

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Regular Meeting
MINUTES
November 22, 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, Councilman Ted McLean, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie, Councilman Kevin Welsh, Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD

Absent, as Excused:

Absent:

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

REPORTS

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

Councilman Welsh reported the NJDOT would be removing the tree and branch debris collecting under the Route 202/North Branch of the Raritan River bridge. He acknowledged the efforts of Ms. Hicks for coordinating this remediation.

Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie – Health/Sanitation

No report.

Councilman Ted McLean – Roads

Councilman McLean reported Somerset County has completed the cleaning and jetting of the stormwater inlets throughout the Borough. The County had also submitted an estimate of \$4,000.00 for repairs to damaged guide rails along Lake Road. Lastly, he informed the Council the Borough has received a NJDOT Local Aid FY 2022 grant in the amount of \$209,510.00 for improvements to Dumont Road and DeMun Place.

Councilman Joseph Carty – Finance/Insurance

No report.

Councilwoman Mary Chimenti – Laws and Ordinances

No report.

Council President David Karner – Police

Council President Karner reported that after interviewing several candidates for the position of Police Officer a highly qualified candidate was selected and would be appointed this evening. Council President Karner acknowledged the efforts of Mr. Jack Koury who informed the Borough of a water leak on Far Hills Avenue and Schley Road. New Jersey American Water was contacted and the issue was being investigated.

Chief Michael DeCarolis

Chief DeCarolis apprised the Council of an increase in car thefts in the area and reminded residents to remove valuables from their cars and to lock their doors and garages every day.

Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD

Mayor Vallone expressed his appreciation to the Far Hills Police Department and recognized that residents must take an active part to thwart these crimes by locking their cars and homes.

He also thanked Council President Karner and Councilman Carty for their time and dedication through the interview process and the selection of our new police officer.

Lastly, Mayor Vallone wished everyone a very happy and healthy Thanksgiving.

REGULAR AGENDA**APPROVAL OF MINUTES****11/8/21 – Regular Meeting Minutes**

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

11/8/21 – Executive Session Minutes

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

REGULAR AGENDA**UNFINISHED BUSINESS****PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION****ORDINANCE NO. 2021-13 - AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING TREE REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT REGULATIONS WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS.**

Mr. Sordillo provided a brief overview of the Ordinance and outlined the permit requirement process which helps to ensure the preservation of easements and buffers established in land use and site plan approvals.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Welsh to open the public hearing.

George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, Far Hills suggested that for each tree taken down another tree could be planted in its place.

There were no further comments from the public.

Ms. Hicks advised that the notice of the public hearing was published in the newspaper of record, and that no communication, either written or verbal was received regarding the Ordinance.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman McLean to close the public hearing.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti that Ordinance 2021-13 be adopted.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-15 - AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND REGULATIONS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF FLAGPOLES IN ALL RESIDENTIAL ZONES.

Mayor Vallone stated that the public hearing for Ordinance 2021-15 would be carried to the December 13, 2021 Borough Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 21-139 – Appointment of Police Officer – Patrick Minardi

Chief DeCarolis provided a brief overview of Mr. Minardi's qualifications and stated he was excited to have him join the Far Hills Police Department.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Carty that Resolution 21-139 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

OATH OF OFFICE

Ms. Hicks administered the Oath of Office to Police Officer Patrick Minardi.

Mr. Minardi expressed his appreciation to the Mayor and Council for this opportunity to serve the residents of Far Hills.

RESOLUTIONS, continued

**Resolution 21-140 – Authorizing Submission of Strategic Plan and Acceptance of Award
SHMAYSC Fiscal Year 2022-2023**

Resolution 21-141 – Authorizing Payment of Bill List

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman McLean that Resolutions 21-140 through 21-141 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Karner, McLean, Tweedie, Welsh

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

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.*

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

Charles Schwester, 410 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired about appointment of Ms. Janis Vallone as the Chairperson for the Recreation Committee and the treatment of the \$800,000.00 donation to the Borough from Melillo Equities.

Mr. Sordillo responded that the Recreation Committee was solely an advisory committee and had no authority to spend funds. He explained the use of this payment to the Borough was detailed in the affordable housing agreement with Melillo Equities and funding was allocated for improvements to public amenities and enhancement of the Fairgrounds and Far Hills Village area. Mr. Sordillo further clarified that any expenditure of these funds would need to be authorized by the Borough Council.

There were no further comments from the public.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution 21-142 - Attorney-Client Privilege – Potential Litigation – Notice of Tort Claim – Mr. Charles Schwester

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Carty, was unanimously carried that Resolution 21-142 be approved.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Carty was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 12-13-21