

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale
Regular Session Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2019

PRESENT: Mayor Ari Bernstein and Councilmembers Liz Homan, Edward O’Connell, Matthew O’Toole, Steve Sasso, Jim Strauch and Amy Wilczynski

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Attorney Raymond Wiss
Municipal Clerk Anne Dodd

A Regular Session Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale was held in the Municipal Building at 500 West Crescent Avenue, Allendale, NJ on December 5, 2019. The meeting was called to order at 8:01 p.m. by Mayor Ari Bernstein who asked that the Municipal Clerk read the open public meetings statement: “In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the notice requirements have been satisfied. The meeting dates for the year are confirmed at the Annual Meeting, are posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building, published in the Record within the first 10 days of the New Year, and copies are sent to the Ridgewood News and Star Ledger.”

The Mayor led those present in a salute to the flag.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Councilwoman Homan, second by Councilwoman Wilczynski, that the Minutes of November 14, 2019 Work Session and November 14, 2019 Regular Session are approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilwoman Homan:	aye	Councilman Sasso:	aye
Councilman O’Connell:	abstain	Councilman Strauch:	aye
Councilman O’Toole:	aye	Councilwoman Wilczynski:	aye

Public Comment

No one came forward.

Introduction of Ordinances

Ordinances 19-15

Motion by Councilwoman Homan that the following ordinance be introduced and passed on first reading and setting December 19, 2019 at 8:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the as the matter can be heard as the date and time and the Council Chambers of the Allendale Municipal Building as the place for a hearing on said ordinance. Second by Councilwoman Wilczynski.

The Municipal Clerk read the title of the ordinance into the record:

ORDINANCE 19-15 – AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 53 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF ALLENDALE, “OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES”, TO FIX THE SALARIES, WAGES AND

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COMPENSATION OF THE OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE BOROUGH OF ALLENDALE FOR THE YEAR 2019.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilwoman Homan:	aye	Councilman Sasso:	aye
Councilman O'Connell:	aye	Councilman Strauch:	aye
Councilman O'Toole:	aye	Councilwoman Wilczynski:	aye

(See Ordinance 19-15 attached and made a part hereof.)

Consent Agenda

- A. **19-245**/Approval of Bill List
- B. **19-246**/Schedule 2019 Sine Die Meeting & 2020 Reorganization Meeting
- C. **19-247**/Amend Resolution 19-241 Authorize Budget Transfer
- D. **19-248**/Authorization to Advertise Bid Specifications for 2020 Snow Plowing & Removal Services of Public Roadways
- E. **19-249**/Authorization to Advertise Bid Specifications for 2020 Snow Plowing & Removal Services of Borough Facilities
- F. **19-250**/Authorize Water Bill Adjustment – 90 Heather Court
- G. **19-251**/Authorize Refund – Water Overpayment – 125 Hillside Avenue
- H. **19-252**/Amend Resolution 19-232 Authorize GovDeals.com Auction
- I. **19-253**/Approve Tax Appeal Settlement – Branchburg Realty Partners, LLC v. Allendale
- J. **19-254**/Authorize Budget Transfers

Motion by Councilwoman Wilczynski, second by Councilman Sasso, that the Consent Agenda be approved.

On a roll call, the vote on the Consent Agenda was recorded as follows:

Councilwoman Homan:	aye	Councilman Sasso:	aye
Councilman O'Connell:	aye	Councilman Strauch:	aye
Councilman O'Toole:	aye	Councilwoman Wilczynski:	aye

All members present voting in favor, the Consent Agenda was approved.

Resolution 19-

Unfinished Business:

There was no unfinished business.

New Business:

There was no new business.

Council Committee Reports and Comments

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Councilman O'Connell – Land Use and Construction Code

Councilman O'Connell announced that the Land Use Committee is scheduled to meet on December 16th at 7:30 a.m. He advised that revisions to the noise ordinance were emailed to committee members for review and will be discussed during the upcoming meeting.

Councilman Sasso – Administration, Finance and Human Resources

Councilman Sasso reported that the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee is scheduled to meet next week. He noted that the 2020 budget season has begun and Department Heads are currently submitting their budget requests. He advised that he and Councilman Strauch will be meeting with the Police and Fire Departments to discuss their respective requests this coming week.

Councilwoman Wilczynski – Facilities, Parks and Recreation

Councilwoman Wilczynski advised that the due diligence period continues with respect to 220 and 230 West Crescent Avenue, noting that, at minimum, the committee meets on a weekly basis. She expressed her belief that the closing will take place in the first quarter of 2020 with the municipal agreement being the next major piece to be reviewed. As part of the increased communication outreach to the public, Constant Contact has been implemented, the protocols for which are currently being developed. The winter newsletter will be going out soon and SwiftReach is also being utilized. The Borough has been awarded the NJ DOT grant for the 3rd phase of the Downtown Streetscape project. She advised that this project will include replacing lights, pavers, trash receptacles, and trees. She reviewed projects that are being completed through Bergen County grants which include refurbishing the playground at Crestwood Lake and making improvements to the surround near the band shell that was recently installed. She commended Julia Burdge, DPW Administrative Assistant, for her work on obtaining a recycling grant which will be used to replace signage at the Recycling Center as well as to purchase a textile bin. She expressed appreciation to the DPW for the job that they did with snow removal. The Holiday Walk will be taking place on December 6th.

Councilman O'Toole – Public Works

Councilman O'Toole reported that the Public Works Committee met two weeks ago and snow removal plans for the season and the current status of the DPW budget were discussed, commenting that the budget is in great shape. Next year's budget requests are currently being prepared. Holiday decorations in the downtown are complete in preparation for tomorrow night's Holiday Walk and decorations at Borough Hall are almost complete. Councilman O'Toole commended the DPW for the outstanding job that they did in handling the recent snowstorm under the direction of Dan Richards, Crew Chief. Lawn sprinkler systems have been winterized and all seasonal meters have been pulled and tagged. An auction of unused Borough equipment will begin next Monday. Councilman O'Toole advised that he attended a talk at Brookside School given by Diane Grossman whose daughter took her life as a result of bullying. He commented that it is a heartbreaking story and he thanked the Allendale Police Department for arranging for Ms. Grossman to speak.

Mayor's Report:

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Mayor Bernstein announced that the tax sale that had been scheduled for today was canceled as all 2018 delinquent taxes were paid. As Councilwoman Wilczynski mentioned, funding from the NJ DOT was received for the West Allendale Avenue Streetscape Phase 3 project. GovPilot's new feature that was mentioned at the last meeting has launched and the GIS map is now available on the Borough website. Through this map, the public can view the records that are associated with a particular property, i.e. building permits, animal licenses, etc. He expressed his hope that this feature will enhance transparency and reduce both OPRA requests and phone calls coming into the Borough. The Holiday Walk is scheduled to take place tomorrow night beginning at 6 p.m. The Fell House will be having its Annual Holiday Open House on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mayor Bernstein stated that he will be reading a holiday story during this event.

Staff Reports:

Ray Wiss, Municipal Attorney, reported that he has spent time working with Ron Kistner, Administrative Officer/Director of Operations, on personnel and property maintenance matters as well as Anne Dodd, Municipal Clerk, on preparation of bid specifications and OPRA requests. He noted that work continues on 220 and 230 West Crescent Avenue. He also spent time working with Councilwoman Homan on the water utility, participated in contract negotiations and worked with Chief Scherb on police matters.

Anne Dodd, Municipal Clerk, stated that she has received 23 OPRA requests since the last meeting and 468 requests to date this year.

Alissa Mayer, CFO, advised that she has no report.

Ron Kistner, Administrative Officer/Director of Operations, advised that he has no report.

Public Comment on any issue:

Walter Widmer, 38 Hamilton Street, thanked Peter Branigan for his comments during the Work Session and expressed criticism of Suez's letter. He inquired how tetrachloroethylene got into the water.

Councilwoman Homan explained that this chemical most commonly enters groundwater from dry cleaning facilities. She noted that, of the Borough's five wells, only two have ever shown to have any levels of this chemical and have been successfully treated to non-detect levels.

Mr. Widmer inquired whether the public could receive a more detailed status of the 220 and 230 West Crescent Avenue project.

Borough Attorney Wiss advised that this project is still in the due diligence period which has been ongoing for a significant period of time. He noted that it is close to closure and it is hoped that this project will come to fruition within the 1st quarter of next year. He explained that, at this time, the Borough needs to abide the due diligence period of the prospective purchaser.

Councilwoman Wilczynski explained that this project has many different components, each with a corresponding agreement that must be prepared and reviewed. She advised that once the due diligence period is complete, there will be more information disseminated to the public as well as public meetings.

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Mayor Bernstein added that an application will be made to the Land Use Board once the due diligence period has ended.

Borough Attorney Wiss noted that the conceptual plans that were previously presented have not changed.

Peter Branigan, 81 Chestnut Street, inquired whether there are any regulations on the use and disposal of tetrachloroethylene, and if so, who is responsible for monitoring the facilities that use it.

Councilman Strauch confirmed that this chemical is regulated and suggested that Mr. Branigan contact the NJ DEP for further information. He noted that many dry cleaners now have a green earth symbol in their windows to denote that they are ecofriendly.

Borough Attorney Wiss explained that this chemical was not historically regulated, allowing it to leech into the ground. As it has been linked to environmental contamination, he noted that its use is now state- and federally-regulated.

Mr. Branigan suggested that a statement with the information discussed tonight should be put out to the public.

Councilwoman Homan advised that this meeting is recorded and the audio will be posted to the Borough website tomorrow. She reiterated that there were not two violations as it was the second measurement that resulted in a violation. She noted that the Borough is now in compliance with NJ DEP regulations and was always in compliance with federal requirements.

Kevin Wood, 57 Meeker Avenue, thanked the governing body for addressing the water issue. He requested information on the Borough's affordable housing obligation.

Borough Attorney Wiss explained the process by which each municipality's obligation has been determined. He advised that a settlement agreement was reached with the Fair Share Housing Center regarding Allendale's obligation.

Borough Clerk Dodd added that there is an Affordable Housing tab on the Borough website with information detailing the Borough's obligation.

Mr. Wood asked for the location of the affordable housing units at 220 and 230 West Crescent Avenue and he was provided with the proposed layout of the buildings that would be located at this property.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilwoman Wilczynski, second by Councilman Strauch, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Dodd, RMC
Municipal Clerk