



BOROUGH OF OCEANPORT

MAYOR & COUNCIL

MINUTES • OCTOBER 15, 2020

Regular Meeting

REMOTE/VIRTUAL

7:00 PM

Municipal Building, 315 E. Main Street, Oceanport, NJ 07757

- I. **Call to Order:** Mayor Coffey called the meeting to order at 7pm.
- II. **Statement of Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act:** This meeting complies with the Open Public Meetings Act by notification on January 6, 2020 of this location, date and time to the Asbury Park Press and the LINK News and by the posting of same on the municipal bulletin board and Borough Web Site. This meeting further complies with the Open Public Meetings Act by adequate notification on September 28, 2020 of this virtual/remote meeting, its location, date and time to the Asbury Park Press and the Star Ledger and by the posting of same on the municipal bulletin board and Borough Web Site. Mayor Coffey then read the virtual/remote meeting advisory advising the public how to attend and participate during public portions of the meeting
- III. **Flag Salute:** Mayor Coffey led attendees and members of Council in the flag salute.
- IV. **Invocation:** Borough Chaplain Stacy Deerin gave the invocation.
- V. **Roll Call:**

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jay Coffey	Mayor	Remote	
William Deerin	Councilman	Remote	
Richard Gallo	Councilman	Remote	
Bryan Keeshen	Councilman	Remote	
Michael O'Brien	Councilman	Remote	
Thomas Tvrdik	Councilman	Remote	
Meghan Walker	Councilwoman	Remote	
Jeanne Smith	Borough Clerk	Remote	
Donna M. Phelps	Borough Administrator	Remote	
Scott Arnette	Board Attorney	Remote	
Catherine D. LaPorta	Chief Financial Office	Remote	

- VI. **GUEST: FMERA Staff Monthly Update:** Mayor Coffey gave a brief update on the commissary parcel was expected to close for a purchase price of \$4.5 million.
- VII. **Administrators Report:** Ms. Phelps reported on items including status of submissions for reimbursement for the generator at the police department and the last FEMA reimbursement on the municipal complex; the air permit for the generator is still pending from the DEP; receipt of Round 2 reimbursement from the County for the CARES funding in the amount of \$15,597.73 for a to-date total of \$43,173.23; she is working with OEM Coordinator on compiling the Round 3 paperwork— unfortunately the County has advised that the SCBA masks are not considered a reimbursable expense. Ms. Phelps also advised that requirements for personal protective equipment and decreasing revenues were impacting local governments throughout the State. As a result she would be notifying Department Heads including volunteer departments that spending requests above the amount of \$2,000 would require her approval in advance of submission.

Ms. Phelps next brought up discussion on the annual purchase of wreaths from the First Aid Squad for placement on the poles along East Main Street. Currently poles have banners from the Centennial Committee event. If wreaths were installed they would cover the banners. The budget provides for the purchase of 18 wreaths and suggested that 2 be placed at Borough Hall and could also include the library, pavilion and new municipal complex and invited suggestions. Discussion ensued on the importance of continuing to support the First Aid Squad, any alternative item that could be hung from the pole, how long were wreaths displayed,

consider taking the banners down for a time while the wreaths up. Mayor Coffey will contact the Centennial Committee and the First Aid and get back to everyone but thinks we go ahead and place the order and then come up with places to put the wreaths.

Ms. Phelps lastly reported that at the request of the Finance and Administration Committee, she has put together job descriptions for our Department Heads and their staff and requested that they provide her with their comments and suggestions.

VIII. Clerk's Report: Ms. Smith reminded voters that they should have received their Vote-by-Mail ballots and where to call if they haven't; she also advised options for returning ballots and an instructional video available on the website. Ms. Smith advised that based on the Board of Education's decision to not allow use of the buildings for Borough meetings she would proceed with advertising the remainder of the 2020 meetings to be conducted virtually. Lastly, Ms Smith asked if everyone had received and had a chance to review the email from yesterday with the proposed revision to the agreement with Rumson for use of court facilities which would permit the Administrator to extend the agreement should the new municipal complex not be ready in time. As there were no objections, the item was added to the Consent Agenda for action.

IX. Consent Agenda: Ms. Smith advised there were 7 items on the Consent Agenda and described added Item #8.

- #2020-221** 1. Resolution authorizing payment of BILL LIST 10-15-2020
- #2020-222** 2. Resolution extending sunset date for Centennial Celebration Trust Fund
- #2020-223** 3. Resolution authorizing an increase in the Borough's bid threshold
- #2020-224** 4. Resolution awarding contract to C&S Electric for 2020 electrician services
- #2020-225** 5. Resolution awarding contract to Blaze Emergency Equip for 2020 fire equipment services
- #2020-226** 6. Resolution approving participation in the NJ Coastal Coalition
- 7. Receipt & Acceptance of Minutes, Historical Committee, August, 2020
- #2020-227** 8. Resolution approving a revised agreement with Rumson for use of courtroom facilities

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Richard Gallo, Councilman
SECONDER:	William Deerin, Councilman
AYES:	Deerin, Gallo, Keeshen, O'Brien, Tvrdik, Walker

X. Best Practices Inventory 2020:

1. 2020 Best Practices Questions

Chief Financial Officer Katie LaPorta provided a brief explanation of the purpose of the best practices inventory put out by the State annually, the minimum of 16 points required in order to receive 100% of any State aid appropriated for the Borough, reviewed Oceanport's score of 21.5 surpassing the minimum required. Ms. LaPorta briefly reviewed the questions that the Borough received no points and why and invited any questions or discussion from the governing body to which there were none.

XI. Second Reading Ordinances:

#1029 An Ordinance to Amend the Salary Ordinance

Councilman Tvrdik called for the 2nd reading and Public Hearing of an ordinance amending the salary ordinance and asked the Clerk to read the affidavit of publication of the proposed ordinance by title only. **"AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF OCEANPORT, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, STATE OF NEW JERSEY SETTING THE SALARY RANGES OF CERTAIN BOROUGH OFFICERS AND BOROUGH EMPLOYEES"** was published one time in the Asbury Park Press on October 1, 2020.

PUBLIC HEARING: Mayor Coffey opened the meeting for public comment for this ordinance. As no one from the public presented to be heard, the public hearing was closed on a motion by Councilman O'Brien and seconded by Councilman Gallo.

Councilman Tvrdik made a motion to adopt the ordinance and advertise in accordance with law, which was seconded by Councilman O'Brien.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Thomas Tvrdik, Councilman
SECONDER:	Michael O'Brien, Councilman
AYES:	Deerin, Gallo, Keeshen, O'Brien, Tvrdik, Walker

XII. Committee Reports:

1. Councilman Deerin, Parks and Recreation

Councilman Deerin gave details on the Recreation Committee's Trunk or Treat event, still need additional participants and more information was available on the website; waiting for bids on landscapers and cleaning up the parks.

2. Councilman Gallo, Public Works and Engineering

Council President Gallo reported that the 2020 Road Program was finalized and going out to bid next week and delays were related to COVID19; reminded residents leaf collection season underway and to please abide by the guidelines, schedule was in the bulletin and with election time, residents should have received their ballots and the Mayor's message provides information on different ways to send in your ballot and the deadline to vote is November 3rd.

3. Councilman Keeshen, Public Safety

Councilman Keeshen stated there was not much to report that month, fire and first aid continue to answer calls; encouraged residents to support both agencies in their annual fund drives ongoing and reminded motorists that as daylight savings time approaches its getting darker sooner and to please slow down; police have had targeted enforcement in the Blackberry Bay area for speeding and they are working with public works on ways to incorporate in the road programs designs to address the speeding issue.

4. Councilman O'Brien, Finance and Administration

Councilman O'Brien reported that the Finance & Administration Committee was exploring the potential for shared service agreement with neighboring municipality; they've also begun the process of formalizing an organizational chart and roles within the Borough and evaluate as well as identify resources that currently may not be being used efficiently; Councilman O'Brien also made a statement concerning the budget recently approved by the governor following introduction by a Democrat controlled legislation that calls for tax increases of \$700 million, to be levied on wealth individuals, corporations and HMO plans; 2nd only in debt; increases in tolls for the parkway and turnpike and plans to reinstate the sales tax at 7%. It means that the Borough will continue to work diligently to ensure current budgets are met and department heads spending above a certain threshold will require approval from the borough administrator; it also means that they must be more conservative with estimates for both state and county next year. The municipal portion of the tax bill is only a small percentage of what the taxpayer pays. Taxpayers should require the same attention and transparency of the county and schools for without a consistent approach to budgeting responsibly, efforts will be in vain. Councilman O'Brien expressed best wishes to Councilmen Gallo and Keeshen on their bid for re-election and reminded voters to turn in their mail-in ballot and wished everyone a safe and happy Halloween.

Mayor Coffey asked Councilman O'Brien about the provision for direct billing to the municipalities which he confirmed was in there. Discussion continued on the importance of keeping the town a place where residents don't feel pressure to leave town and how much of the budget was a push down from the State.

5. Councilman Tvrdik, Planning and Development Liaison

Councilman Tvrdik reported on items including progress on the new municipal complex – punch list on police and oem building; they are working hard on the municipal building and trying to get done for the end of the year; reported on progress on the land development ordinance with a hopeful introduction to Council next month; the Martelli development is nearly sold out at the old borough hall site and coming together. Councilman Tvrdik also spoke on the volume of construction going on in town and the impacts on the Borough's construction department staff and encouraged the public to be patient and be kind while they are working hard. Councilman Tvrdik also added that properties such as the Martelli site and other new home sites should be aware that it incurs an *added and omitted tax* or an added tax. He gave the

example of his own new construction project; purchased a home in town in 2017, went through the approvals process in 2018, moved forward with demolition sometime around April 2019 which at that point the structure is gone and then you're only paying a land tax. Once the construction is complete and a CO is issued, an assessment comes in for an "added tax" that adds on the tax for the improvement on the land at the end of the quarter. The Martelli development and anybody building a new house in town will experience this process and wanted to explain it because they might not be aware of that but will pay their fair share of taxes when its time.

6. Councilwoman Walker, Health and Human Services Liaison

Councilwoman Walker reported on items including the number of new cases of COVID19, average daily cases in the seventies which is up from the summer months, Oceanport's total number of cases stands at 95; the County offers free COVID testing for a county residents and gave details on where to go; the Oceanport Library continues to be open on Mondays only – patrons not permitted inside without masks; Clean Ocean Action applied for a grant for water sampling of the Shrewsbury River and feeder streams, although grant was denied, they are working with the Water Watch Committee to be able to conduct additional site testing. Councilwoman Walker also reported that the Board of Education search for a new superintendent was underway with a list of candidates to interview; gave dates of their upcoming meetings and public portions; Wolf Hill School was closed one day for in-person instruction; preschool and kindergarten are operational 5 days in person, while grades 1 to 4 are using the AB cohort hybrid model. They are currently working on procuring Plexiglas dividers and more PPE which will allow them to move towards phase 3 of reopening plan. She also provided an update on the schools planned improvements. In September, Shore Regional recognized all the IB diploma recipients and welcomed a new director of curriculum and instruction, and a condensed fall sports season was underway albeit with a lot of restrictions.

XIII. Mayor Coffey's Report: Mayor Coffey first reported on Halloween and the State's 2.5 pages worth of regulations that they would like people to follow which he will post on the Residents Facebook page. Mayor Coffey also advised that there have been a number of reports during this election season of signs being stolen, knocked down and that in Oceanport it was so unnecessary and shouldn't be happening here – makes him sad to read these reports. Mayor Coffey also acknowledged texts and emails from people recognizing the efforts by DPW over the past several months with all the brush pickup with the latest "kudos" coming from over on the Fort and thanked them for a fantastic job. Mayor Coffey also reflected back on Councilman O'Brien's comments about the upcoming budget crunch but hopefully at the local level they can stave off as much as they could no matter how much the State pushes down. On the municipal building, it remains closed to the public - work is getting done and hasn't received many complaints about the lack of general access. Hopefully in the new building they'll be afforded more opportunity because of its size and setup. And most important thing is to get the seniors back in their building. Mayor Coffey also commented on Councilman Tvrdik's omitted seminar – there will be a lot of items coming online including East Gate, the Martelli properties, the Fort being the main driver. By next month there should be a comprehensive analysis of what this would mean projecting out as far as real property values as well as the impacts of added and omitted assessments – mostly added. Mayor Coffey provided the cutoff dates are in October so that they can set the budget. The State has rigorous procedures for those buildings built between Oct. 1 and Jan. 1. While its true that all the addeds will increase demands for municipal services, he believes that the money being brought in as opposed to the services will net positive for the Borough.

XIV. Petitions from the public: Mayor Coffey opened the meeting to petitions from the public. Public was advised to click button on "raise hand" to want to speak, email to publiccomments@oceanportboro.com or call the meeting line at 732.272.8337. While waiting for public to present, there was brief discussion on the garbage in the parks and asked that people please clean up – especially the water bottles.

A raised hand by Henry Wollman was acknowledged but for unknown reasons Mr. Wollman did not speak. Mr. Wollman was encouraged to call the public comments phone number but no phone call was received. Mayor Coffey advised Mr. Wollman to contact him after the meeting to discuss any comments or concerns he had.

As no one else from the public presented, Mayor Coffey closed that portion of the meeting.

- XV. Adjournment:** As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:59 PM on a motion by Councilwoman Walker, seconded by Council President Gallo and approved by Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Smith
BOROUGH CLERK