

**Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Work Session Meeting Minutes – 7:30 p.m.
November 17, 2022**

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, New Jersey on November 17, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Mayor Bernstein who welcomed everyone who is joining the meeting in the audience. Zoom Webinar is unavailable due to internet issues. He reminded the public to mute their devices so as not to distract from the business of the meeting. Mayor Bernstein advised the public that they would have one opportunity during this meeting for public comment and he will advise you at the appropriate time.

Mayor Bernstein 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 and on the Borough Website, published in The Record within the first 10 days of the New Year, and copies are sent to The Ridgewood News and Star-Ledger. Notice of this meeting by the November 1, 2022 Sunshine Notice was sent to The Record, The Ridgewood News and Star Ledger and has been posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building and Borough website."

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Councilmembers Liz Homan, Susanne Lovisolo, Ed O'Connell, Matthew O'Toole, Steve Sasso and Amy Wilczynski, and Mayor Bernstein

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Raymond Wiss, Borough Attorney
Linda Louise Cervino, Municipal Clerk
Ron Kistner, Director of Operations/Administrative Officer
Michael Dillon, Chief of Police
John Gil, Director of Communications

PRESENTATION:

Mayor Bernstein stated that we are honoring the Allendale Senior Housing Corp, Inc., group, the members and what they've done for close to 30 years. I've been on the group for six years. Mayor Liz White appointed. As we were discussing the group in the last couple meetings, we realized that there's a history there that predates me and it goes way back. The current members, Christopher Greimel, who is the president, Shirley Chamberlain, Dan Manning, Susan Barkauskas, Erika Leeuwenburgh and Ari Bernstein. Liz Homan was the council rep that I appointed. Mayor Bernstein asked the members present to come up to share some favorite moments. Susan Barkauskas said she's been on about 25 years. Mayor Bob Patterson appointed Susan. Dan Manning said he came on when Vince first became mayor about 16 years ago.

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Mayor Bernstein stated that Allendale Senior Housing which runs the senior property at Cebak Court that we're going to be transferring the interest to AHI. The borough owns the land and Allendale Senior Housing owns the building. That's being transferred to AHI. We felt that there was a synergy to bring them altogether under one. We voted at the last meeting that we would take whatever actions necessary to effectuate the transfer.

Mayor Bernstein reads the following Proclamation:

**PROCLAMATION
IN HONOR OF ALLENDALE SENIOR HOUSING CORPORATION**

WHEREAS, since 1994 the Allendale Senior Housing Corporation has overseen the senior housing at Cebak Court; and

WHEREAS, on June 5th 1997 Allendale celebrated the completion of its first affordable housing for senior citizens at Cebak Court, named in honor of John Cebak, a longtime resident of Allendale; and

WHEREAS, senior housing serves an important public purpose and is required to be maintained as part of Allendale's Affordable Housing Plan; and

WHEREAS, for 28 years members of the Allendale Senior Housing Corporation Board have ensured that those who wish to make Allendale home in their golden years have a safe, and affordable place to live;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mayor Ari Bernstein, on behalf of the Governing Body and the residents of the Borough of Allendale, hereby acknowledge, with gratitude, the hard work and dedicated service that each and every member who served on the Allendale Senior Housing Corporation Board gave to the Borough of Allendale.

Liz White stated, on behalf of Vince Barra who couldn't be here tonight, we thank you. You were so dedicated and so amazing. There were so many people that needed housing who got it because of you. These were people in our community, these were our neighbors. It was great housing and it was affordable housing. It's not easy to get up at every meeting and go and do what you did and we're just so grateful. Thank you to this council for recognizing you and really thank you for trusting us to continue the legacy that you built. We're very grateful.

John Gil took photos of the members of the Allendale Senior Housing Corporation Board.

Commendations: Allendale Senior Housing Corp, Inc. Board Members

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Councilwoman Wilczynski stated that Liz Homan apologized for not being here tonight, but wants to thank you all for your years of service for not only the time that you've spent on the senior board but all the other volunteer things that you all do in our community. Liz Homan is joining the meeting via telephone.

SUMMARY OF 2022 BEST PRACTICES INVENTORY - Alissa Mayer, CFO, gave a summary of the 2022 Best Practice Inventory. As you know the Best Practices Inventory is required every year by the State. Its purpose is to assess each municipality's compliance with various laws and evaluate implementation of fiscal and operational best practices. It is also used by the DCA to determine areas that may need attention. To that end there is a series of unscored questions. Our answers to the scored questions determine if we will receive our full Final Aid payment. This year's inventory had 56 questions in total in which 43 are scored; 11 of these are new this year; 14 are unscored and are for informational purposes only. A score of 24 and greater assures full payment of aid. Of the 43 scored questions we answered 31 – Yes; 8 - N/A; and 4 – No. The four no's included ongoing cyber security training; electric vehicle charging stations; ongoing detailed cash flow analysis; and Municipal Ordinance and code of ethics. We will be getting our full portion of ETR aid. As always, I'm happy to report that there are really no areas that need to be addressed as we are very compliant with the standard best practices recommended by the DCA.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No one came forward.

ADMINISTRATION:

Agenda Review:

Mayor Bernstein reviewed the Regular Session Agenda consisting of the approval of Work and Regular Sessions minutes of September 8, 2022 and September 22, 2022; second reading and public hearing on Ordinance 22-14; introduction of Ordinance 22-15; and nine resolutions on the Consent Agenda.

No comments from the audience or councilmembers regarding the Agenda Review.

Council Reports:

Councilman O'Connell – Public Works

The auction of borough vehicles and equipment closed yesterday and made about \$52,000. We're working on winterizing the facilities. Holiday decorations are being installed downtown. I would like to say congratulations to Mayor-elect Wilczynski, Councilman O'Toole and Council-elect Yaccarino, and Councilman Kistner. I hope everyone has a great holiday.

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Councilman Sasso – Facilities, Parks and Recreation

Facilities, Parks and Recreation is moving along smoothly as it usually does. I went to my last New Jersey League of Municipalities convention yesterday with a lot of people here. It was very productive. It was great to walk the floors and see a lot of cool things. We had some good quality time together as a group to discuss the current and future things.

Councilwoman Wilczynski - Facilities, Parks and Recreation

The borough is still navigating through legal documents for 220. I was hoping to have some stuff on the agenda for this evening but, unfortunately, it's going to be pushed to December. As soon as we get these last couple documents in, we will be able to close on that front building. As you know, this has been years and years in the making. We did sell the back building for \$10.2 million to pay down some of our debt. That is operational right now. We are working on the plans. They are pretty much 100 percent done for the bidding process. We will be going out to bid according to the New Jersey Local Contracts Law. We ran into the architects for Hampshire at the New Jersey League of Municipalities and we told them we wanted a couple tweaks here and there on the building in the back. It's going to be beautiful. We're hoping the timing is going to work out when Hampshire does it, but we fully expect the demo to still happen by the end of this year and just them to start the building.

As Steve mentioned, we did have a wonderful time in Atlantic City. There are always some great speakers to listen to. You always pick up some really good information and we certainly did this year. We walked the floors and have a lot of ideas to help improve the borough and make our operations smoother.

The downtown streetscape is coming along. Unfortunately, our contractor had to have a subcontractor so there's always a little bit with delays with these things when you have to go out to bid. The lights are on backorder. It will be gorgeous when it is done. The wreaths look so pretty on our new lamp post. It's going to be spectacular when we have our new garbage cans and the light is all fixed, new landscaping, etcetera.

We met with the Allendale Circle of Support. They are going to be assisting and working in conjunction with the borough to get our senior goody bags. It's a great group. I think our list is up to 150 seniors happy this year. We started with 50 and now we're up to 150. The program was really successful and the seniors love getting a little treat in December. Congratulations to my running mates, Councilman O'Toole and Tyler Yaccarino. Congratulations to our Director of Operations, Ron Kistner, who is also a councilman and wears many hats in his municipality.

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Councilman O’Toole – Law & Public Safety

The Public Safety Committee has not had a formal meeting since our last meeting, but work is, as always, ongoing. The police department is working with the schools on improving security. Our two new recruits are working their way through the process enabling them to begin the academy in January. At the League of Municipalities, Chief Dillon and I attended a few sessions pertinent to Public Safety, including one on future volunteer Fire and EMS in this time when volunteerism is down. One on what dispatch services might look like in the future. One about cyber security and ransomware given by the FBI. One about radio communication systems for first responders. Congratulations to Tyler Yaccarino, Ron Kistner and Amy Wilczynski. I look forward to another few years up here with you.

Councilwoman Lovisolo – Land Use and Construction Code

The Land Use committee met on Monday morning. A lot of the issues we’ve been dealing with lately have been hovering around homeowners wanting to take down an excessive amount of trees before construction. It’s made us re-evaluate Chapter 244 of our code which centers around trees and probably tightening some things up there. Trying to figure out the best way that we can allow people to do the work that needs to be done but not lose all of these huge mature trees. As usual, we spoke about some certain individual with property maintenance issues and continue to work on those. I thank Ron, Mike, Anthony and Mike Limatola for continuing to address all of these concerns on behalf of our residents. Congratulations to Ron, Matt, Amy and Tyler. It’s a great team and I look forward to working with you even more.

Mayor’s Report:

Mayor Bernstein stated looking back on some of the things I had done the last couple of weeks. One was we had our Land Use Board meeting on Monday. I want to commend the Land Use Board. I think they did a great job. The applications are not easy. If the members are there, they listen, they pay attention. If they miss the first meeting, they went back, they listened to the tape to be able to participate. So, hats off and many thanks to Kevin Quinn, our chair; Mike Sirico, the Vice Chair and all of the members. Chris Botta was not there. Natalie, his partner stepped in and she did a wonderful job. I want to thank the board.

Thanksgiving is coming up next Thursday. The following Friday is the Mingle and Jingle, December 2nd, which is 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the AB&G. We’re having a visitor from the North pole and a tree lighting. It will be a great day in Allendale.

Council Reports: (continued)

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Councilwoman Homan – Water, Sewer and Public Utilities

Liz Homan stated there has been some noise on social media from my understanding about third quarter water bills. I just wanted to make sure I share with council as well as the public that we have not had a rate increase since January of 2021. If individual's costs are up, it is due to increased water consumption. Unlike some things where the more you use, the less expensive it gets, water actually works the other way. The more water you start to use as you go above certain thresholds (and it's on the bill) those additional gallons are more expensive. I do encourage residents to look at their water bills. On the front page of the water bill, there is not only the amount due, which would be that quarter (our most recent one ended in September), but there's also a bar chart that shows the actual volume of usage and it will give the current quarter in dark blue. Then it goes back and actually gives the past quarters including the same quarter last year. I know some individuals were comparing their Q1 or Q2 to what the summertime was as their Q3 bill and that really wouldn't be comparing the same apples to apples because the water utilization in the summer is so much higher in general in Allendale. Just to give a prospective that Q3, so our summer months, was double what we used in Q2 and three times as much as Allendale used back in Q1. It's a lot of water. In the summer months from June 24th to September 22nd Allendale utilized 185.7 million gallons of water. That was utilizing over two million gallons of water per day, which is a lot of water. This is driven by regular water summer demands and this summer was even more dry and the sprinklers, the irrigation systems, the evaporation of water from the pools and things like that definitely drives those utilization numbers very high. I certainly encourage if people have questions to contact me by email, lizhoman@allendalenj.gov.

An update on the transaction with VEOLIA, there's a tremendous amount of work that continues to go on as we move towards a closing date of November 30th. Thank you to Ron, Ray, Mike Vreeland, Ari, Suzanne, Alissa, the entire team for their continued attention to this huge transaction. Even if we are able to close on November 30th, there will still be paperwork that will have to be completed after the closing because of the acquiring of easements primarily for a system that dates back to 1913, is a really big job. We also have other paperwork with other various agencies. So, there are things that still need to be completed, but it will be excellent to be able to have that closing. The plan for the transaction to close with VEOLIA wiring to the borough about \$14.5 million and this would be placed into financial vehicles to pay all of Allendale's debt. Alissa will be working with our team to make sure that that's put into place. The remaining amount of the funds will be put in escrow until the completion of the outstanding paperwork is resolved.

As far as the treatment for PFAS, we've talked a lot about during the time how important it is that we have a company like VEOLIA that can begin to put in temporary treatments and help us ensure that we have water that is in regulation moving forward. Thus far, Allendale has not had to send out any PFAS violation notices. We are advised that VEOLIA is currently in conversation with NJDEP about Well 11's most recent results and we will await further information from VEOLIA.

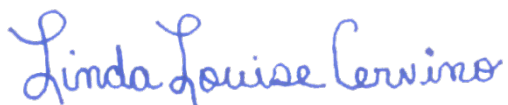
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The well is currently not in service. VEOLIA has been aggressively pursuing temporary treatment to be installed at New Street as we discussed during the public meetings and we hope that the NJDEP approvals will come through shortly. VEOLIA will then be looking to put in permanent treatment at New Street to treat not only the three wells on New Street, but also to bring the water down from Well 11 for treatment. This will be a win for Allendale residents and certainly necessary for the continuation of quality water to be available in Allendale. If anyone has any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to me.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilman O'Toole, second by Councilman O'Connell and unanimously carried, the work meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Louise Cervino, RMC
Municipal Clerk

12/01/2022
Date Approved