

**BOROUGH OF BERLIN**  
**WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2019**  
**MUNICIPAL BUILDING**  
**59 SOUTH WHITE HORSE PIKE**  
**BERLIN, NJ 08009**  
**7:00 P.M.**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

**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 Bilella, Council President Pearce, Council Members Miller, Badolato, Rocco, Buchanan, & MacDonnell.

**PRESENT ALSO:** Solicitor Chris Long, Administrator William Behnke, Police Chief Wilkinson and Municipal Clerk Lois J. Sahina

**COUNCIL DISCUSSION:**

- **BUILDINGS, PARKS, & RECREATION, Chairman Len Badolato**
  - **Municipal Building Parking Lot** - Maser Engineers submitted the plans and cost to have the Borough Hall parking lot restriped and updated to meet the state ADA compliant standards. The cost is \$2910.00. This doesn't include another light that is needed in the parking lot.
  - **Cupula** - Plans are still being discussed with Councilman Miller and Councilman Buchanan about having the cupola repainted.
  - **Street Light Outlets** - Councilman Badolato is in the process of getting three quotes to have outlets installed on the downtown street light poles. This would allow us to light up the wreaths at Christmas.
  - **Department of Transportation** - Councilman MacDonnell is working with Dan Fusco from DOT. They are composing a letter to send to the state with all the issues that need to be addressed including: High visibility cross walks with signage, bump outs and shoulder striping for parking along the downtown area of the White Horse Pike. The State seems very receptive to making these changes and also funding these projects.
  - **Dill House & Heater** - The owner of the old 1800 farmhouse, located on Watsontown New Freedom Road is being renovated. The owners have donated the original heater to place the Dill House. The heaters during the 1800's were shaped in an unusual semi- circle. This will make a unique ecstatic addition to the Dill House as it is being renovated.
  - **Hotel Sign** – Michelle Seacrest is currently designing a sign for the hotel. It will be funded with a small grant that was received from the County.

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

- **2019 Roadway Improvement Project** - The state grant amount that was awarded to Berlin Borough for the 2019 Roadway Improvement Project was \$300,000.00. The total repairs for the 2019 totaled \$486,000.00. The balance will be funded by the Borough. ERI performed a road study for the next five years. This study assessed which borough owned streets will be addressed by year.
- **Resolution & Ordinance** - A resolution needs to be composed to approve the start of the 2019 Roadway Improvement Program.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the amended road opening ordinance will be up for adoption on the May agenda on 4/16/19. Going forward the Borough Engineer will perform all final inspections of all utility road openings and closings. Pennoni will inspect the final milling and paving. He will sign off on the permit and then return it to the Clerk's office. If the street opening is large, escrow will need to be posted in the amount that will be determined by Pennoni. If the whole road needs to be repaved will depend on if the road has been paved within the last five years. The process will insure that the openings are closed correctly.
- **Parking Ordinance Study** - There is a problem with parking in the Lone-a-Coming East Townhouse Community. Pennoni performed a traffic study, which concluded that vehicles can't be parked within 5ft of the driveway depression on both sides. This should solve the problem with both the parking problems and trash can issue. The original parking ordinance will need to be amended to reflect the changes that Pennoni suggested.
- **Franklin Ave & White Horse Pike Intersection** - There was a very serious car accident at the intersection of Franklin Ave & White Horse Pike. Council President Pearce and Councilman Miller created an online petition to obtain signatures to present to the Department of Transportation at both the County and State levels along with a letter of concern and accident reports. The petition already has 2500 signatures. Assemblymen Joe Howarth from the 8<sup>th</sup> legislative district is getting involved with working with the County and State to do whatever he can to rectify this extremely high crash risk intersection.
- **Playground Renovations** - The three playgrounds in the Borough are in need of renovations. A meeting has been scheduled with a landscape architect from ERI. Maintenance, esthetic modifications and drainage will be reviewed. There is money dedicated for this in a trust fund. ERI is currently working on the plans and will submit a proposal and cost.
- **Planning Board Meeting** - A 16 home development by Schaeffer Homes was approved. This development will be on Watsontown-New Freedom Road near the current street of Lincoln Lane and Wyndham Road.

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

- **Funding** - The Borough has been extremely aggressive over the past few years in determining and moving forward with a number of projects in the Sewer & Water Department. Thanks, were extended to all of Council for their help in getting these projects off the ground.

- **Chestnut Avenue Water Tank** - The cost of repainting the inside and outside of the Chestnut Avenue water tower will be 1.7million dollar. Next year this will be the water project. We are currently looking for grants to help fund this project.
- **PUBLIC SAFETY, Chairman Jim Pearce**
  - **Franklin Ave & White Horse Pike Intersection** – There are approximately two accidents per month, along with past fatalities, at this intersection. Measures are being made to bring this problem intersection to the County and States attention. An online petition has been posted with great response from our community.
  - **EMO** -The new Emergency Management Coordinator, Rushi Pandya, will be appointed at our next council meeting. The duties of the EMO are to prepare emergency plans in the event of a bad storm, to help get federal funding, reimbursement for overtime, expenses that accrued from the disaster and the coordination of Red Cross if needed. The compensation for the EMO position is \$5500. Rushi has expressed that he would like to have two deputies instead of one. He would like his compensation to be \$3000 and the remaining of his compensation to be equally split between his two new deputies. Craig Fallstick and Fred Tuttle will be sworn in at our next meeting as the two new EMO Deputies.
  - **Closed Session** - We will need to go into closed session tonight to discuss the Chiefs contract. Chief Wilkinson has been rice noticed.
  - **Chief Wilkinson’s Report & Budget Presentation** - The police budget was not accounted for in the calculating of the 2019 budget. Chief Wilkinson submitted a report and a proposed budget to Council President Pearce. A resolution needs to be created to include this funding. These figures were discussed and he also met with Stacey and went over the Capital Budget. From 2016 to the present, the police department vehicles have gone from leasing to buying. There was discussion about the current type of vehicles that the department owns. Each vehicle runs approximately 100,000 miles before it has to be replaced. Currently, there are a lot of different color cars on the force. Going forward the color & lettering will be consistent on all vehicles. C&M should also be contacted to obtain their rates to fix and maintain the cars on a regular basis. The Chief wants to input a system to have better accountability of how much it costs to maintain each car.
    - The police trailer needs to be replaced. Both Administrator Behnke and Councilman Badolato suggested fixing the trailer instead of purchasing a new one.
    - The replacement of the live scan fingerprint machine, which is mandated by the State, needs to be replaced. It is currently out of order. An extended warranty was placed on this machine.
    - The items that will be removed from this year’s budget and considered for next year were the trailer and live scan machine. The two older vehicles will need to be replaced this year. Debbie will need approval from Council for the final budget number, which came to \$146,000. This figure will include the purchase of two vehicles and also the hiring of one Class II Officer. The Chief also wants to input two lieutenants and do away with one sergeant. An amendment to the current ordinance will need to be done to adjust this number. The ordinance will also state that there will be more than one and not more than two lieutenants. Revamping these positions will help better protect

our town. Next week interviews will be conducted to fill these positions along with promoting someone into the spot of sergeant.

- **COMMUNICATIONS, Chairman Rick Miller**

- **New Web Provider** - The contract has been signed with our new website provider. We will still need the services of Peachtree/Mike Ferrara for approximately seven more months until this gets off the ground. We also own our domain which will make the transition easier.
- **YMCA** - The YMCA is no longer interested in acquiring the community center.
- **Spring Newsletter** - The spring newsletter has gone out to the publishers and will soon be ready for distribution

- **FINANCE, Chairman Mike Buchanan**

- **2018 Audit** - Bowman will be starting the 2018 Audit this week
- **ASFCME Contract** - The contract is still being worked on at this time
- **Debt Roll Off** - At the end of the year, there will be some debt roll off from the general, water and sewer accounts. This will put the Borough in a better position to use newly available funds towards other upcoming projects.
- **Salaries** - Salaries also need to be discussed
- **Berlin AA** - The Berlin AA has always rented out the baseball fields in the past. They will no longer be able to do this. They will suffer a lose of \$10,000 a year. They are looking for subsidized funding from the Borough.
- **Board of Health** - Our local Board of Health has no power to enforce. This can only be done at the County level. Because of this, Councilman Buchanan suggested we decommission the Board of Health.

- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REAL ESTATE, Mayor Jim Bilella**

- **Washington Avenue Speed Study** - The results from the Washington Ave. Speed Study have come back from Pennoni Engineers recommended that eliminating parking on Washington Avenue, would actually increase speeding on Washington Ave. An amendment to our parking ordinance will have to be revisited in order to address parking issues.
- **Safe & Secure** - The Safe & Secure Resolution needs to be added to the next agenda.
- **Complaints** - Hal Talbot has received 67 signed complains from the Lone- a- coming development. It was decided that Mr. Talbot should move forward and send out a letter to the residents to address this problem.

- **SOLICITOR, Howard Long** - We will need to enter into closed session tonight to discuss the contract for the newly appointed Chief of Police.

- **ADMINISTRATOR, Bill Behnke**

- **Verizon Lease** - The new 3% lease agreement has been negotiated and finalized with Verizon
- **Energy Audit** - The free Energy Audit is now complete. An exit interview will be conducted with suggestions on how to help reduce energy costs for the Borough. The audit will include savings suggestions for the Water & Sewer Department along with their pumps.

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR: No one spoke**

**Motion to go into Executive Session** - Council MacDonnell

**Sec.;** Councilman President Pearce

All present were in favor

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion to come out of Executive Session** - Council President Pearce

**Sec.;** Council MacDonnell

All present were in favor

**GOOD OF THE ORDER** - No one spoke

**Motion to adjourn;** Councilman MacDonnell

**Sec.;** Council President Pearce

All present were in Favor

**Lois J. Sahina**  
**Registered Municipal Clerk**

**April 2, 2019**