

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Work Session Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2021

PRESENT: Mayor Ari Bernstein

PRESENT: Councilmembers Liz Homan, Matthew O'Toole
Steve Sasso, and Jim Strauch (*via teleconference*)

ABSENT: Councilmembers Ed O'Connell and Amy Wilczynski

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Attorney Raymond Wiss
Acting Municipal Clerk Michelle Ryan

A Work Session Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale was held in the Municipal Building at 500 West Crescent Avenue, Allendale, NJ on September 23, 2021 and livestreamed via Zoom Webinar. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Mayor Bernstein who reminded the public to mute their devices so as not to distract from the business of the meeting. He advised the public that they would have an opportunity at an appropriate time during the meeting to be heard.

Mayor Bernstein asked that the Acting Municipal Clerk read the open public meetings statement: "In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the notice requirements have been satisfied. The meeting dates for the year are confirmed at the Annual Meeting, are posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building, published in The Record within the first 10 days of the New Year, and copies are sent to The Ridgewood News and Star-Ledger."

Public Comment:

None.

Administration:

A. Agenda Review

Mayor Bernstein stated that for the Regular Session agenda there is an ordinance introduction and six resolutions. He asked if any member had questions; no member replied.

B. Council Reports

Councilman Sasso – Land Use

Councilman Sasso reported that although they have not met since the last Council meeting, the Committee held an adjunct meeting to discuss 5G. Their next meeting is in the process of being scheduled.

Councilwoman Homan – Water, Sewer and Public Utilities

Councilwoman Homan reported that the Water Committee has been incredibly busy speaking with the community and answering questions concerning the proposed water sale to SUEZ. She thanked Layne Simon and the construction code officials for their work in updating the inventory reports, which is now required of water utilities by the NJ DEP. Every time water meters are changed information is collected. Also, she and

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Borough Engineer Mike Vreeland have been working on the necessary documents for putting in a temporary PFAS removal treatment at the New Street Plant. A decision has been made to turn off the West Crescent well until the next steps for such treatment have been determined, hopefully in the near future. While Allendale's water is not in violation, the numbers have trended upwards. This decision will increase bulk water purchases. The Water Committee is tasked with ensuring that Allendale customers receive safe and reliable drinking water and after studying the cost and complexity of meeting this task, she has determined that Allendale does not have the resources or expertise to provide the oversight necessary to do that job. Water regulations are only becoming more onerous and more complex and expensive. Additionally, Allendale has an aging system and as Suez is in the business of treating and distributing water, they have the capability and resources to maintain the system. She explained three components of the water system – the water, cost of the water, and the treatment, storage and distribution of the water. The water resource itself is controlled by the NJ DEP. The Board of Public Utilities governs the rates of the water and the Borough is responsible for its treatment, storage and distribution, of which the Borough is looking to move responsibility to Suez. To address misinformation that is online, a Q&A is being created so that everyone has the correct answers.

Councilman Sasso stated that he could not have summed it up better and that it's about economies of scale.

Mayor Bernstein expressed his full support and the Council's 6-0 vote.

Councilman O'Toole – Administration, Finance and Human Resources

Councilman O'Toole reported the Committee has not held a meeting since the last Council Meeting. On tonight's agenda, the 2021 Capital Budget is being introduced after reviewing all the requests from the different departments and fine tuning with them. The total number is \$810,000 and out of that number \$347,722 is from grants. A note sale occurred, a roll over note for our Capital Ordinance on which the net interest was 0.289. The Borough anticipates sending out the final tax bills by the first week of October.

Councilman O'Connell – Public Safety

Councilman O'Toole gave the report on Councilman O'Connell's behalf. The Public Safety Committee has conducted interviews with the six Chief of Police candidates over the last two evenings. The good news is that there are six incredibly qualified candidates, the bad news is that only one of them will be chosen. Next in the process, the entire Mayor & Council will interview all the candidates next week and thereafter tally up the scores.

Councilman Strauch – Public Works

Councilman Strauch noted that he is entering the final months of his 18th year, sixth term, on the Council and that not a day goes by that he is not amazed by the performance of the DPW. He gave a shout out to Rich McDowell for getting his chemical license so that he could help us treat the water at Crestwood Lake. The Green Team will be meeting on October 5th and they are excited for a field trip to the recycling center that Mr. Kistner is putting together. Councilman Strauch then

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announced that a Styrofoam recycling event will be held on October 30th in Mahwah. He encouraged residents to visit the Borough's website to find out various information about what is happening in town and to sign up for Swift Reach and other social media channels to get trusted and vetted information from the Borough. Finally, he thanked Councilwoman Homan and everyone involved with the work for the sale of the water system. He then gave his reasons for his support of the sale.

Councilwoman Wilczynski - Facilities, Parks and Recreation

Councilwoman Homan read the following comments for Councilwoman Wilczynski: 220 West Crescent Hampshire is still working with the chosen contractor to drill down the costs and do value engineering. This needs to be done before we can complete all of the closing documents such as the municipal facilities agreement. In the meantime, we are setting up meetings with bond counsel to get set up for when we are ready to close, which we are aiming for two months. Thank you to all of the Allendale residents who contributed to making the 9/11 ceremony so special for the 20-year anniversary with a specific thanks to John Gil and Ray Frazier for helping put all of the 40 flags together, Dan Richards for coordinating with Ramsey to hang the big flag, and Rich McDowell for his work to get the fountains operating. It really was an unbelievable evening that doesn't happen except in a community where everybody pulls together and supports each other. It really was such an amazing memorable event for the 9/11 Memorial. The solicitation of bids for phase three and phase four of the streetscape project are on the consent agenda and we look forward to getting the next phases done on the AB&G side, which will start in the spring. The Chamber of Commerce's Allendale Day was a huge success and a huge round of applause to Tyler Yaccarino who was the organizer.

Councilwoman Homan read Councilwoman Wilczynski's comments on the water sale into the record:

The process to sell the water system was a two-year long arduous process of research and studies including an extensive feasibility study. The Water Committee exhausted every possibility to get to this point including going all the way to government officials to ask for information. We no longer have the technical expertise and capability to ensure clean safe affordable drinking water to our residents. The regulations now and in the future coming down from the NJ DEP are stringent requiring technical expertise and updated treatment facilities that we do not have as a municipality. For example, the treatment facility that is currently needed immediately to treat PFAS will cost between seven to ten million dollars. This will not be the end of needed requirements, rather only the beginning. This, in addition to an aging system, led us to seek alternative options. As an elected official, we are tasked to recommend what is best for the Borough. We recommend that selling the Allendale water system is best for the Borough. We already purchase 50 percent of our water from SUEZ and they run operations for us. It's not about control, it's about providing clean safe drinking water at an affordable price.

C. Mayor's Report

Mayor Bernstein gave the following report:

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I want to thank everyone involved, especially Councilwoman Wilczynski, for the beautiful and fitting tribute marking the 20th Anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. I am pleased that so many of our residents and community organizations gathered with us

that day at our memorial and via Facebook Live to remember and honor the victims and heroes. For those that weren't able to join us, a video of the ceremony has been posted on our social media. Thank you to John Gil for doing that. Allendale Day was held this past Saturday. I want to recognize the Chamber of Commerce, and especially Event Chair Tyler Yaccarino, for putting together a nice event that celebrated our community spirit and highlighted our Allendale businesses. Under Upcoming Events, the Allendale Woman's Club will be sponsoring a town wide garage sale on Saturday, October 2nd. More information can be obtained by visiting their website - allendalewomansclub.org. The Holiday Observers will be holding their annual Halloween Poster Painting Contest. Pick up of the painting materials will be on Saturday, October 9th from 7:30am to 12 noon at Red Barn with drop off of the finished paintings on Sunday. For more details, please visit their website at holidayobservers.org

Staff Reports:

Raymond Wiss, Borough Attorney, reported that he has been working with the Clerk's office on various matters, Mr. Kistner on property matters, the Public Safety Committee on interviews as well as working with the Water Committee. It looks like 220 is now getting into a formative stage.

Acting Clerk Michelle Ryan reported that the Clerk's Office is gearing up for the General Election on Tuesday, November 2nd. The Bergen County Clerk's office has sent out Vote by Mail Ballots (VBM's) to those voters who requested them. If anyone doesn't receive their ballot by September 28, they should call the Bergen County Clerk's Office or the Allendale Clerk's Office. In response to Councilwoman Homan, Ms. Ryan stated that she will find out the number of VBM's that have been sent out. Tuesday, October 12th is the last day to register to vote in this General Election and the Clerk's Office will be open until 9:00 pm to accept registration applications. Compost permits, pet licenses and all other constituent services will also be available. Finally, she congratulated Mayor Bernstein who came in third place overall, but first out of the current mayors, at the Hackensack Riverkeepers Kayak Regatta on Sunday September 12th.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilwoman Homan, second by Councilman Sasso, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle Ryan
Acting Municipal Clerk