

**BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS**  
Borough Council Regular Meeting  
**MINUTES**  
October 11, 2022  
IN PERSON MEETING AT MUNICIPAL BUILDING

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Karner called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and read the open public meetings statement in accordance with the law.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Karner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Councilman Joseph Carty, Councilwoman Chimenti, Councilman Ted McLean, Councilman Rick Rinzler, Councilwoman Sheila Tweedie, Council President Kevin Welsh, Mayor David Karner

Absent, as excused:

Also Present: Deputy Borough Clerk Samantha D'Antuono, Police Chief Michael DeCarolis, Borough Attorney Joseph Sordillo

**REPORTS**

**Council President Kevin Welsh – Fire, Water, Light, Buildings & Grounds**

Council President Welsh stated the Borough contracted with Baza Landscaping to remediate the overgrown brush on Railroad Avenue however upon their arrival the situation had been remediated by an unknown source.

Council President Welsh advised the VNA sale had been completed with minor damage to the track and field areas. After a walkthrough of the Fairgrounds with VNA representatives it was decided remediation of the minor damage would commence immediately.

**Councilwoman Tweedie – Health/Sanitation**

Councilwoman Tweedie stated the STAB meeting was scheduled for October 13, 2022 where the agenda includes discussion on the county and state/federal grant. Councilwoman Tweedie stated Mr. McCatharn was expected to provide an overview on projects to be completed utilizing the acquired funds.

**Councilman Ted McLean – Roads**

No report.

**Carty – Finance/Insurance**

No report.

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

Councilwoman reported the Court proceedings were continuing to be held via Zoom as Municipal Judge Katty Wong-Taylor explained the Vicinage was denying in-person court hearings. She explained, only cases that met specific criteria would be held in-person until further notice. Councilwoman Chimenti stated court was in session on October 11, 2022 and there was no one in attendance. She stated bench warrants would be issued for specific cases that are required to attend court in-person but do not show up which will require more administrative involvement. She added, Court Administrator Marjorie Freeman had returned to work and is doing well.

### **Councilman Rinzler - Police**

Councilman Rinzler provided a brief overview of statistical data from the monthly police report submitted by Chief DeCarolis. He added, Chief DeCarolis increased patrol and enforcement in the area of Peapack Road at the crosswalks as discussed in the previous Borough Council meeting.

Councilman Rinzler stated Officer Finnerty, while on vacation was on scene where an individual collapsed and he initiated CPR, ultimately reviving the subject. In addition, as a result of a motor vehicle stop Officer Merkle apprehended suspects with multiple local felony involvements.

### **Chief DeCarolis**

Chief DeCarolis provided details on a request for mutual aid in a neighboring town whereas a result, Officer Merkle was able to initiate a motor vehicle stop of the suspect vehicle resulting in the apprehension of multiple subjects involved in burglary and other charges as it was an ongoing investigation. Chief DeCarolis noted these subjects were believed to be involved in the numerous motor vehicle break-ins throughout the surrounding areas including Natirar.

Additionally, Chief DeCarolis stated the VNA was a successful event without any major incidents. Minor incidents involved syncopal episodes possibly due to heat and an ankle injury.

Chief DeCarolis indicated the Law Enforcement and Emergency Services meeting occurred with the Far Hills Race Meeting Association and all participants were well prepared for the event. He mentioned meteorologic data indicating pleasant weather with no rain anticipated.

### **Mayor Karner**

Mayor Karner provided a brief synopsis of important event dates including the Far Hills Race Meeting event and Election Day. Mayor Karner commented on the success of the AVN sale and indicated the contractors for the barn repairs on the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds have been contracted to complete repairs and painting prior to inclement weather.

Mayor Karner explained with the Borough CFO, Debra Stern out on bereavement, on behalf of the Borough Council, expressed appreciation to personnel specifically Sarah Housman who was paramount in ensuring the finance department continued to run smoothly during an unexpected shift in personnel. Mayor Karner expressed gratitude to Dorothy Hicks for her assistance with Borough business while she was on vacation.

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

#### **9/26/22 – Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Councilman Rinzler, seconded by Councilwoman Chimenti, was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content and release.

#### **9/26/22 – Executive Session Minutes**

Motion by Council President Welsh, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie, was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content only

#### **10/7/22 – Special Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Councilman McLean, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie, was unanimously carried that these minutes be approved for content and release.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

The items listed within the Consent Agenda portion of the meeting have been referred to the Borough Council for reading and study; a copy placed on the table in the meeting room 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 22-140 – Authorizing Change Order - Not-To-Exceed – Surenian, Edwards & Nolan, LLC
2. Resolution 22-141 – Authorizing Refund of Overpayment of Taxes
3. Resolution 22-142 – Designation of Signatories for Borough Accounts
4. Resolution 22-143 – Authorizing Payment of Bill List

Mr. Sordillo provided a brief overview regarding Resolution 22-140.

Motion by Councilman McLean, seconded by Councilwoman Tweedie that Resolutions 22-140 through 22-143 be approved.

Roll Call:

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

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Mayor Karner provided a brief statement regarding a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the financial/fiscal impact statement for the Residences at Overleigh development. He stated details were finalized and input from multiple sources was taken into consideration. He recommended that himself, Council President Welsh, or Mr. Sordillo be contacted for further details on the firms that will be receiving the RFP directly from the Borough.

Mr. Sordillo added that the RFP would be sent to the four firms that have contacted the Borough but will also be available to alternative firms. The RFP will be posted on the Borough website.

**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 Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Rinzler to open the meeting to public comment.

Charles Schwester, 410 Lake Road, Far Hills inquired as to number of firms the Borough Council will retain for the financial impact study for the Errico Acres/Residences at Overleigh development.

Mayor Karner indicated one firm would be selected however two firms will be retained if the Borough Council deems it necessary.

Mr. Schwester queried the level of involvement the developers will have in the selection process.

Mr. Sordillo advised although the input provided by the developer would be taken into consideration, the Borough Council will ultimately select the firm. A brief discussion ensued regarding a second financial/fiscal impact study.

Mr. Schwester inquired if the AVN was responsible for repairs to the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds as it pertains to the bi-annual Rummage Sale as well as the funds received by the Borough.

Mayor Karner confirmed the AVN is responsible for repairs and Council President Welsh has already reviewed the repairs that are required with representatives from the AVN.

Council President Welsh provided an overview of the process before and after the sale. Mayor Karner provided statistics regarding the funds the Borough received from the rummage sales.

Mr. Schwester queried the expected attendance for the upcoming Far Hills Race Meeting.

Chief DeCarolis provided an anticipated number of attendees at 30,000.

Mark Vogel, 5 Spring Street, Far Hills provided a brief background on the growth of American democracy, commending the members of the Borough Council for their participation in the process. In an effort to increase attendance at the meetings, Mr. Vogel requested the Borough Council consider hybrid meetings.

Councilwoman Tweedie stated consideration had been made in the past however the logistics electronically are beyond what the Borough has the resources for. She provided examples of concerns that arise during hybrid meetings.

Councilman Rinzler encouraged residents to provide information verbally to other residents to encourage attendance.

Mr. Vogel commended the Chief and Police Department for their increased presence on Peapack Road. He also expressed appreciation for the addition of the two picnic tables that were recently installed at the large pavilion at the fairgrounds.

Dr. George Mellendick, 260 Lake Road, Far Hills echoed the statements of Mr. Vogel, agreeing that attendance at the meetings was paramount suggesting a possible call-in option.

Dr. Mellendick expressed appreciation for the hard work involved with ensuring an increase in vehicular traffic due to recent large events locally, did not result in any motor vehicle crashes.

A brief discussion regarding the Rummage Sale continued, where Council President Welsh confirmed the color of the sheds to be reconditioned was Hunter Green with Dove White trim.

Dr. Mellendick applauded Mayor Karner for reaffirming at a recent Planning Board meeting, the public would have ample time to review the material regarding the Residences at Overleigh development prior to the Borough Council authorizing the final documentation.

There were no further comments from the public.

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Councilman Rinzler to close the meeting to public comment.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

### **Resolution 22-144**

- Attorney Client Privilege – Litigation – Affordable Housing Litigation
- Attorney Client Privilege – Special Counsel – Affordable Housing

Motion by Councilwoman Tweedie, seconded by Council President Welsh was unanimously carried to approve Resolution 22-144.

## RETURN TO OPEN SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT

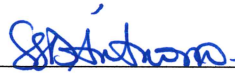
Upon return to open session, Mayor Karner stated NJ employee health insurance benefits are increasing by 3% while municipal health insurance benefits are increasing by 24%. Mayor Karner encouraged the Borough Council and Borough employees to submit a letter to the legislature opposing the drastic increase in benefits for municipal employees as opposed to the 3% increase for state employees. Mayor Karner suggested a template for the letter be included in the seasonal newsletter provided to residents.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the technical difficulties associated with hybrid meetings.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the new addition of the picnic tables at the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds. It was also noted that the playground equipment, which was deemed unsafe by the Borough's insurance company and had been cordoned off, was unanimously agreed to be completely removed.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Samantha D'Antuono  
Deputy Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 10/24/2022