

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Work Session Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2015

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

ABSENT: Councilmember 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 October 8, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 7:38 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.”

Administration:

A. Best Practices Inventory

Mayor White explained that the Best Practices Inventory is a mandatory worksheet that must be completed and the number of questions to which the municipality answers yes determines the amount of State aid that Allendale will receive. She noted that it is a very time consuming process and she thanked Alissa Mayer, CFO, for her work.

CFO Mayer advised that Allendale will receive all of the aid to which it is entitled. She commented that there were two questions to which she answered no and out of five new questions, three were not applicable. She noted that although in response to question 4 she answered no, the report was reviewed and many of the best practices with regard to legal fees were implemented, but not all. She further advised that although she formerly had answered no to question 6, a new policy has been implemented requiring that each councilmember attend one instructional course per year. In response to question 39, she answered yes as there has been discussion regarding the Borough’s policy to provide payments in lieu of health benefits. It has been decided that keeping this policy is in the best interest of the Borough as it saves the Borough approximately \$15,000. The second question to which she answered no was with respect to Workers Compensation Law as the Borough does not limit benefits for work-related injuries to 70% of the employee’s weekly wages. CFO Mayer noted that the Borough has always paid 100% of the employee’s salary and this amount is contractual in some cases. Borough Attorney Wiss noted that although, from time to time, there have been extensions on the number of weeks for which you can collect workers compensation, there is a fixed amount of weeks during which one can collect these benefits. He further explained that separate from this benefit, there is a workers

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compensation proceeding in which a judge determines whether an employee has been disabled and to what extent.

Mayor White advised that Council has worked to implement changes to meet the mandates of the best practices such as recently implementing a formal surplus policy. The Council thanked CFO Mayer for the great job she has done in guiding the Council and ensuring that the Borough is compliant with all regulations.

B. Agenda Review

Mayor White reviewed the Regular Session agenda. She noted that Diane Knispel has resigned from her position as Recording Secretary and commented that she will be missed. Christina Montanye will be appointed to this position and Mayor White expressed her opinion that she will be a wonderful addition.

With respect to the resolution to authorize an auction through GovDeals, Councilman Sasso advised that Mr. Kistner did a great job in facilitating this auction. He expressed that he is looking forward to receiving money for equipment that is not being used and returning this money to the taxpayers. He further advised that auctions such as this one can be conducted on an ongoing basis.

In reference to the resolution to authorize the CDBG Grant agreement, Councilwoman Wilczynski explained that this grant in the amount of \$30,000 is being awarded for Phase I of the Handicap Accessible Bathrooms at Crestwood Park. She advised that the grant application requesting an additional \$40,000 for Phase II of this project was handed into the County earlier today.

C. Mayor's Report

Mayor White reported that she will be attending the Northwest Bergen Mayors meeting this Saturday. She advised that she attended Saddle River's open house on deer and reported to the Board of Health at their meeting on the recommendations for deer management.

As the time has not been reached to start the Regular Session, Mayor White announced that Council Committee Reports and Staff Reports would be covered during this meeting.

Council Committee Reports and Comments

Councilman Sasso - Public Works

Councilman Sasso reported that the Public Works Committee will be meeting at the end of the month. He commented that he is excited about the auction as he is eager to clean up the DPW building and grounds.

Councilwoman Wilczynski – Facilities, Parks and Recreation

Councilwoman Wilczynski advised that as noted earlier, the CDBG grant application was dropped off earlier today. She stated that they are already considering

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improvements for next year and will begin to prepare the bid specifications for the bathrooms in the near future. They will also be looking to do some landscaping.

Councilwoman Homan – Public Safety

Councilwoman Homan reported that the Fire Department will be painted in the near future. She advised that CERT is looking to establish themselves as a 501(c)3. The Allendale Volunteer Ambulance Corps is in the midst of fundraising as well as trying to raise public awareness. She advised that the next Public Safety meeting is on Friday, September 16th.

Mayor White requested that a resolution be placed onto the next agenda to establish a curfew for Halloween.

Councilwoman McSwiggan – Water, Sewer and Public Utilities

Councilwoman McSwiggan advised that the committee is in the process of reviewing the bulk water purchase agreement with United Water which will be renewed this year. They are working on rerouting the water for the W. Crescent Avenue Bridge as well as cleaning sewer lines. The next meeting will take place on October 21st.

Councilman Bernstein – Administration, Finance and Human Resources

Councilman Bernstein reported that this committee met this afternoon. He stated that they reviewed the best practices checklist and commented that the amount of work that passes through the Finance Department is enormous. The budget was reviewed and those line items that were greater than 75% were noted. Councilman Bernstein requested that his fellow councilmembers be vigilant with their respective committees and Department Heads to ensure that the numbers stay within the budgeted amounts.

Staff Reports:

Ray Wiss, Municipal Attorney, advised that he has been working on a topical land use issue as well as working with the Municipal Clerk on a response to a comprehensive OPRA request.

Anne Dodd, Municipal Clerk, reported that her office will be open until 9 pm on October 13th for Late Night Voter Registration. She advised that she received a notice from the Bergen County Board of Elections to inform that, effective August 10, 2015, the number of people for which someone can be an authorized messenger has been limited to three.

George Scherb, Police Chief, advised that there has been progress within the Police Department.

Mayor White commented that both the new Acting Technical Assistant and Clerk Typist in the Building Department are doing a great job. She advised that she was invited to attend a presentation given by the FBI Director at Northern Highlands and she expressed her opinion that he gave a wonderful speech.

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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 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Anne Dodd, RMC
Municipal Clerk