

BOROUGH OF BERLIN
WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2017
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
59 SOUTH WHITE HORSE PIKE
BERLIN, NJ 08009
7:00 P.M.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

MAYOR BILELLA- Introduced and welcomed Cub Scout Pack #127 the Bear Den who are present tonight to lead us in the flag salute. This leadership requirement must be completed before they can move up to the Weblow's rank. Jonathan, CJ, Nathan, Michael, Jason and James were present.

FLAG SALUTE:

SUNSHINE NOTICE: Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, Pursuant to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231. Said notice has been advertised in the Courier Post and posted on the Borough Hall Bulletin Board showing the date, place and time of said meeting.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Jim Bilella, Council President Jim Pearce, Council Members Miller, Badolato, Rocco, Buchanan, & MacDonnell.

PRESENT ALSO: Solicitor Howard Long, Acting Municipal Clerk Lois J. Sahina and Administrator/CFO Mike Kwasizur

This is our work shop meeting where we discuss borough business as a group and no action will be taken tonight

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

- **BUILDINGS & GROUNDS,** Chairman Len Badolato

He has been approached by some of the elder residents in town and they asked if some sort of quarterly paper with borough news can be put together to inform those residents who do not have or do not know how to use a computer.

We are also in need of an attendant for the Community Center. DPW has been filling in, we really need someone who can do this on a weekly basis when there is open gym on Fridays, and when the center is rented out.

I have also spoken to Councilman Buchanan and John the superintendent of DPW about putting a "Don't block the block" at the corner of Presidential and Franklin Ave. Residents are having a problem getting out of their development and turning onto Franklin Ave and Clementon Road. This is due to the traffic that is created in the morning and afternoon due to the parents dropping off and picking up their children from school.

There are members of the DRVC here tonight to give a short presentation. Keith Koeing explained the upcoming plans of the organization for the 2017 year. Some of our plans are short term goals along with long term goals.

They are looking at street signage along with grant funding and fund raising for the facades of the building in the downtown area. They will be accepting applications and will take one applicant per quarter to start the program. Maggie's Bakery was a test of what the DRVC wants to do with other properties in the downtown area. We are also looking into a 40 two- sided pole banner program. One side of the sign would be sponsored by a business and the other side would highlight a design. They want to look at creating a Village Square area, centered in the Borough Hall area. They also want to continue the Historic Tour at Christmas, along with improving signage for parking. They are going to use a fundraiser based on the Monopoly game in conjunction with the Berlin Athletic Program. They are also hoping to sponsor different events such as the farm fresh vendors. These ideas are projected for 2017 into 2018.

Cindy Williams was also introduced. Cindy is a Berlin resident and is part of the DRVC. She has worked in marketing for many years and is volunteering her time to the DRVC to help launch and position Berlin as a place where people want to come to shop. She wants to take the design and vision of what Berlin could be and make it a reality by working with planners, developers and contractors. This will be a business building program. We want to provide mom and pop stores with things that big businesses don't provide to the public. We will be working with branding, signage, web business, business cards to build a main street design to the down town area.

Phase I will include the areas from the hotel, down to the brewery, the beginning entrance to Jackson Road, Washington Ave, down around the train station, Haines Ave, Taunton Ave and back up to the Borough Hall. It is basically the same route that was taken on the Historic Tour at Christmas time. They will later focus on the area down Broad Street and Park Ave to the outdoor recreation area.

The start of this program will be beginning by the end of this month. This is a sustainable plan that is being launched, not at the tax payers expense. We want to put our re-estate to work because it is currently under performing. Everything will be staged, with pop-up retail and businesses. We want to take advantage of all of the history that Berlin has to offer.

The DRVC will come back to Council meetings as often as they request to update them on their progress and upcoming plans. We are in need of volunteers to co-chair sub committees and get involved.

- **STREETS & ROADS**, Chairman Dan MacDonnell

The work on Tansboro Road will begin to start again with the warm weather approaching. Kushman Avenue has been completed and came in under budget. We will be using the money in other areas that are in need of work.

The traffic light on Cross Keys Road and the Clementon Road Safety Project are being reviewed by the County before it can go out to bid. We are waiting to hear from the NJDOT about the amount of funding we will be receiving for the 2017-year road program.

- **WATER & SEWER, Chairman Ron Rocco**

Improvements have been made to the Harrison Ave Water Main. I am asking that a resolution for the Harrison Avenue project be placed on the upcoming agenda for the next council meeting.

- **HEALTH & RECREATION, Chairman Mike Buchanan**

I would like to ask for a resolution for the 2017 Soccer Grant be put on the next agenda for the next upcoming meeting. I would like the Mayor and Council to acknowledge the Soccer Team Grant so that they have a better chance to qualify.

We are in need of an attendant for the Community Center. If anyone is interested or knows of anyone that would be interested, please contact me. I have contacted a company that is going to put two vending machines in the community center. We are not buying these machines. It is just a convenience to our residents and people who rent the center for functions. We will receive 10% of the proceeds for allowing them to put their machines in our facility.

There are a large number of items that have accumulated at the centers lost and found. We would like people to come to the center and claim their lost items.

Our free rabies clinic is coming up on April 1, 2017. It will be held at the DPW from 10-12 noon. The reminder cards were mailed out this week to residents.

On Saturday, May 13, 2017 will be our first Community Cleanup Day. We will focus on the jug handle on the White Horse Pike, Cross Keys Road and Park Drive. We will plan another cleanup day at a later date.

Erin Maloney will be again heading up Camp Long a Coming this summer. The camp is being extended from 4 weeks to 6 weeks, with the option of campers to attend for 4 or 6 weeks.

I will be at the VFW tomorrow night Wed, March 8, 2017 at 7:30 pm for the open forum to discuss the parking ordinance of boats, campers and RV's. All residents are welcome to discuss their opinions about this ordinance.

- **PUBLIC SAFETY, Chairman Jim Pearce**

Our Fire Chief, Bill Behnke, was been working for months with Collings Lakes to transfer our old ladder truck for their pumper truck. This will cost us no money and the mileage on the pumper truck is far less than what is on the ladder truck. I encourage you to vote yes on his recommendation at our next meeting. I will ask at this time that a resolution for this transfer be created and put on the agenda for the meeting of March 16, 2017.

- FINANCE, Chairman Rick Miller

We are meeting again to work on the budget for the 2017 year. We will be introducing our budget at our April meeting. Last year when I was chairman of Health and Recreation we discussed the widening of the path along Park Drive. Now that the County is finished refurbishing the park on the tennis court side, we are looking to address widening the path.

- MAYOR, Jim Bilella

The new owners of the Berlin Farmers Market will be having a Grand opening on Saturday, April 29, 2017. They have invested a lot of money in remodeling the Mart. They have also signed an agreement with Simon Family Farms to purchase this property. They plan on using half of this property for commercial use and are going to do away with the trailers that are currently in the mart parking lot and construct a warehouse for storage. This property will produce revenue for the borough while the other 10 acres will be purchased by the Borough for open space.

Currently the Borough owns a lot of property. The Borough is not in the business to own property. We provide services to our resident through sewer, water, trash etc.... We want to sell these properties to private owners to bring in revenue. This will help to control taxes.

If you go onto our website, you will find the scholarship application for Eastern High School students who are juniors and seniors. They have a chance to win a scholarship for \$1000.00 towards their college education.

- SOLICITOR, Howard Long

Later on, a closed session personal item needs to be discussed with Mayor and Council. Today I was notified of a ruling that was made on February 8, 2017 by the New Jersey Appellate Division issuing a ruling in the matter of Kean Federation of Teachers v. Morell. This will require a Rice notice to employees, as well as the approval and availability of minutes following open public meetings. The Borough as a public entity is bound by the same set of relevant laws as a university. Employees must be notified before they can be discussed concerning disciplinary actions, hiring, firing or promotions. Any personal issues of any matter. Anytime a person's name is stated directly on the agenda they must receive a Rice Noticed. This does add an additional burden to the Clerk.

- ADMINISTRATOR/CFO, Michael T. Kwasizur

I listed some old police cars on Gove- Deals. Also, the flyers for Camp Long -a Coming are now on our website.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Joe Cliver
24 Delwood Lane
Berlin, NJ 08009

Are we only discussing the parking ordinance tomorrow night because a lot of people have come here tonight to talk about the ordinance? Why can't you focus on vehicles that are not being used? Council President Pearce answered that this is not an issue that this governing body is pushing. We don't want to micro manage this policy. We want to work with residents and feel there can be a compromise for both sides. Our focus is on the police contract and the downtown area and redevelopment.

Pat Armano
7 Rich Ave
Berlin, NJ 08009

Can we talk about the parking ordinance? Mayor Bilella answered that this is the public portion of the meeting and we can talk about the ordinance. We are having a more involved forum tomorrow night at the VFW. Mr. Armano said that the majority of the complaints are coming from one person. I want to know how old this ordinance is? Mayor Bilella responded that the ordinance was established in 1997. We are passively enforcing this ordinance that was put in place twenty years ago. When complaints come in the borough must enforce the ordinance. When a person calls our property maintenance officer makes a decision if there is a problem and if a summons should be given.

Until you can cross the pike safely you can spend hundred million dollars on the down town area And it won't make a difference. Mayor Bilella stated that they are award of this problem and working with the County to fix this problem.

Bob Bigwood
38 Evanin
Berlin, NJ 08009

It seems to be a certain person is behind the harassment about my boat. She has put pictures on Facebook and sending flyers out around my neighborhood. At this point she is harassing me. Mr. Long said that he could not give personnel advice to him, however if he feels she is harassing him over and over and over he can come down to the court office and file a complaint.

Motion to Close Public Portion- Councilman Miller
Sec.; Council President Pearce
Voice Vote - All present were in favor

- **CLOSED SESSION-** To discuss personnel issues

Motion to go into Closed Session, - Councilman Miller
Sec.; - Councilman Badolato
RCV; - All in favor

Motion to go into Open Session, - Councilman MacDonnell
Sec.; - Councilman Rocco
RCV; - All in favor

Mayor Bilella explained that the workshop agenda will be the same generic agenda each month and it will be posted for the rest of the year on our website, unless there is a special meeting, otherwise it will stay the same each month. There are no resolutions or ordinances listed on the workshop agenda.

You will also receive a draft agenda of the upcoming council meeting. This will be provided at the workshop to the governing body only. This will give you the opportunity to review the upcoming resolutions and ordinances.

We also need to have a deadline when resolutions can be submitted. Council meetings are on Thursday nights, so resolutions can be submitted no later than Monday at noon prior to the council meeting. Tuesday the agenda will be published on our website for the Thursday meeting. This will provide transparency to the public in a timely fashion. If a resolution requires spending money or a resolution needs to be walked on, make sure it has been discussed during a prior workshop. For emergency reasons a resolution can be added if needed.

Howard Long stated to be careful what you respond to on social media. Nothing good can come of any of this media. If the public wants to know the truth tell them to come to a meeting.

Councilman Badolato commented that we are in desperate need of an attendant for the Community Center. There are no paper towels and supplies and we need to have the place attended and cleaned. A lot of people who are attending are out of town. We need to get control of who is using the facility, along with hiring a cleaning service. We must keep in mind that this has to be inserted into the budget. The center is to be used to generate revenues. There is also an issue with people renting the center and they can't get onto the courts because of residents using the center at the same time for no fee. This is where the attendant could enforce the court times.

We need to decide on a date for the budget introduction. Our next meeting is April 13, 2017 and this is the first action meeting after the deadline and we must introduce at this point. The budget meeting will be on Wednesday, March 22, 2017 at 6:00 pm. We don't want to introduce and then have to make changes, because it makes things very complicated. Mike also needs time to incorporate adjustments into the budget, this also gives us time to advertise.

Howard will also be holding the JIF session to all governing body members after the next council meeting on March 16, 2017.

Motion to adjourn: Councilman MacDonnell
Sec; Council President Pearce
Voice Vote- All in favor

Lois J. Sahina
Registered Municipal Clerk
March 7, 2017