

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Work Session Meeting Minutes
August 24, 2017

PRESENT: Mayor Elizabeth White and Council members Liz Homan, Jackie McSwiggan, Steve Sasso, and Amy Wilczynski

ABSENT: Council members Ari Bernstein and Jim Strauch

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Attorney Ray Wiss
Municipal Clerk Anne Dodd

A Work Session Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale was held in the Municipal Building at 500 West Crescent Avenue, Allendale, NJ on August 24, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m. by Mayor White who asked that the Municipal Clerk read the open public meetings statement:

“In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the notice requirements have been satisfied. The meeting dates for the year are confirmed at the Annual Meeting, are posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building, published in the Record within the first 10 days of the New Year, and copies are sent to the Ridgewood News and Star Ledger.”

Public Comment:

Kristen Tsarnas, 74 Heights Road, asked if there are any plans for the installation and repairs of sidewalks throughout town, and in particular, on Franklin Turnpike as well as Crescent Avenue between Oakwood and Brookside.

Mayor White advised that she had written one of the first Safe Routes to School applications for which a grant was awarded and used to install a sidewalk on Crescent from Franklin Turnpike to approximately Ivers. Prior to that, a sidewalk had been installed on Franklin Turnpike approximately from Crescent to below the Celery Farm on the eastern side. She noted that, per the Borough code, sidewalks and curbs are a resident’s responsibility. She explained that there is a policy whereby sidewalks are checked when a home is being sold to ensure that they are up to code. She further advised that grants are continued to be sought and some funds are budgeted each year for small sidewalk improvements. Currently, they are looking to repair the sidewalk on Franklin Turnpike just north of Rohslers to just north of Chestnut as the County has agreed to some drainage improvements on Franklin Turnpike. Once these improvements are complete, the intention is to upgrade the sidewalks. As funds are budgeted for sidewalk repairs, she noted that the Public Works and Engineering Committees do look at places in need of sidewalk improvements and they are currently looking at Homewood, Midwood and Elmwood.

Ms. Tsarnas inquired whether residents will have the opportunity to provide input on the use of the Black Millwork property.

Mayor White responded that residents can email her should they wish to have input into the use of this property. She advised that they will be putting together a Vision Committee, plans for which had been previously announced. This committee will most likely begin to meet in the next month or so. She further advised that there have been some discussions with a core group regarding financing and other issues.

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Michele Bonacorte, 30 Maple Street, expressed concern regarding the sidewalk that is in front of her house. She noted that her property is the only one on the street with a sidewalk and it does not lead anywhere. She proposed that the sidewalk be removed.

Mayor White advised that they are in the process of applying for a streetscape grant for the downtown area. As she is unsure whether the sidewalk can be eliminated, she stated that she would have the Borough Engineer look into this issue. Mayor White advised that she will contact Ms. Bonacorte once she has a more definitive answer.

Administration:

A. Agenda Review

Mayor White reviewed the Regular Session agenda. She noted that the August 10th Work and Regular Session Minutes will need to be carried to the September 14th Regular Session as there are not enough council members present who had also been present on August 10th to hold the vote this evening.

With respect to Ordinance 17-11, Mayor White explained that this Ordinance increases the number of patrol officers from eight to nine. Chief Scherb commented that the increase in the number of patrol officers has been a great help to the department as overtime numbers have decreased significantly as a result. Borough Attorney Wiss noted that, by adopting this ordinance, it brings the municipality into compliance with the law.

Mayor White reviewed the resolutions on the Consent Agenda. She highlighted Resolution #17-228 opposing proposed rules N.J.A.C. 5:30-18.1 and 18.2 which put into place regulations regarding employee compensation disclosure. She explained that these rules as proposed will impose a hardship on municipalities and thanked Borough Clerk Dodd for putting this resolution together. She noted that the resolution will be sent to the Division of Local Government Services.

B. Mayor's Report

Mayor White reported that an informative notice was received from the State regarding black bears and what to do when one is seen. This notice has been posted to the Borough website.

Correspondence was received that there are free homebuyer educational workshops being offered in Bergen County at various locations throughout the month of September. This information has been posted to the Borough website.

The Borough website will be down for maintenance on Tuesday and Wednesday of next week.

A meeting was held with PSE&G to discuss the ongoing construction. Beginning tomorrow, Hillside Avenue from Lake to Crescent will be closed, and next week, Crescent Avenue from W. Maple to Brookside will be closed. SwiftReach notifications have been sent and information has been posted to the Borough website as well as Facebook. Some tie-in work will take place on Saturdays and during the school break in September. Mayor White thanked residents for their patience during this construction. She expressed her belief that they have reached an agreement that the road will be paved from curb to curb.

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Councilwoman Homan inquired whether information on construction within Allendale is communicated to surrounding towns. Chief Scherb responded that although they do advise other towns of construction, how that information is disseminated is at the town's discretion.

PSE&G will also be completing infrastructure upgrades on Surrey Lane this week.

C. Council Reports

Councilwoman Homan – Public Safety

Councilwoman Homan thanked the Police Department for coordinating the traffic detours during the construction as well as communicating information regarding these detours to the public. She thanked the Mayor and Council for consideration of the ordinance to amend the number of patrol officers to nine. She advised that she met with the Allendale Volunteer Ambulance Corps and commented that they are a great group who devote a lot of time. She noted that while nights and weekends are well-staffed, additional volunteers are needed during the day. There have been some new volunteers who have recently joined and are available during the day. A meeting also took place with the Allendale Fire Department to review policies and processes by which business is managed. Councilwoman Homan thanked CERT for their assistance during events, noting that they are trained for emergencies. The next Public Safety Committee meeting with all volunteer groups is scheduled on September 15th at 7:30 a.m.

As it had reached the time to commence the Regular Session, the remaining Council Reports were carried to the Regular Session.

D. Staff Reports

Due to time constraints, this agenda item was carried to the Regular Session.

E. Correspondence

County of Bergen – Free Homebuyer Education Workshops

This agenda item was addressed during the Mayor's Report.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilwoman McSwiggan, second by Councilman Sasso, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Dodd, RMC
Municipal Clerk