

BOROUGH OF FAR HILLS
Borough Council Regular Meeting
MINUTES
January 2, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Welsh called the meeting to order at 6:48 p.m. at the Far Hills Municipal Building and read the open public meetings statement in accordance with the law.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilman Joseph Carty (via phone), Councilman Peter J. Coccoziello, Jr. (via phone), Council President David P. Karner, Councilman Rick Rinzler, Councilman Charles P. Schwester, Mayor Kevin P. Welsh

Absent, as Excused: Councilwoman Mary Chimenti

Absent:

Also Present: Borough Clerk Dorothy S. Hicks, Borough Attorney Albert Cruz

REPORTS

Councilman Joseph Carty – Police

No report.

Councilman Coccoziello - Fire, Water, Light, Buildings & Grounds

Councilman Coccoziello stated that he looks forward to working together with both Mayor Welsh and Council President Karner on this new assignment in order to meet the goals and objectives of the Borough. He also looks forward to any feedback from our residents at the January 22, 2024 meeting.

Council President Karner – Laws & Ordinances

Council President Karner stated he will work with Councilwomen Chimenti during this transition as well as offering his assistance to Councilman Coccoziello in his new role.

He noted that due to the flooding at the fairgrounds there were a few areas that needed to be addressed, especially indicting that an electrician has been asked to restore the power to the holiday tree.

Councilman Rinzler – Finance & Insurance

No report.

Councilman Schwester – Roads

Councilman Schwester stated he would be working with Councilman Coccoziello to get up to speed regarding the road conditions throughout the Borough. He also indicated that he would be reviewing the maps and contract documentation in order to prepare a comprehensive report at the next meeting.

Mayor Welsh

Mayor Welsh stated he was looking forward to 2024 and thanked each and every member of the Borough Council for their time and dedication.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 24-040 - Professional Services Contract, Civil Engineering Services - Carroll Engineering of NJ, LLC

Mayor Welsh stated that Carroll Engineering would be conducting a review of the site plans concerning the retaining wall issue at the Errico Acres (Pulte Homes/Kimbolton) development.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Rinzler that Resolution 24-040 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Coccoziello, Karner, Rinzler, Schwester

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Resolution 24-041 – Urging the New Jersey Legislature Not to Adopt Assembly No. 4 Amendments to the NJ Fair Housing Act

Mr. Cruz provided a brief overview regarding this pending legislation which if adopted would make substantial amendments to the New Jersey Fair Housing Act that currently governs affordable housing throughout the state of New Jersey. Mr. Cruz stated that the Borough's Judgment of Compliance and Repose expires in July 2025 when the fourth round of affordable housing obligations would commence.

He noted that this legislation was introduced on December 18, 2023 and the legislature was looking to adopt Assembly No. 4 during this lame duck session which ends on January 8, 2024 providing only twenty-one (21) days for all interested parties to review and assess its impact. He opined it was a noticeably short period of time to address an extremely complex issue.

Mr. Cruz continued by informing the Council that there was currently a lawsuit filed in the NJ Superior Court Appellate division, compelling the Governor to reconstitute the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) which was a balanced representation of parties associated with affordable housing. He noted that there is a concern regarding the adoption of Assembly No. 4 prior to the resolution of the appellate division lawsuit.

The Borough's Special Counsel for Affordable Housing, Mr. Jeffrey Surenian has recommended the Borough reach out to the respective district legislators and governor to ask that Assembly No. 4 not be adopted. Mr. Cruz indicated that one of the most effective ways of communicating this is through a resolution. Ms. Hicks was asked to post this information on the website.

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Rinzler that Resolution 24-041 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Coccoziello, Karner, Rinzler, Schwester

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Resolution 24-042 – Professional Service Contract, Board of Health Attorney - DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, PC

Councilman Rinzler stated that this contract requires additional review. A brief discussion ensued resulting in a consensus to award this contract for a period until January 31, 2024 only.

Motion by Councilman Rinzler, seconded by Council President Karner that Resolution 24-042 be approved as amended to award the contract until January 31, 2024 only.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Coccoziello, Karner, Rinzler, Schwester

Nay:

Abstain:

Motion Carried.

Resolution 24-043 – Payment of Bill List

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Rinzler that Resolution 24-043 be approved.

Roll Call:

Aye: Carty, Coccoziello, Karner, Rinzler, Schwester

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.*

Mayor Welsh opened the meeting for public comment.

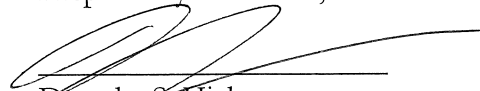
There were no comments from the public.

Mayor Welsh closed the meeting for public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council President Karner, seconded by Councilman Rinzler was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorothy S. Hicks
Borough Clerk

APPROVED – 1-22-2024