

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF DEMAREST**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 23, 2022 7:30 PM

Mayor Iannuzzi opened the meeting at 7:31 pm with the following announcement: The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey have been satisfied by the inclusion of the date, time and place of this regular meeting in the annual schedule and notice of regular meetings of this Governing Body. Such annual schedule and notice of regular meetings is posted at Borough Hall, was mailed to the Record and Star Ledger and was filed with the Borough Clerk of Demarest on November 22, 2021.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

Mr. Carroll-present	Mrs. Slowikowski-present
Mrs. Fox-present	Mr. Connelly-present
Mrs. Hamilton-absent	Mrs. LaPira-present
Mayor Iannuzzi-present	

Also present: Borough Administrator, CFO, Borough Clerk, Wendy Rubenstein sitting in for Mr. Paster, Borough Attorney.

3. Mr. Carroll moved to adopt the agenda, second Mrs. Fox

Mr. Carroll-yes	Mr. Connelly-yes
Mrs. Fox-yes	Mrs. LaPira-yes
Mrs. Slowikowski-yes	

Carried.

4. PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCE NO. 1100-22; CALENDAR YEAR 2022 ORDINANCE NOT TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK. Mr. Carroll moved to open to the public, second Mrs. Fox. All in favor. Carried. Mr. Vinci explained the CAP bank and the reason for it. Mr. Carroll moved to close to the public, second Mrs. Fox. All in favor. Carried. Mrs. Fox moved to adopt the ordinance, second Mr. Carroll.

Mr. Carroll-yes	Mr. Connelly-yes
Mrs. Fox-yes	Mrs. LaPira-yes
Mrs. Slowikowski-yes	

Carried.

5. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2022 BOROUGH OF DEMAREST BUDGET. Mr. Carroll moved to open to the public, second Mrs. Fox. She reported that the Finance Committee worked long and hard on the budget and unanimously supports it. All in favor. Carried. The Auditor and CFO presented the budget. Mr. Carroll moved to close to the public, second Mrs. Fox. All in favor. Carried.

6. RESOLUTION APPROVING THE AMENDMENT TO THE BUDGET. Mr. Carroll moved to open to the public, second Mrs. Fox. All in favor. Carried. Mr. Carroll moved to close to the public, second Mrs. Fox. All in favor. Carried. Mrs. Fox moved to adopt the ordinance, second Mr. Carroll.

Mr. Carroll-yes	Mr. Connelly-yes
Mrs. Fox-yes	Mrs. LaPira-yes
Mrs. Slowikowski-yes	

Carried.

7. RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2022 BUDGET. Mrs. Fox moved to adopt the resolution, second Mr. Connelly. The Mayor thanked everyone for their work on the budget.

Mr. Carroll-yes	Mr. Connelly-yes
Mrs. Fox-yes	Mrs. LaPira-yes
Mrs. Slowikowski-yes	

Carried.

8. PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCE NO. 1101-22: AN ORDINANCE TO INCREASE CONSTRUCTION FEES. Mrs. Fox moved to open the meeting to the public, second Mr. Connelly. All in favor. Carried. Mr. Carroll moved to close the meeting to the public, second Mr. Connelly.

Mr. Carroll-yes	Mr. Connelly-yes
Mrs. Fox-yes	Mrs. LaPira-yes
Mrs. Slowikowski-yes	

Carried.

9. PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCE NO. 1102-22: AN ORDINANCE TO REPURPOSE THE BANK PROPERTY. Mr. Carroll moved to open to the public, second Mr. Connelly. All in favor. Carried.

Lynn Paulison asked how the Borough is already doing work at the bank; the Mayor said that the Borough owns the building and is doing repairs. The administrator outlined safety issues in the building. Tia Barancik (19 Academy Lane) asked about the

agreement that the bank building would be used for affordable housing and what the Council is doing to comply with the COAH obligations; Mrs. Rubenstein responded that this does not breach the COAH obligations and explained the plan. Brian Bernstein (Van Horn Street) asked whether the money used to purchase the bank building has been reimbursed to the Affordable Housing Trust; Mrs. Fox said she would check with the CFO. Mr. Bernstein spoke about the OPRA request he made about costs for developing the bank; the Mayor said the costs were still being evaluated, and Mrs. Fox said that the amounts in the letter from the architect are higher than the amount that will be spent. Mrs. Rubenstein said that the Ordinance is what she needs to move forward for the Affordable Housing. Discussion. Mr. Bernstein asked that the information be given to him while he is in the chamber. Mrs. Fox moved to close the meeting to the public, second Mr. Connelly. All in favor. Carried. Mr. Carroll moved to approve the ordinance, second Mr. Connelly.

Mr. Carroll-yes

Mr. Connelly-yes

Mrs. Fox-yes

Mrs. LaPira-yes

Mrs. Slowikowski-yes

Carried.

10. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 1103-22: A BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE RIVERSIDE COOPERATIVE ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IN AND BY THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$415,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$394,250 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF. Mr. Carroll moved to introduce the Ordinance, second Mrs. Fox. The Mayor stated that there will be a public hearing next month.

Mr. Carroll-yes

Mr. Connelly-yes

Mrs. Fox-yes

Mrs. LaPira-yes

Mrs. Slowikowski-yes

Carried.

11. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 1104-22: A BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS PAVING PROJECTS IN AND BY THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$1,061,306 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$805,706 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF. Mrs. Fox moved to introduce the ordinance, second Mr. Carroll. The Mayor stated that there would be a public hearing next month.

Mr. Carroll-yes

Mr. Connelly-yes

Mrs. Fox-yes

Mrs. LaPira-yes

Mrs. Slowikowski-yes

Carried.

12. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 1105-22: COUNTY OF BERGEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING CHAPTER 20- FIRE DEPARTMENT; ADDING SECTION 6 AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE AND DISBURSEMENT OF FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE (SAFER) GRANT. Mr. Carroll moved to introduce the ordinance, second Mr. Connelly. The Mayor stated that there would be a public hearing next month.

13. **The Borough Clerk read the following: Review of Consent Agenda Items:** All items with an asterisk are considered to be non-controversial by the Council and will be approved by one motion. There may be further discussion prior to the vote upon request of a member of the public or a Council member. Also, any item may be removed for further discussion or for roll call vote in which case the item will be removed and considered in its normal sequence as part of the general order of business.

Resolutions

14. Resolution approving authorizing claims in the amount of \$ 3,152,191.04*
15. Resolution appointing the Municipal Court Judge*
16. Resolution approving the promotions of Anthony Dimitriadis and Frank Visaggio*
17. Resolution approving the renewal of the Alpine Country Club liquor license *
18. Resolution determining the form and other details of \$5,545,000 General Improvements Bonds, Series 2022*
19. Resolution providing for the combination of certain issues of General Improvement Bonds, Series 2022*
20. Resolution authorizing payment to Foveonics Document Solutions for scanning and archiving services*
21. Resolution authorizing payment to Organic Recycling, Inc. for compost and leaf disposal services*
22. Resolution authorizing advertisement for bids for FY21 NJDOT Local Aid grant-paving of Stewart and Prescott Streets*
23. Resolution authorizing advertisement for bids for FY22 NJDOT Local Aid grant-paving of Lenox Avenue*
24. Resolution authorizing entry into an interlocal service agreement with the Northern Valley Regional Board of Education – Engineering design and paving via Riverside Cooperative Program*
25. Resolution approving a soil movement application for 83 Pine Terrace*
26. Resolution approving a soil movement application for 42 Demarest Avenue*
27. Resolution approving the release of escrows*
28. Resolution approving the estimated tax levy*
29. Resolution approving Kara Yako as a violations clerk*
30. Resolution applying for a grant for Municipal Alliance*
31. Motion approving Joseph Mason as a volunteer fire fighter**
32. Request to remove items from Consent Agenda - None
33. Discussion on items removed from Consent Agenda – None

Mr. Carroll moved to open the meeting to the Public, second Mrs. Fox. All in favor. Carried.

Mr. Bernstein asked about item 21 and was told that it is a previous expense for work required at the compost site including removal of materials other than leaves. Mr. Bernstein asked how much was for mulching leaves; Mrs. Fox replied that the bill was not itemized and it is not possible to determine what portion was the leaf mulching. Mr. Bernstein asked if the mulch facility was reopened; it is not.

Mr. Carroll moved to close meeting to the Public on Consent Agenda items only, second Mr. Connelly. All in favor. Carried.

Mr. Carroll moved to approve Consent Agenda items 14-31, second Mrs. Fox.

Mr. Carroll-yes	Mr. Connelly-yes
Mrs. Fox-yes	Mrs. LaPira-yes
Mrs. Slowikowski-yes	

Carried.

New Business

Mr. Carroll moved to approve the minutes of Mayor and Council meeting of April 25, 2022 (JC, DF, MH, AS, BC, RL), second Mr. Connelly.

Mr. Carroll-yes	Mr. Connelly-yes
Mrs. Fox-no	Mrs. LaPira-yes
Mrs. Slowikowski-yes	

Carried.

Mr. Carroll moved to approve the minutes of the special meeting of the Mayor and Council of May 2, 2022. (JC, MH, AS, BC), second Mr. Connelly.

Mr. Carroll-yes	Mr. Connelly-yes
Mrs. Fox-yes	Mrs. LaPira-yes
Mrs. Slowikowski-yes	

Carried.

Mayor's Report The Mayor thanked everyone for coming. She apologized for not being able to have Mr. Toronto (with United Way) attend this evening but hoped to have him attend for the June meeting. The Memorial Day parade will go from the Library to the Duck Pond with a ceremony and recognition. The High School band will be participating.

Council Committee Reports

Police, Fire, and Public Events: Mr. Carroll gave the Police report and the locations of the radar trailers. Several officers were detailed to the baseball parade. Mr. Carroll received a gift from Radio City.

Ambulance and Recreation: Mrs. LaPira reported that EMS week was recently. The Ambulance Corps had a barbecue. Summer Recreation has 101 campers registered already. All counselor and director positions are filled. The concert series will start on July 6th. Unfortunately, there is no Shakespeare in the Park this summer for Demarest.

Management, Administrative & Communication Mr. Connelly reported that the administrator has been working on improving the phone system and that a new part-time administrative assistant has been hired.

Finance & Insurance Committee no report

DPW, Public Buildings, Public Utilities & Recycling Committee no report

Real Estate & Ordinance Committee no report

Reports of Borough Officials

Borough Administrator: the Borough phone lines have to be converted to digital. He will meet with the phone company on Thursday. The Rec Commission has been issued a phone. The number is 803-558-8662. The Rec Camp director will use it during camp. The Rec Camp email is reccamp@demarestnj.gov. The cemetery grant was not awarded. The cemetery was not on the list of historical sites and thus was not eligible. Perhaps some volunteers can help. The Swim Club requested repairs to the parking lot. The DPW will be able to move the stone required, but the cost would be about \$2,000. They asked the Borough to cover. The Mayor suggested this go to the DPW Committee. The drainage issue at 10 Drury Lane is almost resolved. Congratulations to the two lieutenants on their promotions.

Borough Attorney not present

Borough Engineer not present

Borough Treasurer not present

Police Chief not present

The Fire Chief thanked the Council for their support. He highlighted the calls and stated that the corner of Highland Avenue and County Road were dedicated to Jim McFadden. Training continues. Another award is being given for the save during Storm Ida.

Ambulance not present

Mr. Carroll moved to Open to the Public, second Mrs. Fox. All in favor. Carried.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilder (7 Bogert Road) asked whether there were any specifics for what was going to be done for the Everett Cemetery; the administrator said the Borough has no plans at this time; Mr. Wilder suggested reaching out to the residents on Everett and Bogert Road for input.

Kathleen Rogan Olsen (424 County Road) came to lend her support to the United Way affordable housing project. She said that they have many beautiful properties that are wonderfully run. About the cemetery, perhaps it could be an Eagle Scout project. She asked if there is any hope concerning the County Road bridge; the Mayor said that the materials have been ordered. Ms. Olsen thanked everyone for their service.

Dimitri Fantanis (Woodland Road) asked about the police promotions, whether the female officer was being replaced, and about the two officers who should be in the academy. He said that supervision was not in accordance with attorney general guidelines and asked for the plan. Mr. Carroll said it would be discussed in committee. Mr. Fantanis said the PBA letter said a new car was given to the borough administrator and a Chevy Tahoe with police equipment had been given to him on retirement; Mr. Carroll said that the Tahoe was not gifted, it was in lieu of monies owed to him and all police equipment had been disabled.

Lynn Paulison asked for clarification on the nepotism ordinance. The labor counsel stated that the whole manual was updated. She also stated that someone else should have been interviewed; the attorney stated that a municipality is not required to advertise for an administrator.

Ms. Kipnis (8 Lauren Pond Court) asked what exactly affordable housing means. The Mayor said that it would be seniors, special needs and families and that every community was required to submit plans and intentions. Ms. Kipnis said that the town needed a substantial Police Department.

Stacey Fantanis (48 Woodland Road) said that security was not being strengthened and that there was a lack of communication between the administrator and the Council. She said that the Council has done nothing to help with speeding and she is filing an OPRA request about the signs in front of the Councilmembers' houses.

Mr. Herskovitz (3 Maple) asked what the incentive was for people to volunteer in the community. The Fire Chief said that a LOSAP was received every year, as well as a clothing allowance and a stipend received from a grant. Mr. Herscovitz suggested getting children involved.

John Cuomo (6 Brookside) voiced his support of the Police Department and asked for the breakdown of senior vs disabled in the affordable housing.

Ray Cywinski (256 County Road) stated that when he was on the Governing Body he had an architect visit the parking lot behind Dunkin Donuts and was told that the site would serve the Borough well for building. He thanked the Borough for having the political signs removed from Borough property. He asked whether the borough administrator had signed a contract; the labor attorney said that he did not believe a contract had been signed. Mr. Cywinski spoke about the building that was purchased by the governing body with Open Space funds and later knocked down. Mr. Cywinski will file an OPRA request.

Noelle Tuntunjian (8 John Street) spoke about a group of people who wanted to help the seniors during COVID, and the police helped and made it happen. She said that there needs to be a way to communicate with the residents, Shespoke about the disappointment of receiving the recent PBA letter. She said people come back month after month asking the same questions but feel unheard.

Joe Connolly said that he supported the police. He also asked what was happening with the property on Serpentine Road; the Mayor replied that a grant had been sought for a passive recreation area.

Zohar Shinar (68 Pine Terrace) asked about the easement issue on is property; the Mayor asked him to speak with her after the meeting.

Tia Barancik (19 Academy Lane) said that she supports the Demarest Police and the Fire Department. She objects to the lack of repair to Borough infrastructure. She requested timely online posting of the agenda, transparency in town matters, and the opportunity for the public to participate and be heard.

Len Vadala (70 Woodland Road) lives 1 block from the high school and thanked the Council for adding signs near the HS but said that it is not working; he suggested a no-right-turn sign during certain hours. Mr. Carroll said that he would ask Officer-in-Charge Foley to reach out to the County about that.

Joann Cerrone (310 Hardenburgh) voiced her support of the Police Department and the importance of supporting each other.

Howard Rifkind (350 County Road) said he opposed paying for a Borough Administrator when the work could be done by the Borough Clerk and her assistant who had been terminated. He said that the expense of the administrator would be better spent putting officers on the street. He also spoke about the Master Plan.

Marion Hayden, Planning Board Chair, gave background about the affordable housing.

Brian Bernstein said there are risks if the least experienced officers are on duty without supervision, and that there are risks to the public when the bridge/culvert is out. He also asked what the step increase is from sergeant to lieutenant. The administrator said that he has the contract and said that Mr. Bernstein could look at it.

Brian Hampton, President of the PBA, thanked everyone for coming out. He said that what they are asking for is more supervision to function properly. He thanked the Council for promoting the two sergeants to lieutenants.

Dan Marks asked what the affordable housing “unmet need” is; counsel replied that it is 309 but that the “realistic” number that could be built by 2025 is 9; the proposed affordable housing would be for at least 12 persons. He asked whether three bids were being sought for the work being done at the bank building; the Mayor said that the Borough now has a QPA, which raises the threshold.

Mr. Carroll moved to close the meeting to the public, second Mr. Connelly. All in favor. Carried.

Closed Session (not needed)

Mr. Carroll moved to adjourn, second Mrs. Fox. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 10:20 pm.