

**BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE**  
**Mayor & Borough Council Meeting Minutes**  
**May 22, 2023**

Mayor Mary Jane Canose called this meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Council Members Jay Ambelang, Diane Greenfield, Jena McCredie, Chad McQueen, Al Ribeiro, and Christine Zamarra. Also present were John Pidgeon, Borough Attorney, Nancy Malool, Administrator, and Anthony Suriano, Borough Clerk.

**STATEMENT OF PRESIDING OFFICER**

Notice of this meeting was provided to the Bernardsville News and Courier News, filed with the Municipal Clerk and posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board on December 15, 2022.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**PRESENTATIONS** - None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. McQueen moved approval of minutes from April 24, 2023. Ms. Zamarra seconded and the motion was approved with six yes votes.

**OPEN SESSION**

Mayor Canose opened the meeting to the public. Hearing no comments, Mayor Canose closed the open session.

**ORDINANCES (Public Hearing)**

Mayor Canose opened the public hearing on Ordinance #2023-1968, **APPROPRIATING \$731,000 FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR VARIOUS EQUIPMENT AS LISTED IN THE 2023 MUNICIPAL BUDGET.** Hearing no comments, Mayor Canose closed the public hearing. Mr. Ribeiro moved to pass this ordinance on final reading and adopt as published. Mr. McQueen seconded and the motion was approved by the following roll call vote. Mr. Ambelang, Ms. Greenfield, Ms. McCredie, Mr. McQueen, Mr. Ribeiro, and Ms. Zamarra voted yes.

**ORDINANCES (Introduction)** - None

**RESOLUTIONS**

**#23-110      AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS**

**#23-111      A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE,**

**COUNTY OF SOMERSET AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY,  
SUPPORTING RevolutionNJ**

- #23-112 AUTHORIZING REFUND OF ESCROW FEES - BOA APPLICATION #20-02, BVTWO LLC**
- #23-113 AUTHORIZING REFUND OF ESCROW FEES - PB APPLICATION #SP-233, B'VILLE STORAGE LLC**
- #23-114 APPROVING A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR THE BERNARDSVILLE POLICE DISPATCHERS FOR 2022 THROUGH 2025**
- #23-115 APPROVING MEMBERSHIP IN THE FIRE COMPANY**
- #23-116 APPROVAL TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION (BERNARDS AVENUE SIDEWALK GRANT APPLICATION) AND EXECUTE A GRANT CONTRACT WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS FUND**
- #23-117 AUTHORIZING AN EXEMPTION FROM ROAD MORATORIUM FOR STREET OPENING AND THE WAIVING OF FEES – LLOYD ROAD COUNTY BRIDGE**
- #23-118 EXERCISING TWO TWO-YEAR OPTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE LEASE OF THE BERNARDSVILLE RAILROAD STATION FROM NJ TRANSIT**

Regarding Resolution #23-115, Ms. Zamarra thanked Jessica Villalba for volunteering to be a member of the Bernardsville Fire Company.

Regarding Resolution #23-116, the Mayor and Council discussed the location of sidewalks on Bernards Avenue. A map showing the proposed location of sidewalks on Bernards Avenue from Pine Street to Mount Airy Road was shown.

Ms. McCredie moved to adopt Resolutions #23-110 to #23-118. Ms. Zamarra seconded and the motion was approved by the following roll call vote. Mr. Ambelang, Ms. Greenfield, Ms. McCredie, Mr. McQueen, Mr. Ribeiro, and Ms. Zamarra voted yes.

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Mayor's Update**, Mayor Canose said she attended the Somerset County Government Officials meeting last Wednesday. The speakers were from the NJ Conference of Mayors, Executive Director, Kerry Pflugh and President, Paul Muir. Mayor Canose said they are being very

proactive in terms of lobbying for a lot of the issues that the NJ League of Municipalities is also lobbying for. Mayor Canose attended the Library's volunteer lunch on June 11<sup>th</sup>. She said it was a really nice event and well attended. On June 12<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Canose received a Distinguished Women award from the Patriot Path Boy Scouts. Mayor Canose attended the Economic Legislative Committee of the Somerset County Business Partnership meeting. She said they are doing a Meet The Mayors in different sections of the county. Mayor Canose said thanked the Bernardsville Law Enforcement Foundation and the Davi family for a really great fundraising event. Mayor Canose said the Memorial Day parade will take place this Monday. Mayor Canose said earlier this week the NJ League of Municipalities, Conference of Mayors, and the New Jersey Urban Mayors Association handed in a letter with 401 Mayor's signatures (including Mayor Canose) to fully fund the energy tax receipts.

**Administrator's Report**, Ms. Malool said the Bernards Avenue reconstruction project is progressing and the contractor is working on drainage. She said the center court at the pickleball courts was resurfaced and painted today. She said we are working on a date to have a Mobile MVC come to Bernardsville. She said the pool opens on Saturday, May 27<sup>th</sup> for weekends only and then full time on June 17<sup>th</sup>. She said the Primary Election is on June 6 and the polls are open from 6:00am to 8:00pm. Mr. McQueen asked if pool enrollment was up or down. Recreation Director Bob Markowick was present on Zoom and said pool enrollment is pretty steady with years past and on par from last year.

Mr. McQueen moved to accept the monthly reports as listed on the agenda. Ms. Greenfield seconded and the motion was approved with six yes votes.

## **COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Public Safety Committee**, Ms. Greenfield said the committee met on May 18<sup>th</sup> and discussed Round Top Road. She said before Tom Czerniecki left, he was going to consult the Borough Engineer to see if and where an advisory sign is to be placed in the blind turn areas of that road. She said Chief Remian will be following up on this. Ms. Greenfield said the Police Department is pursuing accreditation with Lieutenant Melitski heading this effort. She said our Blue Envelope Program will be rolled out shortly and the goal of this program is to make interactions with residents on the Autism Spectrum less stressful for everyone involved. She said the committee discussed the results of the Distracted Driving initiative. She said the committee talked about the Mount Airy Road/Prospect Street intersection. She said the Police Department has been receiving an anonymous email every week about Mount Airy Road. She said that is a county road and the Police Department did a two-week study, which they sent to the County Engineer, to determine if additional signage or other measures would be warranted at this location. Ms. Greenfield said the Police Department would be happy to further discuss this with the requester should the person who is writing the anonymous emails come forward. Mr. McQueen said we like to hear from the public and if a person is anonymous we can't reach back out to them. He said people should include their name and it's not viewed as a negative thing.

**Finance Committee**, Mr. Ribeiro said the committee met last Wednesday with the Library Executive Director and Finance Director. He said they had a great conversation to help the committee understand their priorities, the history of their budget, history of the library's growth,

the challenges they have from a budgetary standpoint, how funding works, how the Library Foundation funding works, and Friends of the Library. He said typically these conversations have happened within two to three months of trying to set the budget. He said it was really nice heading into the budget season not feeling a rush and to make sure that the Library is getting the funding it needs.

**Organization Development and Personnel Committee**, Mayor Canose said the committee did not meet mainly to give Ms. Malool a chance to get to know everybody and meet with everybody one-on-one to get a sense of everything.

**Engineering, Technology, and Public Works Committee**, Ms. Zamarra said the committee met on June 16<sup>th</sup> and discussed the Bernards Avenue sidewalk project. She said they decided that the grant application was a good idea and the principal driving force is pedestrian safety.

**Phase I Polo Grounds** (Item 10A was discussed at this point of the meeting), Ms. Greenfield said the Public Works Committee, having reviewed the report received from Recreation Director Bob Markowick, is now making its recommendations to the entire Governing Body. She said the report was the result of the Recreation Committee's March meeting where they discussed the proposed Phase One and Phase Two of the project. She said the Public Works Committee felt it would be more productive to discuss Phase One tonight and come to a consensus and instruct the Administrator on how to proceed in order to move this project forward for final approval and get it ready to go out to bid. She said the goal is to have shovels in the ground in 2023 and possibly complete some items in Phase One this year. She said Phase Two will be discussed at a later council meeting. She said there are six items in Phase One. The first item is the Pavilion. The Public Works Committee felt that a stick building versus a prefabricated cement block building would better fit into the neighborhood and the aesthetic of the borough. The Public Works Committee agrees with the Recreation Committee that a single-story Pavilion with covered patio would be appropriate. A second floor with space for events at the site would not be cost effective and would interfere with the multiple games and practices going on creating parking issues as well as facility use conflicts. She said other borough owned facilities in town could eventually be used as meeting rooms or event spaces. Ms. Greenfield listed various options for the kitchen and bathrooms at the proposed Pavilion. She said security cameras and wiring needs to be included as well. She said the second item is the Pavilion water and sanitary sewer line. The third item is lighting the turf field. The fourth item is construction of a walking path. The fifth item is lighting the walking path. The sixth item is lighting of the parking area. Council had no issues with the plan. Ms. Malool will get a new estimate on a one-story Pavilion. Mayor Canose said the idea of sponsorship was explored in that someone wanting to make a donation would have the Pavilion or some part of the Pavilion named after them. Mr. McQueen suggested selling bricks.

## **OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Land Use**, Mayor Canose said the committee is meeting on Wednesday night.

**Planning Board**, Mr. McQueen said the Board started discussion of a submission for the corner

of Claremont Road and Mill Street.

**Board of Health**, Mr. Ribeiro said the Health Department inspects septic systems. He said at times our officials will show up to inspect and the contractors do not show up and they have to reschedule. He said there's a \$100 fee for this inspection and that has not been a disincentive to the contractors so they are increasing the fee to \$500. Mayor Canose asked Mr. Ribeiro to ask the Health Department about attending a Mayor's Wellness Committee meeting.

**Recreation Committee**, Ms. Greenfield said the committee met on May 9th. They have new spring volleyball clinics. She said the girl's spring basketball clinic more than doubled this year with 35 participants. We had over 100 children enrolled in spring after school programs which included yoga, Fun 'N Games, art, chess, and drama. She said we sold out our first three pickleball clinics in the spring and open registration last Monday for the summer. Ms. Greenfield said our Recreation Camp has filled for our six-week program. She said we have between 120 and 135 kids per week in the Recreation program and our vendor camps are seeing their highest registration numbers ever. She said pool usage includes six school graduation parties, field days, local sports organization rentals, and Bedminster Camp rentals. On May 12th eight oak trees and sixteen native shrubs were planted inside the pool fence on the slope between the pool and the pickleball courts in an effort to replace habitat loss when large tulip trees were removed to make the room for pickleball courts. On May 2nd we had over 20 Verizon employees volunteer at 267 Mine Brook Trail and they picked up garbage and helped to work on the creation of the new perimeter trail. Ms. Greenfield said members of the Trails Committee are in the process of collecting the required 200 signatures to officially name the 267 Mine Brook Road facility Kirkpatrick Park.

**Housing/Property Maintenance/Zoning**, Ms. Greenfield said the Committee met on May 19th and discussed the detached accessory and building ordinance issues. They also discussed tweaks to the fence ordinance, reviewed the home based business ordinance, and worked to finalize recommendations for revisions to the outdoor dining ordinance.

**HPAC**, Ms. Greenfield said the committee did not meet.

**Environmental Commission**, Ms. Zamorra said there was a lot of input from members about what types of projects they can focus their efforts on for the upcoming year. She said they try to keep on top of what other environmentally conscious and dedicated organizations of our area do such as Raritan Headwaters and Great Swamp. The Commission is also making recommendations about new developments. There is an upcoming styrofoam recycling event in the future.

**Shade Tree Committee**, Mayor Canose said the committee lost most of their members and asked Mr. Suriano to send the Governing Body any Skills Bank forms with people listing an interest in joining the Shade Tree Committee.

## **ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

### **Request for Temporary Sign for More Than Two Weeks – Music In The Somerset Hills**

Council consent was given to Music In The Somerset Hills to display a sign for more than two weeks.

**Correspondence - None**

**Unfinished Business**

**Garden Club,** Ms. Zamarra said the Garden Club is doing a great job decorating at Olcott Square. Mayor Canose also thanked the Public Works Department for their assistance.

**New Business - None**

**OPEN SESSION**

Mayor Canose opened the meeting to the public.

Fran Daley, Library Executive Director, said the Friends of the Bernardsville Library lunch was a great event. She thanked the Finance Committee for meeting with them as it's really helpful to get financial talks going early. She said we are close to hiring a second Librarian. She said they are gearing up for summer reading and have a lot of fun events posted. They are collaborating with the other libraries in Somerset County and have a lot of partnerships with other towns.

Mark Walden, Liberty Road, said it would be great if we can get Bernards Avenue organized with sidewalks and parking spaces. He said he drops off two or three kids on Bernards Avenue every night after practice and there are parking issues on that street. Mr. Walden said he was impressed with Phase I of the Polo Grounds and would be very happy to see what Phase II is going to be. He spoke about the design of the kitchen. He said there's a number of different things that Council can look at for cost savings/offsetting costs and he hopes they are creative with that.

Kathy Peachey, Chilton Street, said earlier in the meeting Mr. Markowick talked about pool enrollment being on par with last year and she asked what the number of families were. Ms. Peachey asked Ms. Greenfield about the replanting of trees she mentioned earlier in the meeting. Ms. Greenfield said eight oak trees and sixteen native shrubs. Mr. Markowick said we are at 1,500 individual members which includes all family members and is up a little bit from last year. Mr. Markowick said we are seeing a lot more rental requests and hope that will drive up the revenue as well.

Hearing no further comments from the public, Mayor Canose closed the open session.

**CLOSED SESSION**

It was moved to adjourn to an executive session to consider Pending Litigation, Property

Acquisition, and Attorney/Client Privilege and that the time when and circumstances under which the matter can be disclosed to the public is when it is finally resolved. The motion was seconded and approved with six yes votes.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.

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