
BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

May 18, 2021

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, Cox, Duchemin, Heinrich, Noone, Norris, and Higgins.

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

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

Cynthia Valle, McKinley Ave, inquired about sales tax of the sale of cannabis. Stated she is in support of it as long as it is not in the downtown area for retail.

James Jurinko, read a statement regarding a poll for marijuana legislation. Expressed his support for the legislation of legalizing marijuana.

Jodie Meyers, Bayonne, NJ, owner of Rose Bud, stated economic benefits for legalization of marijuana. Stated she is available for help and information for anyone in Washington to answer questions and has resources available as well.

Joshua LaFargue, stated he uses marijuana medically for treatment for PTSD and stated it would be great to have a dispensary in town.

James Post, stated his support for a dispensary in Washington.

Bianca Flora Van Duren Rd., stated her support of a dispensary in downtown.

Chris Caruso, E. Washington Ave. stated facts and his support for the cannabis legislation and having a dispensary in Washington.

Jamie Everitt, Newbold Ct., stated support for the cannabis legislation and stated that she sent in emails with documentation proving facts about marijuana.

Tristian Lafarrier(sp), E. Washington Ave., stated he hopes the Borough opts in for the marijuana legislation and expressed reasons for use of it medically.

Dan Rossi, shared a personal experience with a CBD gummy and stated that he is concerned with a dispensary and doesn't want to smell marijuana in town.

Brian Redfern, supports opting in for the recreational part.

Colleen Redfern, supports the sale of cannabis.

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

MINUTES

Motion made by Noone and seconded by Cox to approve the following minutes.

Regular: May 4, 2021

Executive: May 4, 2021

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

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Abstain: 1(Heinrich)

Motion passes.

OLD BUSINESS

Cannabis Committee Update

Councilwoman Noone gave the update on what the progress the committee has done so far and hopes to get the Land Use Planner on board on crafting ordinances to address the options. Opting in for all classes of permits including retailers and licenses but with the exception of no consumption on premise. Limit retail licenses to two. Charge a licensing fee. Taxing all of the businesses a maximum 2% for retail and 1% wholesale. Strict guidelines for signage. Clear guidelines on times of operation. Absolutely no consumption anywhere on site, needs to be clear in ordinance.

Lengthy discussions ensued with concerns of opting in and supporting the new law and drafting ordinances in time. Attorney Parikh will use a sample ordinance taken from Lambertville and will start working on it.

Motion

Motion made by Noone to prepare an opt out ordinance along the lines of Lambertville's ordinance which gives us time and request the Land Use Board and the Planner to work with Attorney Tara St. Angelo to craft an ordinance to opt in for everything except retail consumption on premises, motion seconded by Cox.

Roll Call: Conry, Cox, Heinrich, Duchemin, Noone, Norris and Higgins.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0

RESOLUTIONS

Motion made by Conry and seconded by Duchemin to open public hearing for Resolution 2021-60 (Budget), all were in favor.

Hearing no public comment, motion to close public hearing made by Noone and seconded by Conry, all were in favor.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-60 made by Conry and seconded by Noone.

Roll Call: Conry, Cox, Heinrich, Duchemin, Noone, Norris and Higgins.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0
Motion passes.

2021 Municipal Budget

of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren for the fiscal year 2021

Revenues and Appropriations Summaries

Summary of Revenues	Anticipated	
	2021	2020
Surplus	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 602,560.19
Total Miscellaneous Revenues	\$ 1,882,042.68	\$ 2,640,561.34
Receipts from Delinquent Taxes	\$ 400,000.00	\$ 408,000.00
a) Local Tax for Municipal Purposes	\$ 5,049,709.06	\$ 5,413,680.88
b) Addition to Local District School Tax		
c) Minimum Library Tax	\$ 149,734.12	\$ 148,383.92
Total Amount to be Raised for Support of Municipal Budget	\$ 5,199,443.18	\$ 5,562,064.80
Total General Revenues	\$ 8,081,485.86	\$ 9,213,186.33

Summary of Appropriations	2021 Budget	Final 2020 Budget
Operating Expenses: Salaries and Wages	\$ 1,230,501.68	\$ 1,273,132.57
Other Expenses	\$ 4,588,360.18	\$ 5,750,584.58
Deferred Charges & Other Appropriations	\$ 266,510.00	\$ 268,049.18
Capital Improvements	\$ 144,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
Debt Service (Included for School)	\$ 1,103,562.00	\$ 1,141,462.00
Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	\$ 748,552.00	\$ 719,958.00
Total General Appropriations	\$ 8,081,485.86	\$ 9,213,186.33
Total Number of Employees	F/T 20 & P/T 14	F/T 16 & P/T 14

2021 Dedicated Sewer Utility Budget

Summary of Revenues	2021	2020
Surplus	\$ 596,196.00	\$ 709,129.00
Rents	\$ 2,100,000.00	\$ 2,250,000.00
Miscellaneous Rents		
Miscellaneous		\$ 25,000.00
Total Revenue	\$ 2,696,196.00	\$ 2,984,129.00

Summary of Appropriations	2021	Final 2020 Budget
Operating Expenses: Salaries and Wages	\$ 185,000.00	\$ 185,000.00
Other Expenses	\$ 1,500,000.00	\$ 1,791,215.00
Capital Improvements	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
Debt Service	\$ 100,196.00	\$ 96,914.00
Deferred Charges & Other Appropriations	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
Surplus (General Budget)	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 800,000.00
Total General Revenues	\$ 2,696,196.00	\$ 2,984,129.00

2021 Dedicated Solid Waste Budget

Summary of Revenues	2021	2020
Surplus		
Rents	\$ 650,168.00	
Miscellaneous Rents		
Miscellaneous		
Total Revenue	\$ 650,168.00	

Summary of Appropriations	2021	Final 2020 Budget
Operating Expenses: Salaries and Wages	\$ 181,000.00	\$ 185,000.00
Other Expenses	\$ 335,323.00	\$ 1,791,215.00
Capital Improvements		\$ 100,000.00
Debt Service	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 96,914.00
Deferred Charges & Other Appropriations	\$ 13,845.00	\$ 11,000.00
Surplus (General Budget)		\$ 800,000.00
Total General Revenues	\$ 650,168.00	\$ 2,984,129.00

Balance of Outstanding Debt			
	General		Sewer Utility
Interest	\$	207,618.27	\$ 8,700.00
Principal		3,224,268.07	160,832.87
Bond Anticipation Notes		2,987,500.00	
Bonds Authorized but not Issued		648,200.00	400,000.00
Outstanding	\$	7,067,586.34	\$ 569,532.87

Notice is hereby given that the budget and tax resolution was approved by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren, on, April 6, 2021

A hearing on the budget and tax resolution will be held via zoom meeting ID #89005200206 on Monday, May 17, 2021 at 7:00 o'clock p.m. at which time and place objections to the Budget and Tax Resolutions for the year 2021 may be presented by taxpayers or other interested persons.

Copies of the budget are available in the Office of the Clerk at Borough Hall 100 Belvidere Avenue, Washington, New Jersey, (908) 689-3600 during the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-72 made by Noone and seconded by Conry.

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

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0

Motion passes.

RESOLUTION 2021-72

FORM 1B

WHEREAS, the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse established the Municipal Alliances for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in 1989 to educate and engage residents, local government and law enforcement officials, schools, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, parents, youth and other allies in efforts to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse in communities throughout New Jersey.

WHEREAS, The Borough Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren, State of New Jersey recognizes that the abuse of alcohol and drugs is a serious problem in our society amongst persons of all ages; and therefore has an established Municipal Alliance Committee; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough Council further recognizes that it is incumbent upon not only public officials but upon the entire community to take action to prevent such abuses in our community; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough Council has applied for funding to the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse through the County of Warren;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough of Washington, County of Warren, State of New Jersey hereby recognizes the following:

1. The Borough Council does hereby authorize submission of a strategic plan for the Franklin/Mansfield/Washington Municipal Alliance grant for fiscal year 2022 in the amount of:

DEDR	\$2476.00
Cash Match	\$619.00
In-Kind	\$1857.00

2. The Borough Council acknowledges the terms and conditions for administering the Municipal Alliance grant, including the administrative compliance and audit requirements.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-73 made by Conry and seconded by Cox.

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

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0

Motion passes.

RESOLUTION 2021-73

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 US Bank Cust Pro Cap 8, 50 S 16th Street, Suite 2050, Philadelphia, PA 19102, in the amount of \$327.13 for taxes or other municipal liens assessed for the year 2019 in the name of Grasso, Debra J as supposed owner, and in said assessment and sale were described as 11 E. Stewart St. Block 29 Lot 1, which sale was evidenced by Certificate #20-00023; and

WHEREAS, the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of the Borough of Washington, do certify that on 5-11-21 and before the right to redeem was cut off, as provided by law, USDA, claiming to have an interest in said lands, did redeem said lands claimed by US Bank Cust Pro Cap 8 by paying the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of Washington Borough the amount of \$1,026.15 which is the amount necessary to redeem Tax Sale Certificate #20-00023.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this 18th day of May 2021 by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren to authorize the Treasurer to issue a check payable to US Bank Cust Pro Cap 8, 50 S 16th Street, Suite 2050, Philadelphia, PA 19102 in the amount of **\$2,126.15** (This amount consists of \$1,026.15 Certificate Amount redeemed + \$1,100.00 Premium).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tax Collector is authorized to cancel this lien on Block 29 Lot 1 from the tax office records.

VOUCHERS AND CLAIMS

Motion made by Conry seconded by Cox to pay vouchers and claims.

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

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0

Motion passes.

COUNCIL REMARKS

Councilman Norris gave the following remarks:

- Stated that BID Director, Melanie Thiel is out with strep throat.

Councilwoman Heinrich gave the following remarks:

- Thanked Natasha (CFO) for her work on the budget.
- Congratulated Noone with her Masters degree in Education, her third one, which is quite an accomplishment.

Councilwoman Cox gave the following remarks:

- Likes hearing people call in that agree with council and not against it.

Councilwoman Duchemin gave the following remarks:

- Glad to see everyone call in and not be angry with council.
- Thanked Noone for updating everyone with what the Cannabis committee has been doing.
- Steam Funk festival was a success.

Councilwoman Noone gave the following remarks:

- Steam Funk festival was a success. The Green Festival and Farmers Market will be opening soon.
- Looking forward to Spring and Summer and getting back out in public and seeing everyone.

Deputy Mayor, Ethel Conry gave the following remarks:

- Expressed her concerns with kids smoking marijuana and kids driving and smoking it. Policies need to be set forth before going forward with the marijuana legislation.
- Would like to pass a Juneteenth resolution at next meeting.
- Never smoked cannabis and doesn't like the smell, and wants to make sure everything is in place. Have the legislation carefully thought out and have policing come into play.

Mayor Higgins gave the following remarks:

- Is against how the cannabis law is written. Regulations and other parts of the law need to be tweaked. State should give another extension to give more time.
- Governor Murphy needs to open up more indoor stuff.

Motion made by Cox and seconded by Noone to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m.

Ayes: 7: Nays: 0

Motion Carried.

Mayor David Higgins

Laurie A. Barton, Borough Clerk