

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Work Session Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2020

PRESENT: Mayor Ari Bernstein and Councilmembers Edward O’Connell, Matthew O’Toole,
(*in person*) Steve Sasso and Amy Wilczynski

PRESENT: Councilmembers Liz Homan and Jim Strauch
(*via teleconference*)

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Attorney Raymond Wiss
(*in person*) 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 March 26, 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, access to the general public was provided via Webex teleconferencing only, with adequate notice of access information posted for public viewing. The meeting was called to order at 7:30p.m. by Mayor Bernstein who welcomed and thanked everyone for their patience and understanding at this difficult and unprecedented time. He acknowledged everyone’s contribution to stemming the spread of the virus and their commitment to helping to keep Allendale and the community-at-large healthy. He reassured everyone of his confidence in Allendale’s as well as the nation’s resilience and how together we will get through this.

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:

No one from the public came forward.

Administration:

A. Agenda Review

Mayor Bernstein stated that the first item listed on the agenda for approval was the March 12, 2020 Work and Regular Sessions minutes. He noted that Councilmembers Strauch and Wilczynski were absent and would need to abstain, however, Councilwoman Wilczynski announced that she had listened to the entire recording and therefore is eligible to vote.

Mayor Bernstein advised the public that Resolution 20-105 to approve the 2020 Temporary Capital Budget was also on the agenda. He further advised that a copy of the accompanying Ordinance 20-08 would be on the website tomorrow for public view.

Regarding Ordinances 20-03 and 20-04 scheduled for public hearing and second reading for adoption, these ordinances will be tabled until the April 30th meeting in light of the current public health emergency.

Mayor Bernstein mentioned the four ordinances being introduced. He invited Councilwoman Homan to speak on Ordinance 20-05, 2020 Water Capital Ordinance appropriating \$171,000 for

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Work Session Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2020

installation and acquisition of meters, hydrants, generators, interconnection improvements, new IT equipment, well upgrades and treatment equipment to keep our water infrastructure operating at optimal level. Councilwoman Homan said that it was important to note that Layne Simon and Ron Kistner do a good job of working with Suez to manage the infrastructure and plan for the future. Alissa Mayer, CFO, wanted it to be known that this ordinance is a fully funded ordinance with funds coming from the water capital infrastructure line. There are no new bond notes that need to be issued. The \$25 maintenance fee per quarter on everyone's water bill will be used for funding.

Mayor Bernstein also mentioned that Ordinance 20-06 establishes Chapter 26, Section 30.3 of our Code entitled "Special Protection" and sets the provisions and fees for such special police services. Ordinance 20-07 is an ordinance to exceed the municipal budget appropriation limit and to establish a Cap Bank for Calendar Year 2020, which is routinely done prior to budget adoption. Ordinance 20-08 authorizes appropriations of \$1,575,604 for our 2020 General Capital Bond Ordinance which include funds for road improvements; body armor and firearms, radar, IT and communications systems' equipment for our police department; roof replacement at the Firehouse as well as self-contained breathing apparatus, turnout gear, personal protective equipment, radios, pagers and fire suppression equipment for our fire department; a new street sweeper and other equipment for the DPW; playground improvements at Crestwood Lake; and replacement of sewer flow metering equipment at the Ramsey meter pit. Mayor Bernstein announced that copies of all the ordinances would be posted in full on the website tomorrow for the public's view.

Mayor Bernstein then moved to providing a detailed overview of the entire Consent Agenda. He announced that he and the Finance Committee had reviewed the Bill List for Resolution 20-106. Of particular note on the Consent Agenda, he was happy to report that Resolution 20-107 approves a Memorandum of Understanding with the DPW, an important step to finalizing a contract. Resolution 20-108 will allow Allendale to utilize funds, in accordance with State of New Jersey guidelines, from the Storm Recovery Reserves for costs associated with coronavirus response should it be necessary. Resolution 20-109 provides a refund to the property owners of 16 Allison Court for overpayment of taxes. Resolution 20-110 awards 2020 Commercial Grounds Maintenance Services to High Mountain Landscaping, as they have done for the past several years. In response to the difficult and uncertain financial time that COVID-19 has caused, Suez Water, with the support of Allendale, is suspending penalty charges for late water payments through Resolution 20-111. Resolution 20-112 will authorize additional funds in our temporary budget to carry the town through, as is permissible, until the actual budget is adopted.

Mayor Bernstein announced that under New Business the Borough's 2020 Budget was being introduced via Resolution 20-113. He thanked the Council, especially Councilman O'Toole and Councilwoman Wilczynski, and the Financial Advisory Committee for their diligent work. He expressed his sincere gratitude to CFO Alissa Mayer for her dedicated efforts and expertise. He also expressed his appreciation to all the borough departments for their cooperation and mindfulness of the process. He advised that it was not an easy year and that a true collective effort was made.

Mayor Bernstein provided an overview of this year's budget which will be a 3.6% increase over 2019's, resulting in a \$137 increase for the average house assessed at \$661,334. He advised that a full copy of the budget would be up on the website tomorrow for the public to view and that there will be a full presentation and discussion with the borough's CFO and Auditor on May 14th.

With no further discussion on Agenda Review items, Mayor Bernstein moved to Council Reports.

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Work Session Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2020

B. Council Reports

Councilman O'Connell advised that the Public Safety Committee and OEM were in contact daily through emails and holding conference call meetings as necessary. He urged the public to please listen to the OEM messages regarding COVID-19 that are being sent out, to follow the directives being given, and to stay safe. They will continue to provide updates to the public.

Councilman Sasso – Land Use and Construction Code

Councilman Sasso reported that in an abundance of caution, the Land Use & Construction Code Committee's in-person monthly meeting had been cancelled, but that they are continuing to move forward, working with Tom Bouregy on some matters and will be setting up a virtual meeting soon.

Councilwoman Homan – Water, Sewer and Public Utilities

The Water Committee has been holding virtual meetings. Councilwoman Homan provided updates on committee initiatives such as the progress made by Mott MacDonald on the PFAS treatment study. The committee is working with Suez to compile the makeup information of municipally-owned and resident service lines to submit to the DEP, a new mandate. Regarding mutual emergency interconnect agreements, progress has been made with Ramsey and Ridgewood will be voting to execute soon. She expressed her gratitude to Ron Kistner, Layne Simon and Alissa Mayer for all their efforts on the Water Capital Budget. She invited residents to reach out to her, especially during this challenging time, if she can be of assistance.

Councilwoman Wilczynski – Facilities Committee

Councilwoman Wilczynski thanked the residents for their understanding during this challenging time. Allendale's parks remain open as long as people practice social distancing. She encouraged everyone to enjoy the fresh air while being mindful of staying healthy. She also commended OEM Coordinator Scott Zieber, the entire OEM team and Public Safety Committee for doing a fabulous job of communicating to the public. She thanked Tyler Yaccarino, the Borough Webmaster, for all his help making sure the residents stay informed. The Borough is still continuing to work, conducting due diligence on 220/230 to get the best deal for Allendale. The committee is staying on track to submit an Open Space grant application to Bergen County. The Facilities meeting which had been scheduled for today, has been moved to next week and will provide updates on facilities and Crestwood.

Councilman O'Toole – Administration, Finance and Human Resources

Councilman O'Toole reported that the budget is being introduced tonight.

Councilman Strauch – DPW

Councilman Strauch expressed his appreciation to OEM, Public Safety, staff and everyone involved for their efforts during this difficult time. Though he has been self-quarantining, he has kept up with all the emails and messages, and from a resident's standpoint he feels he has been very well kept informed. Regarding his DPW Committee report, they have altered their schedules and operations as necessary to adhere to the new protocols, but work continues. He feels Allendale is fortunate to have a good team led by Ron Kistner.

Regarding expansion and improvement of the borough's recycling program, Councilman Strauch reported that he and Mark Savastano have been discussing ideas and options over phone conferences and in the coming months will be presenting their recommendations to the DPW Committee for evaluation.

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Work Session Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2020

Regarding Allendale's Volunteer Goose Patrol, they are hoping to hold their elections in the second half of April, but are monitoring the current situation and will push them back if necessary. The current vest is valid until December 31, 2020.

C. Mayor's Report

Due to time constraints, this agenda item was carried to the Regular Session.

D. Staff Reports

Due to time constraints, this agenda item was carried to the Regular Session.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilwoman Wilczynski, second by Councilman Sasso, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Michelle Ryan
Acting Municipal Clerk