

**BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS**  
Borough Council Regular Meeting  
**MINUTES**  
June 14, 2021  
VIA REMOTE MEETING ACCESS ONLY

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Vallone called the remote meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. 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: Councilman Joseph Carty, Councilwoman Mary Chimenti, Council President David Karner, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie, Councilman Kevin Welsh, Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD

Absent, as Excused: Councilman Ted McLean

Absent:

Also Present: Borough Clerk Dorothy S. Hicks, Borough Attorney Joseph Sordillo, Chief of Police, Michael DeCarolis

**REPORTS**

**Councilman Kevin Welsh – Fire, Water, Light, Buildings & Grounds**

No report.

**Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie – Health/Sanitation**

No report.

**Councilman Joseph Carty – Finance/Insurance**

No report.

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

No report.

**Council President David Karner – Police**

Council President Karner reviewed the May 2021 Police Report. He informed the Council of an armed carjacking that occurred in the Polo Club on June 12, 2021 and commended Corporal Ryan Kamieniecki who successfully apprehended the juvenile suspect.

Council President Karner stated he attended the Community in Crisis meeting on June 10, 2021 and noted the decrease in funding for the DARE police programs.

Lastly, he stated he would be attending the Moving Up Ceremony at the Bedwell Elementary School on June 15, 2021, in the Mayor's absence.

### **Chief Michael DeCarolis**

Chief DeCarolis indicated the carjacking incident at the Polo Club occurred at 9:15 p.m. and was an isolated incident. He acknowledged the neighboring police departments as well as the county dispatch for their support. He stated Corporal Ryan Kamieniecki would be receiving a letter of commendation and letters of thanks would be provided to each supporting police department and agency.

He added that the Law Enforcement Torch Run, which benefits the Special Olympics, came through Far Hills on June 11, 2021 and several Far Hills officers participated in the event.

### **Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD**

On behalf of the Council and Far Hills residents, Mayor Vallone expressed appreciation for the professional and collaborative effort of all involved to successfully apprehend the suspect.

He acknowledged the efforts of the Far Hills Bedminster Fire Department for their organization of this year's Memorial Day Parade.

Mayor Vallone congratulated Councilwoman Chimenti and Councilman Welsh on a successful Primary Election.

He apprised the Council of the Essex Horse Trials event, which would take place on July 16, 17, and 18, 2021 at Moorland Farm. He noted the Far Hills Race Meeting was tentatively scheduled for October 16, 2021 pending further social distancing guidelines.

Lastly, he noted the Far Hills Municipal Building has reopened to the public today but staff schedules would continue to be staggered during a brief transition period in order to accommodate any childcare issues.

## **REGULAR AGENDA PRESENTATION**

### **Far Hills Bedminster Fire Department – Capital Equipment Review**

Fire Chief Matt Draheim presented the five-year capital budget and the 2021 equipment requests for the Far Hills Bedminster Fire Department (FHBFD). He reviewed the current vehicles and the necessary equipment upgrades which included new LED lighting as well as the replacement of the 1992 Pierce Pumper truck. He reviewed the recommendations of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), which indicated a service vehicle over 20 years old should be retired from service.

Council President Karner initially expressed appreciation to the FHBFD for their assistance with the installation of the pennants at the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds and the banner across US Route 202 for the Borough's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. He reviewed the estimated costs of the capital equipment requests for 2021 noting, \$775,000.00 for the new pumper truck; \$30,000.00 for light upgrades and \$5,000.00 for potential hose replacements. It was noted the total costs would be apportioned 20% Borough of Far Hills and 80% Bedminster Township.

Mayor Vallone stated the Borough has been allocating funding annually in preparation for these capital expenses.

Councilman Welsh inquired as to the projected expenses for the remaining years as there were no large capital expenditures noted until 2026. Chief Draheim confirmed that that was correct, as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has repealed the mandate for a radio frequency change,

therefore there was no longer a requirement to replace the current radios. Chief Draheim stated the 1996 Peterbilt Tanker was reviewed by their maintenance company in 2019 and with planned enhancements to this apparatus in 2022, a replacement of this vehicle may not be necessary in 2026.

Council President Karner inquired as to the resale value of the vehicles and equipment. Chief Draheim responded that due to NFPA regulations and the potential liability of selling used equipment, it was difficult to ascertain resale values. He continued that due to the uncertainty of the market for used equipment it was difficult to project a value at the time of disposition; however, he agreed to provide the Borough with estimates in the future.

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

#### **05/24/21 – Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti, was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content and release.

#### **05/24/21 – Executive Session Minutes**

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti, was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content only.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **ORDINANCE – INTRODUCTION**

**ORDINANCE 2021-09** – AN ORDINANCE TO FIX AND DETERMINE THE SALARIES, WAGES OR COMPENSATION TO BE PAID TO CERTAIN OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS, IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET, STATE OF NEW JERSEY.

Ms. Hicks provided an overview of Ordinance 2021-09.

Motion by Councilwoman Chimenti, seconded by Council President Karner that Ordinance 2021-09 be introduced.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Recused:

Motion Carried.

**ORDINANCE 2021-10** - AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS TO TRANSFER AND SELL THE REAL PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS BLOCK 6.28, LOT 1.01, C0101, 18A ASHINGTON CLUB ROAD, TO WILLIAM KOENEN AND EMILY KOENEN, SUBJECT TO THE APPLICABLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESTRICTIONS.

Mr. Sordillo provided an overview of Ordinance 2021-10, which was required in accordance with the Municipal Land Use Law.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Welsh that Ordinance 2021-10 be introduced.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Recused:

Motion Carried.

**ORDINANCE 2021-11** - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2020-15 APPROPRIATING AN ADDITIONAL \$50,000.00 FOR MINE BROOK ROAD IMPROVEMENTS SECTION I AND II.

Mayor Vallone provided an overview of the project and indicated that the Borough was apprised by Bernards Township that additional work was needed in order to complete the project. Mr. Sordillo added that while Bernards Township was providing the engineering and contract oversight, the Borough of Far Hills, as the recipient of the NJDOT Local Aid grant was procedurally responsible for the appropriation of the funds. After the allocation of the grant funds, the project costs would be shared equally between Bernards Township and the Borough of Far Hills.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Carty that Ordinance 2021-11 be introduced.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Recused:

Motion Carried.

### **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 21-092 – Authorizing Refund of Overpayment of Taxes – Various Accounts
2. Resolution 21-093 – Authorizing Refund of Zoning Flood Hazard Review Escrow  
B16 L33 – 141 Peapack Road
3. Resolution 21-094 – Authorizing Payment of Bill List

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Carty that Resolutions 21-092 through 21-094 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Recused:

Motion Carried.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Old Quarry Road Associates, LLC – Bernardsville Solid Waste Facility - Truck Route**

Mayor Vallone provided a brief overview of the solid waste facility in Bernardsville and the proposed truck route, which would traverse on U.S. Route 202 through Far Hills to and from the facility. Mr. Sordillo added the owners, Old Quarry Road Associates, have submitted an application to the NJDEP to run a solid waste facility wherein a component of the NJDEP application was an approval of the proposed truck route. The NJDEP has deferred the review and approval of the truck route to Somerset County. Mr. Sordillo stated that the Borough of Far Hills has submitted letters objecting to the proposed route on numerous counts to Somerset County and the NJDEP.

A general discussion ensued regarding the number and types of trucks that would be utilizing the facility and it was estimated there would be four (4) large transfer trucks and twenty-five (25) to thirty (30) dump trucks per day.

Council President Karner stated he emailed each of the Somerset County Commissioners opposing the proposed truck route through Far Hills and recommended reaching out to the Far Hills Country Day School (FHCDS) and Bedminster Township to garner their support.

Mayor Vallone indicated that he had spoken with the FHCDS and would also reach out to Bedminster's Mayor Larry Jacobs. Information would be provided on the Borough website for residents to reach out to the Somerset County Commissioners.

**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.*

Council President Karner commented that he received a call from a resident regarding noise from fireworks that occurred on June 12, 2021 between 10:45 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Mayor Vallone stated the property owner received the appropriate permit from the Borough Fire Official. A brief discussion ensued regarding the Borough's permitting and noise ordinances. Mr. Sordillo was asked to review the ordinances for possible revisions concerning limiting the hours permitted for future events.

Ms. Hicks informed members of the public that the Borough Council would be adhering to the five-minute time limit for public comment. Members of the public would be advised when one minute remained; and again when thirty seconds remained.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Welsh, was unanimously carried to open the meeting to public comment.

George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired if a mailing could be sent to residents regarding the truck route. He also relayed an incident on June 5, 2021 involving a cyclist while he was driving on Lake Road. Dr. Mellendick stated the cyclist cut into his lane at the bridge and then banged on the hood of his car. Dr. Mellendick videotaped the incident and provided a copy of the video to Far Hills Officer Andrew Perez.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the conduct of cyclists utilizing the roadways in the Borough. Mayor Vallone stated that the Borough had previously contacted the various cycling clubs informing them of requirements for cycling safety and respect to residents when organizing rides through Far Hills.

Charles Schwester, 410 Lake Road, Far Hills commented that the Council should consider rebuilding the fire trucks rather than purchasing new ones as that could be economical beneficial to the Borough. He also inquired as to the sales price for the property at 18A Ashington Club Road and the total cost to the Borough. Lastly, he inquired about obtaining a copy of the Ordinance 803.B as it was referenced in the Residences at Overleigh application.

Ms. Hicks responded an offer of \$191,500.00 was accepted by the Borough for the purchase of 18A Ashington Club Road and briefly reviewed the costs to the Borough. Ms. Hicks suggested that Mr. Schwester send an email requesting a copy of the ordinance and she would review the Land Management Ordinance and provide a copy of section 803.B.

Chief Matt Draheim responded that rebuilding a nearly 30-year-old vehicle would not be as cost effective as presented by Mr. Schwester and indicated that the costs to rebuild could be nearly 75% of the cost of a new vehicle.

Karen Reilly, 7 Fox Hunt Court, Far Hills concurred that the fireworks were extremely loud and rattled her windows and shook her home.

Richard Rinzler, 11 Hurlingham Club Road, Far Hills expressed concern regarding the carjacking incident that occurred in the Polo Club.

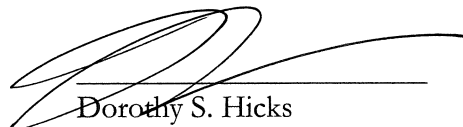
There were no further comments from the public.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie, was unanimously carried to close the meeting to public comment.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks  
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 06-28-21