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*BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY*

*WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES*

*February 16, 2021*

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The regular meeting of the Borough Council of Washington, Warren County, New Jersey was held via ZOOM live stream at 7:00 P.M.

Roll Call: Conry, Duchemin, Heinrich, Noone, Norris, and Higgins.

Also Present: Matthew Hall, Manager  
Laurie A. Barton, Borough Clerk  
Leslie Parikh, Attorney

Absent: Cox

Mayor Higgins led everyone in the flag salute.

Mayor Higgins read the following statement into record:

“The requirements of the Open Public Meetings Law, 1975, Chapter 231, have been satisfied in that adequate notice of this meeting has been published in the Express Times Warren County Edition and posted on the borough website and Facebook stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting as required by law.”

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mel Thiel, BID Executive Director, reported on a spotlight of Frantoni Fashions for Men on CNBC. The video will be on the BIDS website for anyone who wants to see it.

Joan Kopsco, Valley View Terr., inquired about minutes from the previous meeting not on website yet. Mayor Higgins explained that until minutes are approved at a meeting, they won't be available. Ms. Kopsco also stated she didn't see the agenda on website for tonight's meeting. Inquired about the new marijuana law and what will the borough be doing. Attorney Parikh explained that there is no vote and explained on what the borough needs to do to prepare for when this comes into law and when municipalities can opt-in in or out.

Hearing no further public comment, motion made by Conry and seconded by Duchemin to close the public portion, all were in favor.

**MINUTES**

Motion made by Heinrich and seconded by Conry to approve the following minutes:

01/28/2021, 02/02/21 and 02/09/21

Roll Call: Conry, Heinrich, Duchemin, Noone, Norris and Higgins.  
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Abstain 1 (Duchemin from Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting minutes)  
Motion passes.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Library Board appointments:

Motion made by Duchemin and seconded by Conry to approve Mayor Higgins library board appointments:

Andrea Kirchuk and Ian Watts.

Roll Call: Conry, Heinrich, Duchemin, Noone, Norris and Higgins.  
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0  
Motion passes.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Councilman Norris brought up the issue of landlords owning duplexes with no renters and if they are still required to pay the solid waste bill. It was stated that this was discussed at the special meeting and that yes, they will still be required to pay this bill like a sewer bill.

**RESOLUTIONS**

Motion made by Heinrich and seconded by Conry to adopt Resolution 2021-34.

Roll Call: Conry, Heinrich, Duchemin, Noone, Norris and Higgins.  
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0  
Motion passes.

**RESOLUTION 2021-34  
A RESOLUTION FOR REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE  
As per N.J.S.A.54:5**

**KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS THAT, WHEREAS**, lands in the taxing district of Washington Borough, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, were sold on October 22, 2020 to Bala Partners LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979, in the amount of \$1,242.63 for taxes or other municipal liens assessed for the year 2019 in the name of Hartrum, Mildred as supposed owner, and in said assessment and sale were described as 179 East Washington Ave., Block 80 Lot 7, which sale was evidenced by Certificate #20-00033 and

**WHEREAS**, the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of the Borough of Washington, do certify that

on 2-3-21 and before the right to redeem was cut off, as provided by law, PNC Bank claiming to have an interest in said lands, did redeem said lands claimed by Bala Partners LLC by paying the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of Washington Borough the amount of \$6,235.83 which is the amount necessary to redeem Tax Sale Certificate #20-00033.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, on this 16th day of February, 2021 by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren to authorize the Treasurer to issue a check payable to Bala Partners, LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979 in the amount of **\$16,635.83** (This consists of \$6,235.83 Certificate Amount redeemed + \$10,400.00 Premium).

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Tax Collector is authorized to cancel this lien on Block 80 Lot 7 from the tax office records.

Motion made by Conry and seconded by Noone to adopt Resolution 2021-35.

Roll Call: Conry, Heinrich, Duchemin, Noone, Norris and Higgins.  
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0  
Motion passes.

Councilman Heinrich read Resolution 2021-35 in its entirety:

**RESOLUTION 2021-35  
DECLARING FEBRUARY AS BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN THE BOROUGH OF  
WASHINGTON**

February 16, 2021

**WHEREAS**, Black History Month, celebrated during the month of February, originated in 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson, noted scholar and son of former slaves, who founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, set aside a special period in February to recognize the heritage and achievements of Black people in the United States;  
and

**WHEREAS**, President Gerald R. Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected”; and

**WHEREAS**, since 1976, every President has adopted the month of February as Black History Month, an annual celebration of African American achievements and roles in U.S. History; and

**WHEREAS**, Black History Month is a time to reflect on the burdens of racial prejudice and explore, understand, and appreciate the identities and cultures across and within the African diaspora; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Washington recognizes the injustices that African Americans have endured and commends the African American community for the continuous pursuit of overcoming those injustices and changing the course and nature of history; and

**WHEREAS**, we honor the prominent leaders and activists who have paved the way for equality and justice, calling our attention to the continued need to battle racism and to build an equitable society.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Borough of Washington, declares February 2021 as Black History Month, and honors the contributions and sacrifices made in building pride in black history and educating all Americans, as well as many achievements and contributions made by African Americans to our economic, cultural, spiritual, and political development; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we join other organizations throughout the state of New Jersey and this country to use this occasion to raise awareness of the hardships African Americans have endured, celebrate the milestones that have been achieved, and continue the unrelenting pursuit of equality and justice for all.

### **VOUCHERS AND CLAIMS**

Motion made by Heinrich seconded by Norris to pay vouchers and claims.

Roll Call: Conry, Heinrich, Duchemin, Noone, Norris and Higgins.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Motion passes.

## **COUNCIL REMARKS**

Councilman Norris gave the following remarks:

- Stated that he hoped that everyone had a happy Valentines Day. He concurred with everyone's remarks on Black History month.
- Stated that the DPW did a good job in snow removal.

Councilman Heinrich gave the following remarks:

- Stated he was honored to read the resolution tonight in recognizing Black History month and agreed it should be adopted every February.

Councilwoman Duchemin gave the following remarks:

- Urges everyone to support black owned businesses, black artists and creators. To buy black story books, black barbies and toys that children may not otherwise play with. Wished everyone Happy Black History month.

Councilwoman Noone gave the following remarks:

- Wished everyone Black History month and stated that there are events throughout New Jersey celebrating it.
- Stated that Washington Borough is a diverse borough and everyone needs to focus and understand each other and appreciate each other's differences and to care for each other.

Mayor Higgins gave the following remarks:

- Mayor Higgins reiterated comments on Black History month and reflected on a conversation he had being a Marine and how he met an original first-class Tuskegee Airmen who was 97 years old and spoke to him for about an hour. The history lesson he got was phenomenal about the war and coming home.

Deputy Mayor Conry gave the following remarks:

- Announced a Black History program at Kids R Us 2 on Washington Avenue this Saturday from 2-4 pm. Everyone is invited to come. There will be artifacts on display and children's books from black authors.

Mayor Higgins asked for volunteers for a Cannabis Review Committee. Councilman Norris and Councilwoman Duchemin and Noone volunteered to be on committee. Joan Kopsco asked to be part of committee. Mayor Higgins stated to Ms. Kopsco he will wait for legal input on having residents on committee.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no further business, a motion was made by Valle seconded by Conry to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 pm.

Ayes: 6: Nays: 0

Motion Carried.

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Mayor David Higgins

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Laurie A. Barton, Borough Clerk