

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
BOROUGH OF DEMAREST  
Municipal Building  
Demarest, NJ  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
December 18, 2023**

This regular meeting was called to order at 7:33 at the above time and place.

Council President Slowikowski invited all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Present:** Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

**Absent:** Mayor Bernstein

**Also Present:** Jaime Placek, for the Borough Attorney  
Julie Falkenstern, Borough Administrator  
Anthony Dimitriadis, Police Chief  
John McLoughlin, Fire Chief  
Carl O'Brien, Borough Engineer  
Nick Chelius, Borough Engineer  
Peter Suh, Acting CFO

Before proceeding with the agenda, Council President Slowikowski noted that tonight was Councilmember LaPira's last council meeting as her term is ending and she is unable to attend the Sine Die/Reorganization meetings on January 1. She thanked her for her years of service.

**Suspend the Regular Order of Business for Presentation to Demarest Championship Soccer Teams**

Council President Slowikowski then asked for a motion to suspend the regular order of business for the presentation of certificates of achievement to the Girls 7/8 Grade 1<sup>st</sup> Place Soccer Team and the Boys 5/6 Grade 1<sup>st</sup> Place Soccer Team

A motion was made by Councilmember Hamilton, seconded by Councilmember Jiang and approved by all to suspend the regular order of business to honor the soccer teams.

Council President Slowikowski, joined by Councilmember Dan Marks, liaison to DAA presented the awards to:

## **Demarest - Girls 7/8 Team**

**Coaches: Mike Ference, Jeff Gardner, Raed Khawaja**

### **Players:**

Abigail Jacobs  
Ava Arnofsky  
Ava J. Bevilacqua  
Blair Gardner  
Camila Espana  
Charlotte Besnoy  
Darienne Buckner  
Eliana Khawaja  
Emily Watters  
Eva Yezekian  
Lielle Shemesh  
Madlyn Wong  
Maya Huber  
Maya Faehdrinch  
Mia Natan  
Nicki Ference  
Sara Redensky  
Sophia Saurofeem  
Suri Modi  
Tristyn Buckner  
Waverly Greenberg  
Zara Fisher

## **Demarest Destroyers - Boys 5/6 Team**

**Coaches: Hernan Donzis, Steve Sul, Moshe Moallem**

### **Players:**

Harry Maurer  
Hudson Flax  
Ian Jang  
Jason Halper  
Levi Rome  
Liam Natan  
Max Polavieja

Roy Jang  
Samuel Donzis  
Brian Park  
Stanly Sul  
Tomer Moallem  
Yoni Moallem

**Ordinances – Adoption - Public Hearing**

**Ordinance No. 1128-2023**

**ORDINANCE AMENDING AND MODIFYING CHAPTER 122 OF THE  
DEMAREST  
BOROUGH CODE (NOISE)**

A motion was made by Councilmember Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Jiang to open the public hearing on Ordinance No.1128-23

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

Nays: None

Absent: None

There being no one present wishing to speak on the ordinance, Councilmember Fox made a motion to close the public hearing and that it be adopted with notice of final passage to be published in the Bergen Record.

The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jiang.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Ordinance No. 1129-2023**

**ORDINANCE AMENDING AND MODIFYING PART I: ADMINISTRATIVE  
LEGISLATION, CHAPTER 40, §40-5 DEPARTMENT POSITIONS OF THE  
DEMAREST BOROUGH CODE**

A motion was made by Councilmember Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Jiang to open the public hearing on Ordinance No.1129-23

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

Nays: None

Absent: None

There being no one present wishing to speak on the ordinance, Councilmember Marks made a motion to close the public hearing and that it be adopted with notice of final passage to be published in the Bergen Record.

The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hamilton.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Resolution No. 52-23 A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A NORTHERN VALLEY GREENWAY (tabled from March 13, 2023)**

A motion was made by Councilmember Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Jiang to approve the resolution.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Resolution No. 149-23 RESOLUTION TO RELEASE SHADE TREE BOND**

A motion was made by Councilmember Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Marks to approve the resolution.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Consent Agenda**

Council President Slowikowski asked if any member would like to have any resolution removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately.

Councilmember Hamilton asked to remove Resolution No. 160-23 from the consent agenda for discussion in closed session.

Council President Slowikowski asked if any member would like to abstain from voting on any resolution on the consent agenda.

There being no abstentions, Council President Slowikowski asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda after removing 160-23.

A motion was made by Councilmember Fox and seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve the consent agenda as amended.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Consent Agenda:**

Resolution No. 153-23	FY 2024 American Rescue FF Grant
Resolution No. 154-23	Authorizing Transfer of 2023 Budget Appropriations
Resolution No. 155-23	Approval to Change Title Appropriations
Resolution No. 156-23	Approval Budget Amendment Ida Storm Damage Grant
Resolution No. 157-23	Approval Budget Amendment Clean Communities Grant
Resolution No. 158-23	Approval Budget Amendment NJDEP Water Resources and Planning Grant
Resolution No. 159-23	Approval Budget Amendment Body Worn Camera Grant
Resolution No. 161-23	Authorizing Casual Labor
Resolution No. 162-23	Bills List
Resolution No. 163-23	Approving Soil Moving Permit – 33 Ross Ave.

**Borough Engineer's Report**

Carl O'Brien briefly reviewed the December Engineer's report, noting that the review from the CAP submitted to NJDEP is proceeding as expected. He also noted that Pine Terrace Drainage project experienced some contractor related delays but is proceeding.

**Discussion**

Demarest Swim Club

Jackie Fullin from the Demarest Swim Club came forward to discuss some issues they are experiencing operationally and financially. Before proceeding, she noted that Dominic DiFrancesco who served 40 years on the pool board recently passed away. She remarked that he was a tremendous asset and a wonderful person and he will be missed.

Ms. Fullin then explained that the Club has experienced lower membership and some changes with organizational use and that the finances are an issue. Council President Slowikowski, who serves as the liaison to the swim club and joined their recent meeting to discuss the issues reviewed the finances and stated that in order to even open the club would have to raise \$103,000.00 in just a few weeks. A discussion ensued with ideas of how to raise the funds. It seems unlikely that the pool will be able to open this year, but Ms. Fullin will reach out to surrounding towns in the next weeks, but a final decision needs to be made by the end of January and the camps, including the Demarest Recreation Summer Camp, that use the pool need to be informed of the plans soon so they can make any necessary adjustments to their summer schedules. The council thanked Ms. Fullin for her work keeping the pool going as membership has dropped and Council President Slowikowski noted that she will keep working with the board over the coming weeks to try and help with a solution.

### **Council Committee Reports**

#### **Police, Fire, and Public Events**

Councilmember Jiang reported that members of the Fire Department were recognized by Congressman Gottheimer as Hometown Heroes, and he congratulated them. He reported that the BOE is going to bid on the new gym soon and noted that while there are reported teacher shortages in NJ, Demarest is not experiencing such shortages.

#### Ambulance and Recreation

Councilmember LaPira thanked all the departments for their support in the successful tree lighting and menorah lighting ceremonies earlier in the month.

#### Management, Administrative & Communication Committee

Councilmember Marks reported that the 2 new police officers are working out well and then the Borough will be appointing a new Deputy Borough Clerk soon. The new electronic sign is being fabricated and DAA is working with the grant writer on some new funding opportunities.

#### Finance & Insurance Committee

No report

#### DPW, Public Buildings, Public Utilities & Recycling Committee

Councilmember Hamilton thanked the DPW for all their hard work and their support of Borough events. She reminded everyone that there are trees available for spring planting from the Shade Tree Commission if anyone wants a tree in the spring. She reported that the BOH had a successful flu clinic in the fall.

#### Real Estate & Ordinance Committee

Councilmember Fox reported that the committee continues its work on the updated zoning ordinance required by the Master Plan update.

## **Reports of Borough Officials**

### **Borough Administrator**

Ms. Falkenstern congratulates Mike Shields on his upcoming retirement after 42 years of service with the DPW. She noted the times for the upcoming Reorganization Meeting. She thanked Dot and Lee for their assistance to her throughout the year. She noted that Borough Hall would close early on Friday ahead of the Christmas Holiday. Finally, she reported that due to flooding on Sunday/Monday the manger was cleared out and the holidays lights were off but would be restored in a few days.

### **Borough Attorney**

No Report

### **Borough Treasurer**

Mr. Suh noted that the finance office is working on the 2024 budget and that end-of-year finances are being processed.

### **Police Chief**

Chief Dimitriadis reported the following:

Update on today's storm: Knickerbocker, Belmar and Madison re-opened; Madison, Meadow and Wakelee wires still down and portions of the roadway closed.

I'd like to congratulate Michael Bartelucci on his promotion to Lt. and officially welcome our two newest officers: Fernando Saint-Hilaire and Fredi Nolasco to the ranks of the Demarest Police Dept.

Appreciate the time and effort spent by the captains and detectives in screening the best and most qualified applicants of all those that applied.

I am confident that our newest officer's backgrounds and previous experience in law enforcement will make them an outstanding addition to our department and community.

Additionally, I'd like to commend the members of the PBA that attended Demarest Day and the Halloween Parade and interacted with our community as they distributed a seemingly never- ending line for cotton candy at each event. And of-course the DPW, FD & DVAC for all their efforts in making Demarest Day an enjoyable and successful event.

The Demarest Police Department logged a total of 441 calls for service and Administrative activities from last council meeting 11/27/23 to 12/17/2023

Some of these calls for service include:

Arrest – 1 outstanding traffic warrant

Fraud – 4

Theft – 3

MV Crashes – 11

Medical Calls for service – 15

Lastly, the PBA raised \$1200 for cancer awareness during No-Shave November and Double-Down December.

#### Fire Chief

Chief McLoughlin thanked Councilmember LaPira for her nomination of his team for the Hometown Hero award that they received. Additionally, he reported that "Santa" did 27 miles of visits with residents.

#### Ambulance

Roberta Hoag reported that Andy Woods was honored as a Hometown Hero by Congressman Gottheimer as well. She reported that the EMS responded to 376 calls with very good response times. Lastly, she reported that NVD has an EMS club that has 40-50 kids as members which is promising for new volunteer members.

#### **Minutes for approval:**

April 17, 2023 Special Meeting

April 24, 2023 Regular Meeting

May 30, 2023 Special Meeting

June 12, 2023 Work Session

September 26, 2023 Regular Meeting

October 10, 2023 Work Session

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Jiang to approve the minutes.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

Nays: None

Absent: None

A motion was made by Councilmember Fox, seconded by Councilmember Jiang and approved by all to open the meeting to the public.

Andrew Correa

5 Jays St.

Closter, NJ

Mr. Correa stated that he is the leader of Boy Scout Troop 20 that is part of the Demarest Nature Center, and he introduced the Council to two of his members. He highlighted some of their accomplishments and offered to assist in any way they can.

**(Mayor Bernstein arrived at 8:42 and will join the Council in closed session)**

**Closed Session Resolution No. 2023-015**

At 8:43 pm a motion was made by Councilmember Fox and seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to convene a closed session to discuss litigation and personnel. Action will be taken when the Council returns to open session.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Resolution No. 160-23 Authorizing Settlement Agreement**

Returning from closed session at 9:35 council President Slowikowski offered a motion to approve Resolution No. 160-23. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jiang.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Hamilton, Councilmember LaPira, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Jiang

Nays: None

Absent: None

There being no more business before the council, Councilmember Fox made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and approved by all. The meeting was therefore adjourned at 9:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Falkenstern

In the absence of the Borough Clerk.