

**BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS**  
Borough Council Regular Meeting  
**MINUTES**  
May 28, 2019

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Vallone called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. at the Far Hills Municipal Building and read the open public meetings statement in accordance with the law.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Vallone led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Carty, Chimenti, Tweedie, Vallone

Absent, as Excused: Hand, Karner, Surks

Absent:

Also Present: Clerk Hicks, Attorney Sordillo, Chief DeCarolis, Sergeant Kocur, Borough Planner Banisch and approx. 15 members of the public

**REPORTS**

**Councilwoman Tweedie – Health/Sanitation**

Councilwoman Tweedie reported that despite the recent heavy rains, there was a decrease in sewer flows which indicates that much of the flow can be attributed to ground water infiltration. She noted that the Borough's Environmental Engineer, Natural System Utilities would be conducting a video surveillance of the system to ascertain any leaks and propose appropriate remediation.

**Councilman Carty – Finance/Insurance**

No report.

**Councilwoman Chimenti – Laws, Ordinances & Elections**

Councilwoman Chimenti reported deposits for the month of April 2019 were \$5,738.77.

**Chief DeCarolis – Police**

Chief DeCarolis commended the Far Hills Police Department on their representation at the Memorial Day Parade held Sunday, May 27, 2019. Chief DeCarolis advised that Peapack Road would be closed on June 9, 2019 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. for the Miles for Matheny 5K event. He stated Nixle alerts would be utilized to notify residents.

**Mayor Vallone**

Mayor Vallone echoed Chief DeCarolis on the Memorial Day Parade, commending the Far Hills Police Department on their performance, specifically during the Honor Guard gun salute as well as their professionalism throughout the event. Mayor Vallone also commended the Far Hills-Bedminster Fire Department on their commitment to our community and expressed appreciation for all of their efforts.

Mayor Vallone noted that the Morris Area Freewheelers Revolutionary Ramble Ride was scheduled for June 8, 2019 and informed the Council that bicyclists would be traveling on Route 202, Lake and Liberty Corner Roads as well as utilizing the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds as a rest stop.

He encouraged all to attend the upcoming Essex Horse Trials event scheduled for June 21-23, 2019 at Moorland Farm featuring numerous equestrian events, food courts and an antique car show.

In Councilman Surks absence, Mayor Vallone updated the Council on the NJDOT Local Aid grants for improvements to both Douglas and Minebrook Roads both via a shared services agreement with Bernards Township. The Douglas Road project is anticipated to go out to bid next month with construction to commence summer 2019. The Minebrook Road project, due to a less than anticipated grant award, pending NJDOT approval will be bifurcated into two separate sections.

Mayor Vallone shared a letter of appreciation from the VNA acknowledging the Borough's continued support of their organization.

Lastly, Mayor Vallone indicated that the Borough of Far Hills would be celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in April 2021 and indicated that Council President Karner and his wife, Janis Pulton-Vallone have agreed to co-chair the committee to organize this community wide celebratory event.

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

5/13/19 – Regular Meeting

Motion by Councilwoman Chimenti, seconded by Mayor Vallone, was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content and release. Councilwoman Tweedie and Councilman Carty abstained.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **REGULAR AGENDA**

#### **ORDINANCE 2019-03 – AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$81,680.00 FOR VARIOUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

Chief DeCarolis provided a brief description of the police equipment that would be purchased through this capital expenditure.

Motion by Councilman Carty, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie that Ordinance 2019-03 be introduced.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Tweedie, Vallone

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **Resolution 19-078 – Adoption of 2019 Budget**

Mr. Sordillo advised that the Adoption of the 2019 Budget would have to be tabled until the June 10, 2019 as the budget law required a majority of the full membership of the Borough Council be present to approve the resolution.

### **Resolution 19-079 – Authorizing Shared Services Contract - Somerset County Community Development Block Grant and Home Investment Partnership Program**

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Carty, that Resolution 19-079 be approved.

Roll Call:  
Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Tweedie, Vallone  
Nay:  
Abstain:  
Motion Carried

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The items listed within the consent agenda portion of the meeting have been referred to the Borough Council for reading and study and are considered routine and will be enacted with one motion of the Borough Council with no separate discussion. If separate discussion is required, the item may be removed from the agenda by Borough Council action and placed on the regular agenda under new business.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

1. Resolution 19-080 – Authorizing Municipal Youth Services Commission Grant Application
2. Resolution 19-081 – Authorizing Release of Maintenance Bond  
Manhole Sewer Repairs
3. Resolution 19-082 – Authorizing Release of Maintenance Bond  
Lake Road Headwall Repair
4. Resolution 19-083 – Authorizing Waiver for Sign Permit – Miles for Matheny
5. Resolution 19-084 – Authorizing Large Event Permit – Essex Horse Trials
6. Resolution 19-085 – Payment of Bill List

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Carty that Resolutions 19-080 through 19-085 be approved.

Roll Call:  
Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Tweedie, Vallone  
Nay:  
Abstain:  
Motion Carried.

Mayor Vallone addressed a letter received from Mrs. Amy Pressler last week wherein she had requested a retraction of the statement made at the Planning Board and Borough Council meetings in which she was identified as a principle in Preserve Far Hills, Inc. Mrs. Pressler commented that the corporation has been recently dissolved and requested that her name not be mentioned any longer in association with Preserve Far Hills, Inc.

Attorney Sordillo stated that the Borough Council would be entering into Executive Session to review the RPM Development Group and Errico Acres site proposals. He noted that additional information was received on May 23, 2019 from the RPM Development Group with regard to their affordable housing proposal. He also stated that this morning, he and Mr. Banisch met with representatives from Pulte Homes and Melillo Equities regarding the age deed restriction for the market rate units at the Errico Acres site.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – *The Mayor and Council welcome comments from any member of the public. To help facilitate an orderly meeting and to permit the opportunity for anyone who wishes to be heard, speakers shall limit their comments to 5 minutes.*

Frank Semcer, 360 Lake Road, Far Hills as a resident of over thirty years expressed his appreciation to the Borough Council for the time and effort they have dedicated to Far Hills. He stated that the Preserve Far Hills Group was organized in an effort to increase transparency and to review the information that

led to the Borough's selection of the 134 unit affordable housing project at the Errico Acres site as opposed to a self-funded project. He also indicated that residents would be willing to serve on a committee to review the documents and analyze the data. Mr. Semcer also stated that Preserve Far Hills had submitted OPRA requests for information which were denied and was the subject of the current litigation. Mr. Semcer also requested that Lake Road be considered for repaving as its condition has continued to deteriorate.

Mr. Sordillo responded by providing parameters of a valid OPRA request and indicated that requests submitted by Preserve Far Hills were determined, pursuant to case law and GRC guidelines, as being overly broad and not valid requests and were therefore denied.

Jon Sobel, 44 Spring Hollow Road, Far Hills reiterated that he was not suing the Borough and was not a member of the Preserve Far Hills group. He questioned the lack of notification and the inclusion of affordable housing updates on the agendas for several Borough Council and Planning Board meetings. He again requested that an extension of the Fairness Hearing be sought from the court. Mr. Sobel also questioned if adequate notification was provided to residents regarding the October 9, 2018 Errico Acres presentation and highlighted that the resolution authorizing the MOU with Melillo Equities and the Settlement Agreement with Fair Share Housing Center was approved on the same night as the presentation.

Janine Silberberg, 90 Hidden Valley Road, Far Hills questioned the availability of documentation in reference to the self-funding proposal detailed in the recent Borough newsletter. She also requested further clarification pertaining to the timing of the \$800,000.00 donation detailed in the Melillo proposal.

Karen Reilly, 7 Fox Hunt Court, Far Hills sought clarification as to the Borough's obligation regarding its participation in the grant program authorized via resolution at tonight's meeting.

Dr. George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, Far Hills commented that Preserve Far Hills was started as a community organization in order to provide residents a means to obtain information regarding the affordable housing projects in the Borough. He also requested that the Borough Council consider the establishment of a public steering committee, similar to one in Harding Township, with regard to affordable housing.

Cindy Campbell, 81 Peapack Road, Far Hills inquired as to the construction timeline for the Matheny project in order to afford residents an opportunity to provide input regarding the development. She also indicated that she was also in favor of a steering committee. Lastly, she inquired if the developer, Mr. Richard Fox, was contacted regarding an alternative affordable housing proposal.

Mayor Vallone encouraged residents to attend upcoming Planning Board meetings in order to review the affordable housing development plans and to pose any questions directly to the developers and professionals.

There were no further comments from the public.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

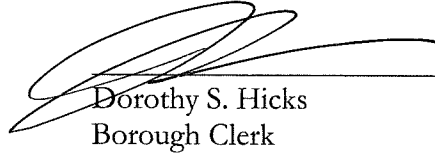
**Resolution 19-086** – Attorney/Client Privilege – Litigation – Affordable Housing

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Carty and unanimously carried to approve Resolution 19-086.

**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Carty and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks  
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 6/10/19