Lavallette, County of Ocean, State of New Jersey, does hereby attest these to be a true copy of the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 4th day of May 2020.


Donnelly Amico
Municipal Clerk