

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Reorganization Meeting
MINUTES
January 4, 2021
Via Remote Meeting Access Only

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vallone called the remote meeting to order at 6:05 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, Councilman Richard Hand, Councilman David Karner, Councilman Ted McLean, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie, Mayor Paul J. Vallone, MD

Absent, as Excused:

Absent:

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

HONORED GUESTS

Somerset County Commissioner, Melonie Marano

REGULAR AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS

OATH OF OFFICE

Clerk Dorothy Hicks administered the Oaths of Office to Sheila Tweedie and Joseph Carty as members of the Borough Council for a three-year term expiring December 31, 2023.

ELECTION OF BOROUGH COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Carty to nominate Councilman Karner as Council President for a one-year term expiring December 31, 2021.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Chimenti, Hand, McLean, Tweedie

Nay:

Abstain: Karner

Motion Carried.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS

Mayor's Address – State of the Borough:

Dear Members of the Borough Council, Distinguished Guests, Neighbors and Friends,

Like many of you, I am pleased to welcome a new year and say goodbye to 2020. 2020 started like every year, with hope and promise for health, happiness and prosperity for our families, friends, our children and our communities. Then five letters and 2 numbers, known as COVID-19 came into our lives, our families' lives, our communities, and our country and the rest as they say is history.

I will not belabor the obvious, we all know how devastating this has been for many and how this pandemic has changed the way we live, work and play. But, America has something that helped us through many crises in the past, through Polio, through World War II, through the Great Depression, through AIDS, through Ebola. We are resilient, we are forward thinking, we are problem solvers and we are a country with a vision toward the future with the means to solve problems, and not be defined by them. And so in that vein, let's briefly look back for a moment and recount what we have accomplished here in Far Hills.

We have kept our residents safe by working with and coordinating with the Police, Somerset Board of Health and the Governor's office. We have kept our PPE supplies and closed the Municipal Building to the public, yet continued to have meetings via Zoom. We have continued to provide infrastructure repair with repaving of Liberty Corner Road, and Mine Brook Road in conjunction with our neighbors in Bernards Township, the repair of and paving of Prospect Street and the new drainage system on Dumont Road to help ameliorate drainage issues. We have proposed and are seeking funding for additional road projects as well. We have after much hard work had the COAH plan this past December certified by the Court and Far Hills has been commended by the Court for the job done on this difficult issue. We have continued to keep our taxes low by planning well ahead for difficult times despite the loss of revenue from the VNA events as well as the equestrian events and the Far Hills Race which all had to be cancelled in 2020.

We continue to share services such as our Far Hills Bedminster Fire Department and EMS. We are also very proud of our Clarence-Dillon Library for providing a great Community Center with educational events and materials. We have added a Police Officer to replace the one who left us, and additional support staff at the municipal building to further assist our residents. So, yes despite COVID-19, we have been very busy and very productive.

As we look forward to 2021, the unknown factor of COVID-19 continues but our plans are undaunted. We are planning for Far Hills turning 100 with Council President Karner and my wife Janis Vallone spearheading a great community event on May 15th, with a parade and a picnic for Far Hills residents, a time capsule burying and a proclamation to take place, plan to attend.

Road projects will continue pending NJDOT grants, and we'll continue Fairground improvements, a place where our residents enjoy walking, relaxing and walking their dogs on a leash, of course. We are working toward restoring the large events with the VNA and Far Hills Race Association and continue to seek guidance from the Governor's office regarding these much anticipated events in 2021.

We continue to look at and explore options to maximize our purchasing dollars and financial relationships so that our fiscal conditions remain strong. The Council and I will continue to do everything possible to keep our taxes low, which we have done very successfully for the last 10 years.

My dear friends and neighbors, the state of the Borough of Far Hills remains very good, we will continue to safeguard the health of our employees and will continue to keep Far Hills a place we are proud to call home.

Thank you and God Bless America

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 is considered routine and will be enacted with one motion 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 21-001 – Establishing Rules and Procedures for the Conduct of Business at Borough Council Meetings
2. Resolution 21-002 – Establishing 2021 Borough Council Meeting Dates
3. Resolution 21-003 – Establishing Fee for Public Meeting Notice
4. Resolution 21-004 – Designation of Official Newspapers
5. Resolution 21-005 – Temporary Appropriations for Operating Purposes
6. Resolution 21-006 – Tax Grace & Interest on Delinquent Taxes
7. Resolution 21-007 – Designation of Depositories for Borough Funds
8. Resolution 21-008 – Designation of Signatories for Borough Accounts
9. Resolution 21-009 – Authorization of Payroll Signatures
10. Resolution 21-010 – Authorizing Opening of Petty Cash Account
11. Resolution 21-011 – Authorizing a Cash Management Plan
12. Resolution 21-012 – Authorizing Mileage Reimbursement
13. Resolution 21-013 – Authorizing Municipal Attorney to File Corrective Appeals with the Somerset County Board of Taxation
14. Resolution 21-014 – Authorizing Flexible Spending Account
15. Resolution 21-015 – Authorizing Mileage Stipend
16. Resolution 21-016 – Authorizing the CFO to Approve Payment of Bills
17. Resolution 21-017 – Authorizing Tax Collector to Cancel Tax Payments/Refunds
18. Resolution 21-018 – Appointment – Personnel
19. Resolution 21-019 – Appointment – Boards, Committees and Commissions
20. Resolution 21-020 – Appointment – Recommendations to the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders
21. Resolution 21-021 – Appointment – Somerset County Wastewater Management Planning Committee
22. Resolution 21-022 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Attorney DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC
23. Resolution 21-023 – Professional Services Contract, Bond Counsel Hawkins Delafield & Wood, LLP
24. Resolution 21-024 – Professional Services Contract, Certified Municipal Recycling Coordinator Kevin Murray
25. Resolution 21-025 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Engineer Ferriero Engineering
26. Resolution 21-026 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Labor Counsel Trimboli & Prusinowski, LLC
27. Resolution 21-027 – Professional Services Contract, Borough Planner Banisch Associates, Inc.
28. Resolution 21-028 – Professional Services Contract, Environmental Engineer Natural Systems Utilities, Inc.

RESOLUTIONS, continued

29. Resolution 21-029 – Professional Services Contract, Municipal Accountant/Auditor
Nisivoccia, LLP
30. Resolution 21-030 – Professional Services Contract, Municipal Prosecutor
DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC
31. Resolution 21-031 – Appointment, Alternate Municipal Prosecutor
DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC
32. Resolution 21-032 – Professional Services Contract, Municipal Public Defender
Mitzner & Mitzner, PA
33. Resolution 21-033 – Professional Services Contract, Alternate Municipal Public Defender
Kuchinsky and Rotunno, PC
34. Resolution 21-034 – Professional Services Contract, Reassessment Services
Assessor Services, LLC
35. Resolution 21-035 – Professional Services Contract, Special Counsel
Surenian, Edwards & Nolan, LLC
36. Resolution 21-036 – Professional Services Contract, Court Interpreter
Accurate Language Services, LLC
37. Resolution 21-037 – Professional Services Contract, HR Consultant
People Management, Inc.
38. Resolution 21-038 – Professional Services Contract, Stormwater Management
Stormwater Compliance Solutions, LLC
39. Resolution 21-039 – Award of Contract – Animal Control
Animal Control Solutions, LLC
40. Resolution 21-040 – Appointment and Award of Contract, Risk Management Consultant
Meeker, Sharkey & Hurley
41. Resolution 21-041 – Authorizing Interlocal Agreement Contract
Somerset County Department of Health

Motion by Councilman Carty seconded by Council President Karner that Resolutions 21-001 through 20-041 be approved.

Roll Call:

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

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION

Borough Council Committee Appointments for 2021

Mayor Vallone reviewed the appointments for 2021 and it was the consensus of the Borough Council that the appointments be accepted.

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 Councilwoman Tweedie to open the meeting to public comment.


There were no comments from the public.

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

ADJOURNMENT TO REGULAR MEETING

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 1/25/21