

BOROUGH OF BERLIN
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2ND, 2016
7:00 PM
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
59 S. WHITE HORSE PIKE
BERLIN NJ

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY MAYOR BILELLA.

FLAG SALUTE LED BY MAYOR BILELLA.

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 Philadelphia Inquirer showing the date, place and time of said meeting.

ROLL CALL: Mayor James Bilella, Council President Jim Pearce, Council members Kupchik, Miller, Badolato, Rocco, Buchanan.

PRESENT ALSO: Solicitor Howard Long and Administrator Charleen Santora

Mayor Bilella addressed members of Council and the public regarding the new format for workshop meetings. At this time, Mayor Bilella stated he has a request from the Downtown Revitalization Committee to speak.

Don Faulk of Faulk Huber Accountants addressed members of council, distributed handouts regarding the establishment of the newly formed committee recognized as the Downtown Revitalization Corp. On board is Cindy Williams who is a consultant, Cassie, Keith Hohing, President, Kevin McHugh, Kris Kolovos, and Jose Hernandez. Mr. Faulk explained they are a NJ non-profit charitable organization, and in the handouts there is a mission statement. The intent is to enhance the downtown area with private investors. The targeted area is from Route 30 and Cross Keys Road, to Washington Avenue. The handouts have a map outlining the area.

Keith Hohing addressed members of council, he is the owner of Comteck, and "The Vault". Mr. Hohing asked that Mayor and Council prepare a resolution giving authority to the Downtown Revitalization Corp to manage the downtown with the Borough giving funding of \$25,000.

Cindy Williams, consultant addressed Mayor and Council. She is a Berlin Resident for 40 years, and has worked in marketing and design for 20 years in redevelopment, and 10 years travelling. She mentioned a main street style funding search, and conducting a visioning campaign. Berlin needs a branding/ identity, it needs to be a community brand. Engage the community first. In about 6 months the group can invite the public, create a web portal to take information, testimonials, stories, get memorabilia and present to

Council. From that we can recruit businesses and get funding. Start with the downtown area that is identified as a part of the culture, and setting. The park is a big asset.

Mr. Hohing introduced Cassie. Cassie mentioned her family is from Berlin, her sister and her family still lives in Berlin, she now lives in Hammonton. When she was in training she met Cindy Williams, who helped her apply for grants for Hammonton. Cassie ran the main street program for 20 years, it's no fast fix. We need to solicit feedback from the community. Cindy came up with a sustainable approach, use the website, and create a monthly newsletter. Mr. Hohing stated he would like to have a follow up meeting, with a Q & A. Mayor Bilella questioned 60 businesses in Hammonton? Cassie commented businesses like Adams, Reyhman, and Heggan relocated to the downtown area, 130 employees came to the downtown area, another is Sadie's Boutique, a Toy Market, Eateries, El Mariacchi a Mexican restaurant came. Hammonton embraced diversity all based on design and signage the big window marketing. There are 5 more retails for more than one year operating. Councilwoman Kupchik if she does this full time for Hammonton. Cassie stated the town invests about \$40,000 per year there are grants, some fundraising, and gaining sponsorships for events engaging banks, and businesses. Mayor Bielella asked who the central contact would be. Mr. Hohing stated he would be, at 160 S. White Horse Pike. Mayor Bilella suggested on setting up a subcommittee, with one person from finance. Mr. Long stated they are set up to accept charitable donations, is the group looking for a resolution? Mr. Hohing added we would like acknowledgement of the group, allow us to work independently, no partnership, use our skills to move things along, more ceremonial, and get the word out, put it on the website. We need a director with skill basis, to get some compensation be a point guard. Mr. Hohing added he will send the information to Mayor Bilella to understand the government interaction programs from the Chamber of Commerce. The Main Street New Jersey program gives access to resources, funding from the Governor. The idea is to have continuity, give one group authority.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- Buildings and Grounds, Councilman Badolato, nothing to discuss, tomorrow will be a meeting with Councilman Rocco, and Councilman Pearce to go over a list of items that was given to council from Mark Mauger DPW, and prioritize that list. Charleen asked if there would be more added to the list, like with the elevator. The generator is being wired into the elevator, making sure the generator will service the elevator, should be ready in the next 2 weeks.
- Streets and Road, Councilman Buchanan, mentioned the pre-treatment of the roads for the snow. He has been in contact with the County DPW Superintendent, we are gaining ground. Brine put down 2 days early is environmentally safe. Councilman Buchanan addressed street signs on County and State Roads. Mayor Bilella stated contacting the County Engineer and schedule a meeting. Councilman Buchanan has been in contact with Hugh Dougherty from Pennoni Associates regarding mutual aid funding for streets, Atlantic and Cushman, a walkability grant which is due in March.

- Water and Sewer, Councilman Rocco mentioned a request was made at the last meeting regarding a sewer odor. It is something that CCMUA is dealing with, and has been fixed. Councilman Rocco has had meetings regarding a water problem on Katherine Avenue with John Allesbrook from DPW and will explore more options next week for a more permanent solution.
- Health and Recreation, Councilman Miller discussed no smoking signs for our Parks, and continues to look into upgrades for the Community Center, such as the key fob system, the security system. The open gym night is going well, about 30 kids there have not been any behavioral issues. Our Attendants mentioned that there is no notification inside when someone is at the door, and he is looking into Comcast/Verizon for internet service so we can view activity remotely. Mr. Long commented the Borough has a franchise agreement, see when that is up, and negotiate terms, mention wiring the Center, along with the school, municipal building. Councilman Miller addressed the chairs at the Community Center are a mess, he is looking into the Vocational School reupholstering them. Also there is some confusion as to who is responsible for what fields, there is conflicting information in researching data, and contracts. He will bring it to Council when he has everything together.
- Public Safety, Councilman Pearce mentioned a meeting with OEM and the Chief regarding submitting the budget for finance. Also, Saturday night is the Installation dinner for the Fire Company, and he would like to present a proclamation for the number of calls 873 in 2015 which is a record amount. We should show our support. The Fire Chief is working on the generator situation as well.
- Finance, Councilwoman Kupchik discussed money we collect for the Library. \$2,900 less than last year. Do we give what we collect, or do we give the same every year? The CFO stated most towns give what is collected more or less. We can take Library surplus transfers for property tax relief. Mayor Bilella mentioned the CFO is working on a budget, and revenue is down, assessments are down. The Library has a separate line item. Mayor Bilella also added that this is more for discussion, not reports. Reports will be presented at the regular Council Meeting.
- Good of the Order of the Borough, General issues, Mayor Bilella addressed P.U.C., the state collects money to provide an energy assessment. It's an energy audit by a State company, there is no cost to the Borough, and we have to collect last year's annual gas and electric bills. There is no obligation. Next, the Mayors Association meeting brought up an issue with Camden County assessment of ALS response times, Virtua Paramedics, Cooper Paramedics, we do not authorize, the State does, we don't report from the County there are no problems in Berlin based on the report. Chief DeLorenzo received an award if anyone is available to attend March 25th at the Mansion in Voorhees, it is a vision award. Our Planning Board has been provided a redevelopment plan, 1996 was the last full master plan that was done. There are issues mentioned then, that are still issues now. If anyone has issues or ideas bring it to the attention of Mayor Bilella, Councilman Rocco, or Dan MacDonnell, Planning Board Chairman.

- Mr. Long asked if Council would like him to move forward with a resolution for the revitalization committee resolution, all agreed. Nothing further.
- General Matters, Charleen Santora, Administrator commented that she is in favor of the new forum. She has some information that needs to be addressed as it is time sensitive. One issue is the agreement with Comcast. It is not due yet, but a letter has been sent to us we should start looking at what we need, and negotiate now. Also PNC Bank is writing us weekly, the lease expires in 2017, will there be a commitment. The annual rent is \$10,490.18 per year. Councilman Pearce suggested renewing the lease, however reviewing raising the rent. Do an analysis, they pay 874.18 per month, no utilities, we plow the lot, Charleen will look into it. Charleen will get a list of Borough properties, and a tenant list. Councilwoman Kupchik mentioned it appears we have about 50 cars that park in our lot from West Berlin Bus Company. Charleen commented there is nowhere else to park, our lot is a public lot and no one is permitted to park on the grass per our ordinance. Councilwoman Kupchik commented on court day, our parking lot is full. She mentioned charging for parking from the Bus Company, Howard Long agreed to look into regulations for that. Charleen mentioned the company Starlight with a quote to have a hand held remote for video and audio of council meetings. We could send the files to anyone over \$11,000, would be better than a camera on a tri pod. She can bring in a spokesman to talk to the building and grounds committee. We are currently paying \$360 per meeting. There was discussion on the animal clinics, and chips being installed in the pets. Councilman Miller spoke to the vet regarding cost for this. The Board of Health takes care of this, there would be 2 cashiers one collecting the Borough Fee, the other collecting the microchip fee. There are approximately 181 animals in the Borough. This would be an optional choice to the pet owner. Charleen addressed a key fob system for her office. She has a busy office with staff members in and out, she will move forward with installation. There was discussion on the reimbursement of funds for the fields. Councilman Pearce commented that the school owns the baseball fields. Charleen questioned this is the dugout and the fence, why is the Borough paying, it's a FEMA reimbursement. Mayor Bilella added that we are in need of ownership in writing and responsibility. Charleen addressed a maintenance bond agreement with Haverhill East, Mayor Bilella mentioned he has a meeting with the HOA and Pennoni. Charleen addressed the Virtua tax abatement will be handled by Mayor Bilella. Mayor Bilella commented on the letter of non-compliance for Historic Preservation has been resolved. Councilman Miller brought up the defibulator battery needs replacement \$128. Charleen showed everyone how to get to the tax payments online now on the Borough web site, you can pay by check or credit card. This went into effect in October. Mayor Bilella discussed social media, and the Borough web page. Councilman Pearce brought up about swift 911, to get the ball rolling. Councilwoman Kupchik commented that reverse 911, global connect at the school with nixile, the fur alert, and the fact that the school wants to share the cost on their program but have the Borough take the lead. Swift 911 can be pursued on both avenues. Councilman Miller spoke with Mayor Magazzu they tailored it for trash, an email blast, have your house phone on it, you choose the

media. Mayor Bilella said we can bring a company in maybe in March, have an idea before the budget is put in, maybe \$5,000 per year, February 24th is a finance meeting. Caucus is the 1st week of March, Workshop meeting. There is no preliminary budget yet. The agenda will show a bond ordinance introduction next Thursday for Capital. CFO is working on it and an email will go out prior to the meeting with a worksheet.

PRIVILEGE OF FLOOR:

Councilman Pearce made a motion to open the meeting up to the public, Councilman Miller seconded the motion.

Appearing from the public is Bill Bansch. Mr. Bansch handed out a brief synopsis of vacant residential properties, along with a copy of an ordinance from Cherry Hill dealing with the registrations of the vacant properties. Banks refuse to sell distressed properties, with this we can place liens on the property for board ups, lawn care, etc. when Borough Officials have to go out to the property and maintain it. Council thanked Mr. Bansch. Councilman Pearce made a motion to closed the public portion, Councilman Badolato seconded the motion. All in favor.

Councilman Pearce made a motion to go into closed session, Councilman Miller seconded the motion. All in favor.

Councilman Pearce made a motion to come out of closed session, Councilman Buchanan seconded the motion. All in favor.

Councilman Pearce made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Councilman Buchanan seconded the motion. All in favor.


Charleen Santora, RMC