

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Work Session Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2017

PRESENT: Mayor Elizabeth White and Councilmembers Ari Bernstein, Jackie McSwiggan, Jim Strauch and Amy Wilczynski

ABSENT: Councilmembers Liz Homan and Steve Sasso

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 March 23, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 7:31 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:

No one came forward.

Presentations:

A. Proclamation – National Poison Prevention Week

Mayor White read the following proclamation into the record:

Proclamation in Honor
of National Poison Prevention Week

WHEREAS, Congress designated the third full week in March to be National Poison Prevention Week (NPPW) in 1961 and since then this week has helped to raise national awareness of the dangers of potentially poisonous medicines, household chemicals, and other substances; and

WHEREAS, poison centers across the country will focus the public’s attention on identifying poisoning hazards at home as well as learning ways to prevent poisoning emergencies; and

WHEREAS, unintentional poisoning is the leading cause of unintentional injury death in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, drug overdose deaths including prescription pain medicine and heroin remain at epidemic proportions for both New Jersey and the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the majority of drug overdose deaths (more than six out of ten) involve an opioid; and

WHEREAS, a poison is defined as anything that is taken in the wrong amount, in the wrong way or by the wrong person; and

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WHEREAS, every poisoning is preventable! From the youngest to the oldest, all people and even pets are at risk; and

WHEREAS, although the majority of reported poison exposures involve children five (5) years old and younger; the majority of poisoning deaths occur in adults aged 20 to 59; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES), a division of the Department of Emergency Medicine of the New Jersey Medical School of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, provides expert advice, drug information, and poison prevention education to NJ residents through the 800-222-1222 Poison Help Hotline; and

WHEREAS, all services are free, confidential, multilingual and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year even during bouts of Mother Nature; and

WHEREAS, the public can contact a poison expert by calling (1-800-222-1222), chatting (www.njpies.org), or texting (8002221222@njpies.org); and

WHEREAS, consumers must be aware that e-cigarette devices, hookah pipes and liquid nicotine may contain very high doses of nicotine in enticing colors, aromas, and flavors – increasing the likelihood that small children and pets will focus their attention on them. These products pose serious risk of poisoning; and

WHEREAS, poison experts urge residents to use our services as a resource for poison and drug information instead of consulting the internet for information that may not be accurate; and

WHEREAS, we encourage all residents to program the Poison Help Line 800-222-1222 into home, office, and cell phones because a rapid response can make a difference in preventing serious injury and saving lives; and

WHEREAS, the use of poison centers services saves residents both time and money. Most cases are managed in the convenience of the caller's home, requiring no hospital visit; and

WHEREAS, NJPIES is also involved with the state's efforts in homeland defense, counter-terrorism, emergency preparedness and response, bio surveillance, and surveillance for clusters of poisonings and their sources (products, food and beverages, chemicals in the workplace and at home, environmental toxins, drugs and medicine, and animal and insect bites and stings);

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Elizabeth White, Mayor of the Borough of Allendale do hereby proclaim the week of March 19-25, 2017 as National Poison Prevention Week in New Jersey and encourage all citizens to pledge their commitment to ensuring the safety of themselves, their families, and their community.

Administration:

A. Agenda Review

Mayor White reviewed the Regular Session agenda. She noted that the March 2nd Work and Regular Session Minutes are listed for approval. She reviewed the ordinances that are listed for public hearing and adoption as well as the ordinance listed for introduction, providing a brief explanation of each ordinance.

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Mayor White advised that the 2017 municipal budget is listed for introduction this evening via Resolution #17-105. She thanked the Administration, Finance, and Human Resources Committee, especially Alissa Mayer, CFO, for their work on the budget. She noted that this budget was difficult as they were up one tax point right away due to increases in debt service and sewer costs. She explained that the increase in debt service was not due to the acquisition of the property located at 220 and 230 West Crescent Avenue, but, rather, due to the way that the Borough's debt was structured. In addition, she advised that they have budgeted for 2% salary increases for the Borough staff which they believe is important.

CFO Mayer advised that the increase in the budget over last year is approximately 1.9%. She noted that, in addition to the items mentioned by Mayor White, there were a few other increases. She further advised that this year is the first time in six years that there is an increase in the municipal budget.

Mayor White added that the committee did not feel comfortable using surplus as it did not increase to the level that it did in 2015.

Councilman Bernstein thanked CFO Mayer and everyone on the Administration, Finance, and Human Resources Committee for their hard work. He explained that expenses went up and revenues went down and the goal of the committee has always been to lessen the burden on the taxpayers while maintaining the amenities and services available to them. He expressed his opinion that they cut it as close as they could as they had to keep any eye on the surplus and he believes that this budget reflects a lot of hard work and a balanced effort to keep the tax rate as affordable as possible for the residents.

Mayor White reported that they have included a \$3,000 stipend for members of the governing body in this year's budget. She noted that this stipend is optional and has a minimal impact on the budget. She expressed her belief that it should not cost anyone money to be a member of Council and pointed out that close to 90% of municipalities have a stipend in place for members of the governing body.

Mayor White then reviewed the Consent Agenda. She advised that Resolutions #17-107 and #17-108 appoint summer interns. She noted that both Libby Davis and Olivia Callaghan were interns last summer and she commented that they are happy to have them both back this summer. In terms of Resolution #17-109, she expressed her belief that the JIF investment legislation has already been adopted, but remarked that it is important to put the Borough's support on the record. With respect to Resolution #17-113, she explained that as Ms. Marquis is already performing the duties that are required of the Recycling Coordinator, this resolution gives her the appropriate title and stipend for the performance of these duties. As issues with the 2016 professional services contract for Mott MacDonald's appointment as Water and Sewer Engineer have been resolved, Resolution #17-118 is being listed to approve this contract. She expressed her belief that the 2017 contract award will be listed for approval on the next agenda.

B. Mayor's Report

Mayor White advised that there was an article in the Northern Highlands Daily Voice publication which appears online regarding the top 50 safest municipalities and she received an inquiry as to

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why Allendale did not appear on this list. In order to clarify the reason, she advised that Detective Michael Dillon of the Allendale Police Department is present this evening to speak on this issue.

Detective Dillon advised that he has provided three crime data reports and has highlighted the Bergen County towns that appeared on the list of safest towns. He noted that, although Allendale's crime rate is very low, Allendale did not make the list of the 50 safest cities. In conducting research, he learned that there is no one common method to decide how a town makes it onto this list. Although Safewise.com states that they only use FBI crime data when generating this list, they also state that they utilize a population threshold and only report on cities with populations above this number to avoid any outliers that may skew the data. Detective Dillon expressed that Allendale most likely did not meet this threshold due to its relatively low population. He further advised that there is a lot of misinformation on the internet and asked that people take into consideration the source of the information when deciding whether to believe it.

Mayor White thanked Detective Dillon for his report and remarked that Allendale is one of the safest places in New Jersey with an outstanding Public Safety team.

Mayor White advised that she and Councilwoman McSwiggan attended an open house this afternoon at Eastern Christian Children's Retreat located at 135 W. Crescent Avenue. She commented that it was a very nice dedication and expressed her hope that they will have another home built at 200 W. Crescent Avenue. Councilwoman McSwiggan added that this facility touches so many lives and noted that the care and support that the special needs residents receive is remarkable. She advised that the Director, Jayne Press, thanked both the governing body and residents of Allendale for having both open hearts and open minds.

C. Council Reports

Councilman Strauch – Public Works

Councilman Strauch reported that Ron Kistner, the DPW, and Public Safety had a challenging week last week due to the snowstorm. He noted that there was good communication among the departments and with the residents during the storm. He remarked that his wife's only complaint is that they now receive multiple notifications.

Mayor White advised that he can make changes to his Swiftreach account through the Borough website to address this issue. In speaking of the Borough website, she stated that she received an email from a resident to advise that this resident has created a website containing information on Allendale. She commented that there is no need to visit another website to receive information on Allendale and she encouraged residents to visit the Borough website for correct and up-to-date information.

Councilman Strauch announced that the next Public Works Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 5th at 8 a.m. with an Engineering meeting to follow at 9 a.m.

Councilwoman Wilczynski – Facilities, Parks & Recreation

Councilwoman Wilczynski advised that she and Councilwoman McSwiggan attended the Bergen County Environmental Conference during which the Master Plan was discussed. She further advised that she and Councilwoman Homan participated in Meals on Wheels yesterday. The next Facilities, Parks & Recreation Committee meeting is scheduled on Wednesday at 8 a.m.

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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 item was carried to the Regular Session.

E. Correspondence

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

Adjournment:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Dodd, RMC
Municipal Clerk