

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD
MAYOR AND COUNCIL WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 6, 2024**

PRESENT: Mayor Arvin Amatorio and Council President Hernando Rivera, Council members Buddy Deauna, Thomas A. Lodato, Domingo Almonte, Ora Kornbluth and Marc Pascual (arrived at 8:10 pm)

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Administrator Corey Gallo
Borough Attorney John Schettino
Deputy Borough Clerk Hilda Tavitian

Mayor Amatorio called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. with the reading of the Open Public Meetings Act Statement, "In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the notice requirements have been satisfied. Meeting dates for the year are confirmed at the Annual Meeting. The Annual Notice is sent to the Record, Star Ledger, Twin Boro News, and Cablevision, placed on two Municipal Bulletin Boards and is on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk. Notice of this meeting dated February 2, 2024 was sent to the Record, the Star Ledger, Twin Boro News, and Cablevision, placed on two Municipal Bulletin Boards and posted on the website, and is on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk."

The Salute to the Flag was led by Councilperson Deauna.

AGENDA CHANGES

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth to add to Consent Agenda Resolution 24-080 To Award and Approve Contract – Relocation/Moving Services for New Municipal Building - Executive Liquidation, Inc., Resolution 24-081 To Approve Proposal – Network Supplies and Equipment – CDW Government LLC, and Resolution 24-082 To Approve Proposal – Surveying 2024 Road Improvements Project – Remington & Vernick Engineers. Seconded by Councilperson Rivera. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/BOROUGH ENGINEER

A. Engineering & Inspection Status Report

Robert Klein, borough engineer from Remington & Vernick, stated the sidewalk replacement project work is complete and will have final close out in the spring. The borough paid for approximately 50,000 sq. ft. slabs to be fixed. They anticipate the continuation of paving the roads in the spring that weren't done last year, including Smith Street, Edward Street, and O'Neil Street. Mr. Klein stated they still need to finalize the roads for the road program this year that they received grants for. The resolution is on the agenda for approval tonight. Mr. Klein stated the location for the speed hump program are to be determined. They currently have 20 speed humps on the list.

Borough administrator Gallo stated there are at least 25-30 locations that have been identified. He had a preliminary meeting with the police department and the traffic bureau, with some additional locations being vetted. The various departments will be involved when they have the final list. The speed humps work in slowing people down.

ORDINANCES

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Grant Application Public Hearing for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Green Acres Program, Urban Parks Initiative for Twin Boro Field

1. Presentation on the application.

Robert Keady, Special Projects Engineer from T&M Associates, stated the borough will be submitting a grant application for Twin Boro Park Phase III and part of the process requires a public hearing. Phase I of the project was the installation of the two synthetic turf fields that was also funded by Green Acres, which has been completed. Phase II includes portions of the walkway and the parking lot, which is funded through a TAP grant received.

Mr. Gallo stated the Phase II TAP grant was in the amount of \$750,000 and is federal money that has to be handled separately by an engineer authorized by the federal government. T&M can be the engineer that can do the inspection. Mr. Gallo stated that Phase II of the project has been funded but will take 18 months to two years to complete.

Mr. Keady stated Phase III is the subject of this grant application. They are proposing to install two volleyball courts, one open space pavilion located in the center, three pickleball courts, driveway, and associated parking lots. There will be some ADA spaces, lighting associated with the parking, security fencing along the park and the parking lot. They will have the required signage. The estimated construction total is \$2,397,972.50. Mr. Keady explained in the future, there will be a Phase IV that will have a splash pad, basketball court, and a playground area. Each of the phases will be connected through a pathway system throughout the park. It is a non-matching full grant.

Mayor Amatorio stated the borough's commitment is to develop the parks for the town's kids. The development of this big property started with the field and they wanted to put bike paths and walkways. There are several parks in the area and some people are complaining about pickleball in the neighborhood. He explained putting pickleball in this area would alleviate some of the complaints as this is a bigger, wider area.

Mr. Keady stated the open pavilion will be 40 ft. by 60 ft. The use of the pavilion will be up to the borough. There will be kiosks along the pathway. Loop A is 0.2 miles, loop B is .35 miles, loop C is .15 miles, and loop D, the whole outer, is 0.6 miles. It adds up to 1.25 miles.

Mr. Gallo stated the pool that was there is being renovated to make concession stands and bathrooms. The bathrooms and stands will be done in-house. The pathway will be wide enough, about 12 ft., for an emergency vehicle to get through. There will be lighting for security.

2. Public Comments on the application.

Barry Doll, resident, stated they should be mindful of destroying trees in the area as Bergenfield is a Tree City. He suggested doing away with one of the walkways and build another basketball court instead.

John Smith, resident, inquired about the wooded area to the left. Mr. Smith suggested instead of having three pickleball courts, they should only have two and make the third court for basketball.

He stated recently there have been a lot of injuries from pickleball. The governing body should take into consideration liability of injuries that will occur. He inquired if people will need permits and if it will be on a first come basis. It's going to be open to everyone since the area is Green Acres.

Borough administrator Gallo stated where the old cell tower and gun range are is not designated as Green Acres and has been separated. He stated that area will be cleaned and utilized for DPW to store vehicles. Mr. Gallo stated there won't be any fees for residents. There will be a fee for people from out of town who have organized events.

Jacqueline Romney, resident, inquired if there are any initiatives for pedestrians and bicyclists with the development of this park and what is the town going to do ensure the safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Mr. Keady stated it's a grant application and just a conceptual plan. There is a pathway system that connects to all the paths and amenities that is pedestrian friendly. It promotes pedestrian travel throughout the whole facility.

3. Adoption of Enabling Resolutions.

24-060/To Authorize New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Urban Parks Grant Application

Motion by Councilperson Pascual, second by Council President Rivera, that Resolution #24-060 be approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Council President Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Almonte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

24-061/To Authorize New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Program Grant Application

Motion by Councilperson Pascual, second by Council President Rivera, that Resolution #24-061 be approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Council President Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Almonte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Borough administrator Gallo stated they are moving forward with the building and working very hard. The staff have started packing as well as getting the day-to-day work done. Mr. Gallo stated they sent letters to all residents along Metzler's Brook requesting consent to go onto to their property to clean and dredge the brook in areas based on the DEP permits the borough received. He stated 30 of the 68-70 residents have already given consent. He stated between all the projects, getting the building going, all the other matters, and formalizing the 2024 budget, it's been very busy.

MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORT

Councilperson Lodato

stated last Monday was the Planning Board's Reorganization meeting. Robert Rivas continues as the Chairman. There was one application for a property on Washington Avenue for a minor extension to create a third apartment on the second floor that was approved. There was some concern about parking but was addressed to the satisfaction of the board. The fire department has a fire officer's meeting next week. The only request of the fire department is that the council consider a new apparatus. The average time from the date of purchase of an apparatus to delivery is three years.

Councilperson Deauna

stated Covid activity has increased in Bergen County as of December 2023. RSV cases continue to decline and Influenza cases have increased in New Jersey. There was new member elected to the Board of Health.

Councilperson Almonte

no report.

Councilperson Kornbluth

no report.

Council President Rivera

no report.

Councilperson Pascual

stated the individual who won the Veterans essay contest from Bergenfield will be competing against other essay writers on February 10th at Tom's River. The Veterans are having a Super Bowl watch party at the VFW. For more details, contact John Smith or Sgt. Major Williams. Their next meeting will be on February 17th, 2024. There was a Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting last night. All applications were approved. The new Chairman for the board is Ben Cabrera and addressed the crowd well.

Mayor Amatorio

stated the committees are continuing to reorganize and are planning activities. The borough is busy trying to move and complete small items. The last word is that we will be able to move in March. There will be a room for all the committees to meet. The Planning Board approved one application. The library received a \$600,000 grant to renovate one of the rooms this year.

CORRESPONDENCE

a.) Naylis/Board of Fire Officers

RE: Personnel Action Letter Dated January 17, 2024

b.) O'Malley/Council of Irish Associations of Bergen County

RE: Request for Street Closure for the Annual Bergen County St. Patrick's Day Parade/Sunday, March 10, 2024/Parade at 2:00 p.m. from S. Washington Avenue on West Englewood Avenue, proceeding

north along Washington Avenue to St. John's Roman Catholic Church (line-up at 1:30 p.m.)

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, seconded by Council President Rivera, and all members present voting in favor, to accept Correspondence Items A and B. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sergeant Major Williams, resident, clarified the 6th grade winner of the VFW Pen Essay Contest had won at the local and district level and was now competing throughout the state in Tom's River on February 10, 2024. He expressed his concern of the flag not being half-staff for the three American soldiers killed last week as the Governor had put out an executive order. He stated he is looking into contractors to clean the plaques and monuments in Memorial Park.

Borough administrator Gallo stated the orders come over teletype to the police telecommunications desk only. The police department didn't notify the DPW to lower the flag. He is addressing this issue with the police department.

John Smith, resident, inquired about the grant listed in Resolution 24-071. He inquired if the dirt at Memorial Park is going to be removed. Mr. Smith suggested holding off with paving Bedford Avenue. He stated the owner of 51-59 Bedford Avenue was granted another 6 month extension at the Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting and the property is for sale. He stated they have the permits and there might construction that will ruin a newly paved road.

Borough administrator Gallo stated there is money set aside to make the dirt area all grass and pave the parking lot, where the Little League area is. The area between the pavilion and the Babe Ruth field is going to be all grass.

Diana Flagg, resident, had mentioned at the October meeting that she and her neighbors had all received notices that she didn't have a house number and the other section of town wasn't ever done. She stated that Mr. Gallo was going to look into it, but never heard back from him. Ms. Flagg stated she knew that Governor Murphy had given order to have the flags lowered and she is not on any communication system. She has talked to everyone about people parking illegally in the handicapped spots on Washington Avenue, like the Penske truck, and no one has done anything about it. Cars are parked in spots where there are "No Parking" signs with people not obeying signs. The town has become neglectful and nothing is being done.

Motion by Councilperson Pascual, second by Council President Rivera to close public comments. All present, voting in favor. None opposed.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS TO BE ACTED UPON:

A. CONSENT AGENDA

CONSENT RESOLUTION 24-062. All matters listed below are considered by the Governing Body to be routine in nature. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If any discussion is desired by the Governing Body, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

- a. **24-063**/To Approve Bill List
- b. **24-064**/To Approve Tax Refund – 51 E. Main Street
- c. **24-065**/To Approve Raffle Applications – RA 1412 and RA 1413
- d. **24-066**/To Authorize Refund of Redemption Monies to Outside Lien Holder for TTL#23-00004
- e. **24-067**/To Approve Temporary Emergency Appropriation

- f. **24-068**/To Approve Form 1B – Bergenfield FY25 GCADA Grant
- g. **24-069**/To Approve Revised Agreement Borough Auditor– Lerch Vinci & Bliss, LLP
- h. **24-070**/To Approve Revised Agreement Risk Manager - GJEM-Otterstedt
- i. **24-071**/To Approve Agreement 2023 Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund Municipal Program for Veterans Memorial Park: Basketball and Tennis Court Renovations
- j. **24-072**/To Approve Change Order No. 2 Final – Twin Boro Field Improvements Phase 1 – T&M Associates
- k. **24-073**/To Approve Pay Certificate No. 7 Final – Twin Boro Field Improvements Phase 1 – T&M Associates
- l. **24-074**/To Approve Veteran’s Tax Exemption – 101 Merritt Avenue
- m. **24-075**/To Authorize Advertisement of Bid – Green Acres PAL Field Lighting Improvement Project
- n. **24-076**/To Authorize Surplus Auction GovDeals DPW
- o. **24-077**/To Authorize Surplus Auction GovDeals Borough Hall
- p. **24-078**/To Approve Agreement – Tyco Municipal Animal Control LLC
- q. **24-079**/To Approve Uniform Shared Services Agreement Mid-Bergen Regional Health Commission
- r. **24-080**/To Award and Approve Contract – Relocation/Moving Services for New Municipal Building - Executive Liquidation, Inc.
- s. **24-081**/To Approve Proposal – Network Supplies and Equipment – CDW Government LLC
- t. **24-082**/To Approve Proposal – Surveying 2024 Road Improvements Project – Remington & Vernick Engineers

Motion by Council President Rivera, seconded by Councilperson Kornbluth, to approve Consent Resolution #24-062 as amended.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Council President Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Almonte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>aye</i>

COUNCIL COMMENTS

The Mayor and Council thanked all for coming and wished everyone a good night.

CLOSED SESSION

RESOLUTION 24-083/Authorizing the Governing Body to Enter into Closed Executive Session to discuss:

- A. Attorney/Client Privilege
 - 1. Presentation – Police Off-Duty Work
- B. Personnel
 - 1. Police Department Personnel Matters
 - 2. Borough Staff Personnel Matters

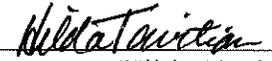
Minutes will be taken of the meeting and released to the public at the time that the matter is resolved. After Closed Executive Session, the Mayor and Council will reconvene in the Executive Chambers to adjourn this public meeting.

On a motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, seconded by Council President Rivera and all present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned to the Closed Session in the Executive Chambers at 9:05 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Council President Rivera, second by Councilperson Pascual and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Hilda Tavitian
Deputy Borough Clerk