

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

BOROUGH OF DEMAREST

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 19, 2022, 7:30 PM

Mayor Iannuzzi opened the meeting at 7:30 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. Fox-present

Mrs. Hamilton-present

Mr. Connelly-present

Mrs. Slowikowski-present

Mrs. LaPira-present

Mayor Iannuzzi-present

Also present: Borough Administrator, Acting Borough Clerk, Borough Attorney, Borough Treasurer

3. Mr. Carroll moved to adopt the Agenda, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton.

Mr. Carroll-yes

Mrs. Fox-yes

Mrs. Hamilton-yes

Mrs. Slowikowski-yes

Mr. Connelly-yes

Mrs. LaPira-yes

4. Mr. Carroll moved to adopt the following Minutes, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton:

Minutes of May 23, 2022:

Mr. Carroll-yes

Mrs. Fox-yes

Mrs. Hamilton-yes

Mrs. Slowikowski-yes

Mr. Connelly-yes

Mrs. LaPira-yes

Minutes of June 27, 2022:

Mr. Carroll-yes

Mrs. Fox-yes

Mrs. Hamilton-yes

Mrs. Slowikowski-yes

Mr. Connelly-abstain

Mrs. LaPira-yes

5. **The 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

6. Resolution approving authorizing claims in the amount of \$ 2,855,179.59 *
7. Resolution ratifying the contract of the Chief of Police and authorizing execution thereof *
8. Resolution authorizing Special Emergency Appropriation pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-54/55 to cover costs of flood damage emergency project *
9. Resolution approving additional flood damage emergency appropriation in an amount not to exceed \$175,000 *
10. Resolution approving soil moving permit for 11 Evergreen Place, Block 146, Lot 2, DEP0168 *
11. Resolution approving soil moving permit for 555 Piermont Road, Block 67, Lot 7, DEP0165 *
12. Resolution approving release of escrow for various development projects *
13. Resolution authorizing payment #2, to Your Way Construction, Inc. for paving services in connection with the NJDOT FY2020 unimproved streets-Phase 4 contract (Woodland and Stelfox) *
14. Resolution authorizing Borough Administrator to hire a part time, seasonal DPW employee, not to exceed 29 hours per week *

Mrs. Slowikowski asked about the reason for soil moving permits, and received an answer. One or more part-time seasonal DPW employees are hired every year during leaf season at \$24/hour.

Mr. Carroll moved to open the meeting to the public as to Consent Agenda items only, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton. All in favor. Carried. Brian Bernstein (Van Horn St.) requested confirmation that the appropriation for flood damage emergency projects is still part of the original FEMA application, so FEMA will cover 90% of the costs; confirmed by Mr. Paster. Chris Marty (87 Stewart St.) asked why we aren't hiring the DPW person from the Borough; Mr. Paster said we can't do that legally.

Mr. Carroll moved to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton. All in favor. Carried.

Mr. Carroll moved to approve Consent Agenda items 6 through 14, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton.

Mr. Carroll-yes
Mrs. Fox-abstain
Mrs. Hamilton-yes

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

New Business – None.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Iannuzzi was invited to 9/10 Dumont Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Conor Lareia, whose project involved installing non-slip surfaces on all boardwalks and bridges in the Demarest Nature Center, including raising \$2,100 for the materials and leading his troop in performing the work; the Mayor gave him a Proclamation. When the County Rd. bridge was wiped out last year, several firefighters including Lts. Carey and Mayer, Firefighters Barbieri, Mattis and Tennyson, and DPW Operator Jason Ganges, saved a stranded motorist; they will receive the 200 Club of Bergen County Valor Committee's John R. Rinaldi Unit Citation at the J. Fletcher Creamer Valor Award Dinner in October. Work on the County Road bridge is ongoing, no firm finish date yet.

Council Committee Reports

Police, Fire, and Public Events: Mr. Carroll said he was honored to address the 20th 9/11 Ceremony this year, which was attended by the Vialonga family who were very grateful for the memorial. Mr. Carroll has a personnel matter for closed session.

Ambulance and Recreation: Mrs. LaPira wants to recognize all who helped out on Demarest Day, with over 1200 participants: the DPW did a great job of setting up and keeping the area immaculate; the Fire Dept. and Ambulance Corps were on standby all day and through the fireworks; the Police Dept. who manned a table; event Coordinator Angeline Sheridan did a fantastic job; Jim Powderley who helped coordinate all of the required permits; the Mayor and Council and the CFO and Finance Dept. supported the event; and the event sponsors. The 6-person Recreation Committee, Chaired by Lee Barker, did a tremendous amount of work organizing the event. The beer garden was well attended and will be done again next year. Already have an O&R grant for next year. Oktoberfest for Demarest Nature Center will be on 10/8 starting at 10am, with canoe rides. The Mayor thanked the Commission for bringing this event back after the pandemic.

Management, Administrative & Communications: Mr. Connolly noted that Demarest Day was begun under Mayor Schooler and the Municipal Committee, to enhance "community attachment."

Finance & Insurance: The Ad Hoc Committee met to review United Way's proposal for affordable housing. Tom Toronto of United Way gave a thorough explanation of the process. All in attendance approved of the proposed project. Council will approve Developers Agreement with United Way, likely at a Special Meeting in early October at which building drawings will be available for public viewing. Will also need an ordinance to adopt a tax abatement and donate the property.

DPW, Public Buildings, Public Utilities & Recycling: Mrs. Hamilton thanked the DPW for their hard work on Demarest Day. She has two matters for closed session.

Real Estate & Ordinance: Mrs. Slowikowsk reported that 5 residents were invited and agreed to join the Ad Hoc Committee: Tim Woods, Dan Marks, Dan Chang, Jay Nadel

and Maureen Neville. There will be an administrative meeting on 9/28, then the full committee will meet on 10/19 to begin discussing BH renovations. Committee meetings are not public meetings that need to be advertised.

Reports of Borough Officials

Borough Administrator: Hired a seasonal DPW employee; we'll probably need more than one for leaf season and possibly for snow plowing. Filed request with DEP for temporary use of DPW area for leaf transfer; still waiting on CAP. Complaint about illegally dumped wood chips on Academy Lane; Police Dept. will investigate and DPW will remove to avoid plugging storm drains. Resuming work on Cresskill Brook, continue to have issue with Duck Pond Road resident so will go around that area and move downstream; then transition to Tenakill Brook and Demarest Brook and tributaries. Davies Dam remediation will require extensive engineering. Filed through FEMA for an extension for all of the work that needs to be done; must be continuous, and it has been continuous except for interim funding applications. Purpose is to restoring to pre-Ida condition. Public schools have requested use of soccer field; request should be directed to the Recreation Commission. Lightning strikes caused damage at DPW, DAA, Ambulance Bldg., EV charging station; report and insurance claim filed. Junior Girl Scout Troop 971 is working on Bronze Award called "Crossing Safety" with great recommendations about school safety and crossing safety, including painting crosswalk on Hardenburgh Ave. near entrance to Wakelee Ave.; BA commends the scouts and recommends implementing this recommendation; DPW will do the painting. Also wants to thank Borough of Cresskill Fire Inspector who came to Demarest Day and did inspections last minute. Pine Terrace drainage project: successful in jetting pipe but need to scope pipe, hope to complete soon to get better idea about what needs to be done; then still have Phase #3 which involves DEP and engineering. Air quality tested at DPW, Police Dept., Borough Hall, Railroad Station and bank building; all samples came back with no issues; did find asbestos in basement of Borough and in attic of bank, inspected and found safe in current condition, so nothing needs to be done. Has closed session matter re personnel.

Borough Attorney: No report.

Borough Engineer: Not in attendance.

Borough Treasurer: Mr. Elenio reports that the Finance Dept. has started implementation of Auditor's CAP, hope to have completed by mid-October; also, policy and procedure changes are 85% to 90% to where he wanted them to be when first started at the Borough.

Police Chief: Chief Dimitriadis thanked Jason Ganges of DPW for assistance during Dearest Day and Andiamo event on following day. Overnight parking ordinance and prohibited streets have been posted on the Police Dept. website; thanks to Officer Cho for his excellent work on this posting. New LED sign on Woodland Rd. will soon be moved to opposite side of street. There were 386 calls from 8/28 to 9/19, including domestic violence, fraud (paving -- vehicle impounded), 5 DMV, 14 medical calls, lockdown drills

completed at all schools, Traffic Officer scheduled to attend future Girl Scout meeting to discuss Crossing Safety project and recommendations.

Fire Chief: There have been 230 calls this year, 30 this month. The 200 Club award dinner will be at the Venetian on 10/5. Dept. participated in 4-alarm fire Rockleigh Country Club, attended Demarest Day and fireworks, and Andiamo event as well. Fire Prevention program will be delivered in all Demarest schools in early October. Dept. received grant for \$80,000 for health and fitness program; Dept. will get all new exercise equipment, physicals, cancer screenings, personal training sessions. Borough match will be 5%. This is the Dept's fourth AFG grant in last 6 years; grant writer specializes in fire department applications. Rep. Josh Gottheimer will visit the Dept. next week.

Mrs. Hamilton – There will be a town-wide shredder at the DPW on 10/8; time TBA (usually early morning).

Mr. Carroll moved to open the meeting to the public, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton. All in favor. Carried.

Lynn Paulison (15 Lois) – Can public attend Ad Hoc Committee meeting on 10/19; advised that committee meetings are generally not open to the public. Mr. Paster is Acting Borough Clerk at \$175/hr; advised that this was approved by resolution at 8/9 Special Meeting, copy on file with BA; Mr. Paster is logging approx. 6 to 8 hours a week on Clerk duties; BA is actively recruiting for temporary Deputy Clerk. Clerk's voicemail box is full; should empty and refer. Item #12 typo; need to remove Crosman certification from resolution.

Mr. Bernstein expressed his thanks for the 9/11 and Demarest Day events. He noted that if asbestos in buildings is not currently friable, need to ensure that nothing is done to disturb it. Concerning dam on private property, was advised that DEP is managing remediation; he requests that DEP reports be made available to the public. Asked what will be done with exercise equipment currently in Firehouse; Fire Chief advised that this is property of Fire Association, not Borough. There was public notice about Demarest grant application in newspaper, mentioned lighted pickle ball court; after discussion, this appears to relate to application for passive park behind Borough Hall; lighted pickle ball court was never under consideration (was originally a bocce court). He requested that a copy of the grant application be made available to the public. Wanted to confirm that Mr. Paster's compensation for serving as Acting Borough Clerk was in resolution; confirmed.

Mike Clarke (15 Donnybrook) asked that when Ad Hoc Committee decision about Borough Hall renovations is made, he would like to attend. Noted errors in Borough Calendar on website re: garbage pickup dates.

Chris Marty (87 Stewart) asked and was advised that BA position did not need to be posted nor other candidates interviewed, but appointment was made at public meeting. He made a number of statements about looking forward to a new administration. Asked why in roomful of Democrats are we not proposing to house immigrants on baseball field.

Roberta Hoag (28 Blanche) expressed gratitude for Girl Scouts addressing crosswalk issue at intersection of Hardenburgh Ave. and Park St., asked about striping for “Don’t block the box” because there is always a jam at this intersection in the morning which makes it difficult for emergency vehicles to get through. BA expressed concern about excess striping in such a small area, might detract from safety of crosswalk, will ask Police Dept. to look into it (note this is a County road).

Dan Marks (14 Van Horn) spoke to support Mr. Bernstein’s comment about not putting a pickle ball court in a residential area, notes that Ridgewood did that and had many complaints, thinks passive park would be a better idea for location behind Borough Hall.

Noel Pugh (64 Prospect) – Two meetings ago, Mayor directed the Borough Engineer to contact him about the Donnybrook/Prospect drainage study, but he still hasn’t heard from the Engineer; the Mayor will follow up.

Mr. Bernstein said the Hardenburgh Ave./County Rd. intersection appears to move slowly because cars in the center lane often block the right-turn lane because of an impediment in the right lane, requests ask Police Chief to look into what can be done to keep the right-turn lane clear.

Mr. Carroll moved to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton. All in favor. Carried. Motion to close: Carroll

Mr. Carroll moved to go into closed session, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton. All in favor. Carried.

Mr. Paster stated that action may be taken after the closed session.

Mr. Carroll moved to reopen from the closed session, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton. All in favor. Carried.

The BA reported that the Teamsters approached him with a proposal to extend the current DPW contract which currently ends on 12/31/2023 to end on 12/31/2024, with no changes except for a 3% increase as of 1/1/2024.

Mr. Carroll moved to approve the above-described extension of the Teamsters DPW contract to 12/31/2024 with a 3% increase as of 1/1/2024, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton.

Mr. Carroll-yes
Mrs. Fox-abstain
Mrs. Hamilton-yes

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

Meeting adjourned.