

Work Session
Borough of Allendale
Mayor and Council
March 26, 2015

A Work Session of the Mayor and Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor White.

Mr. Valenzuela announced that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act were met by the required postings and notice to publications. In addition, this evening's meeting is being recorded.

The following individuals answered roll call: Council members Bernstein, McSwiggan, Sasso, Strauch, Wilczynski and Mayor White. Mrs. Homan was absent. Mr. Valenzuela and Mr. Wiss were also present.

Public Comments

Mayor White Opened the meeting to the public for comments. There were none.

Administration

Agenda Review

Ordinance 15-06

Adoption of Refunding Bond Ordinance

Mayor White said Ordinance 15-05, is scheduled for a public hearing and adoption this evening. This ordinance will allow the Borough to combine a refinancing of the 2005 bonds, including existing notes, with 2015 capital projects.

Ordinance 15-07

Exceed the Budget Appropriation Limits and Establish a CAP Bank

Mayor White said Ordinance 15-07 is scheduled for introduction this evening. This ordinance will allow the municipality to bank what was not used in this year's budget.

Introduction of 2015 Municipal Budget

The 2015 Municipal Budget is being introduced this evening with a public hearing to be held on April 23, 2015. On that evening the Municipal Accountant will be present to review the Budget with the Council. Mrs. White thanked Mrs. Mayer, CFO for her assistance this year is working with the Finance Committee in preparing this year's Budget.

Mrs. White said the value of the average assessed home in 2015 will be \$648,000 and a tax point is approximately \$166,390. The 2015 municipal tax rate will be .523 which is only the municipal portion of a property owner's taxes. Approximately 25% of a tax dollar goes to the municipality, 10% goes to the county and 65% goes to the schools. Mayor White said 2015 marks five years in a row without a municipal tax increase.

Mrs. White said that the Finance Committee maintained a solid surplus and used 38.7% of the surplus, or \$1,000,000, toward the 2015 budget of \$12,783,481. The highest three line items in the budget are

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Public Safety, debt service and sewer charges.

Nine years ago when Mayor White joined the Council, Allendale's debt was over \$16,000,000. This year it will be \$11,500,000. In this year's budget a greater contribution is being made to debt service than is required. Paying down more in debt than is required has helped Allendale to receive a AAA bond rating.

Mr. Bernstein said that making the budget is a collaborative effort which takes many months to complete. He thanked Mrs. Mayer for all the work she put into perfecting the budget.

Mayor White said Allendale begins with a zero based budget – a blank slate, and they work from there instead of taking last year's budget and adding two percent to it.

Mr. Bernstein said the Financial Advisory Committee reviewed the budget earlier this week and everyone there gave this year's budget a “thumbs up”.

Mrs. Wilczynski noted that even with a zero percent increase in the budget, it is not at the expense of the Borough's infrastructure. Eleven roads per year are still being paved, better curbside service is available for residents, and new equipment is being purchased for the municipality, including a new fire truck.

Mrs. White also congratulated Mrs. McSwiggan on the reduction of \$400,000 in the sewer budget from its high point in 2008 and 2009. This number can be directly related to the sump pump program which has had a significant effect on the bottom line number.

Mrs. McSwiggan congratulated Mrs. Mayor on her sense of humor in working with the Council during the budget process.

Ordinance 15-08

Amendment to Property Maintenance Code – Fire Hydrants

Mayor White said the Introduction of Ordinance 15-08 amends the Property Maintenance Code to include the removal of snow around fire hydrants within 24 hours. Mr. Bernstein asked who has the responsibility to provide this removal or if it is understood it is the property owner. Mr. Wiss said a further amendment may be needed to clarify and amend all the sub-sections to include that information. He will review the ordinance and report back to the Council.

Ordinance 15-09

Amendment to Sales and Solicitation - Solicitors

Mrs. White said Ordinance 15-09 is also being introduced this evening. She is pleased to see this item on the agenda tonight and she thanked Detective Dillon, Mr. Bernstein and Mrs. Wilczynski for their work on this issue.

Mr. Sasso asked if non-profit solicitor still has to have a permit. Detective Dillon responded that a

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clause was put in for groups like the Girl Scouts and the Holiday Observers who, with the Chief's permission would be exempt from the requirement of having a permit. Political, non-profit and religious groups will be exempt from being fingerprinted and paying the \$30 fee.

Detective Dillon added that a solicitor may not go to a resident's side or back door.

Ordinance 15-10
Smoke Free Zones and Areas

Mr. Sasso said Ordinance 15-10 which allows for smoke free zones and areas, was brought to the Council by the Board of Health. Mr. Sasso explained the only place people will be able to smoke at a public building will be in a designated smoking area. Parks and fields will be no smoking areas with the exception of parking lots, public roads and public sidewalks. The term "smoking" also includes chewing tobacco and electronic cigarettes. In addition, Allendale will receive Sustainable New Jersey points for adopting this ordinance.

Mayor White thanked Mr. Sasso for spearheading this issue.

Resolution 15-21
Opposition to the State's Transition Plan

Mayor White said Resolution 15-121 is Allendale's objection to the current draft of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Statewide Transition Plan. Mrs. White believes that action will be taken to amend this draft and she is eager to see what those amendments will be.

Consent Agenda

Mrs. White noted that the Consent Agenda has been amended to include the approval of the Memorial Day Parade.

Mrs. White reviewed the balance of the Consent Agenda.

Mayor's Report

Mrs. White was at the Allendale Nursing Home on Tuesday night for the opening of their Kessler Rehabilitation Center. Kessler has closed their location in the Allendale Shopping Center.

On a motion from Mr. Sasso, seconded by Mr. Strauch, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn to Regular Session at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Valenzuela
Acting Municipal Clerk