

Mayor and Council of the Borough of Allendale  
Work Session Meeting Minutes  
December 19, 2019

PRESENT: Mayor Ari Bernstein and Councilmembers Liz Homan, Edward O’Connell, and Jim Strauch

ABSENT: Councilmembers Matthew O’Toole, Steve Sasso, and Amy Wilczynski

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Attorney Raymond Wiss  
Municipal Clerk Anne Dodd

A Work 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 19, 2019. The meeting was called to order at 7:33 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.”

**Public Comment:**

Walter Widmer, 38 Hamilton Street, expressed his opinion that the second Suez letter was much clearer. He thanked Councilwoman Homan for organizing Tuesday’s informational session with Suez, noting that he found it to be very interesting and helpful. He wished everyone happy holidays.

Mayor Bernstein commended Councilwoman Homan for the wonderful job that she does as Chair of the Water, Sewer and Public Utilities Committee and commented that she continually goes the extra mile.

Councilwoman Homan expressed appreciation to Suez for suggesting the open house format as she feels that it worked well.

**Administration:**

A. Agenda Review

Mayor Bernstein reviewed the Regular Session agenda. He noted that the December 5<sup>th</sup> Work and Regular Session Minutes are listed for approval. He advised that Ordinance 19-15 is listed for second reading and adoption, explaining that the purpose of this ordinance is to set the salary range for the part-time position of Board of Health Secretary/Tax Assessor Clerk. He then reviewed the resolutions on the Consent Agenda. With respect to Resolution #19-256, which pertains to the 2019 NW Bergen Pricing Cooperative Paving Program, Ms. Dodd explained that this change order resulted from actual quantities of work measured and performed. In regard to Resolution #19-258, Mayor Bernstein advised that the first clause is being amended to read, “WHEREAS, the Borough has owned the below-listed properties during 2019, as a result of which 2019 taxes need to be formally cancelled.”

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B. Council Reports

**Councilman O'Connell** – Land Use and Construction Code

Councilman O'Connell reported that proposed amendments to the noise ordinance as well as a few additional items have been sent to the Borough Attorney for review. It is hoped that these amendments will be adopted in early 2020. The committee will be seeking input from the Public Safety Committee on a few items that are under consideration. There are property maintenance issues that are in the process of being addressed.

**Councilwoman Homan** – Water, Sewer and Public Utilities

Councilwoman Homan announced that a second letter was sent by Suez to provide additional context for residents regarding the tetrachloroethylene incident. Suez held an open house for residents to ask questions regarding water on Tuesday night which Councilwoman Homan noted was well-attended. She reminded residents that, if they were unable to attend Tuesday's event, they can always email her with any questions or concerns. She advised that additional meetings regarding water are planned to be held in 2020. She attended a conference this past Friday offered by NJ Waterworks which featured great speakers and presented an opportunity to meet representatives from the EPA and NJ DEP. She thanked the members of the Water, Sewer and Public Utilities Committee, recognizing the many contributions that each member makes to this committee. She announced that the next committee meeting is scheduled on December 30<sup>th</sup>.

Councilman Strauch asked for confirmation that NJ DEP's standards are stricter than federal standards.

Councilwoman Homan confirmed that New Jersey's standards are at least as strict in all areas with 29 areas in which the NJ DEP's standards are stricter.

**Councilman Strauch** – Public Safety

Councilman Strauch reported that he met with the Allendale Police and Fire Departments on December 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss their respective 2020 budget requests. He noted that the needs of both departments are aggressive and the committee is working to address those needs. The Allendale Volunteer Ambulance Corps will be hosting a free rabies clinic on January 11<sup>th</sup> from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Councilman Strauch recognized Mayor Bernstein for the many accomplishments that he has achieved during his first year serving as Mayor. He further commented that it has been a joy to work with all members of the governing body this past year and expressed that he looks forward to continuing to work with everyone in 2020. He also thanked members of AVAC, AFD, and CERT for volunteering their time to serve the community.

C. Mayor's Report

On behalf of Councilman O'Toole, Mayor Bernstein acknowledged Julia Burdge, DPW Administrative Assistant, for her work on the 2019 BCUA Recycling Enhancement Grant, noting that the Borough was awarded funding in the amount of \$2,180.32. Ron Kistner, Administrative Officer/Director of Operations, will be providing an update on the O&R project during his report. Although the leaf pickup program ended last week, when time permitted, the DPW picked up any additional bags that were left out. The Borough streets were swept yesterday prior to the snow

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activity. Mayor Bernstein expressed appreciation to Dan Richards, DPW Crew Chief, and the DPW staff for salting the roadways yesterday.

Mayor Bernstein advised that he attended the CERT holiday celebration on December 11<sup>th</sup>. He commented that CERT is an integral part of the Public Safety team and thanked them for their service. He also met with all committees to review their respective budget requests as well as Anne Dodd, Municipal Clerk, Ron Kistner, Administrative Officer, and Michelle Ryan, Deputy Clerk, to begin working on the Reorganization Meeting agenda. He attended the Northwest Bergen Mayors' holiday party two Sundays ago and the Holiday Walk two Fridays ago, commenting that both were nice events. Pet Licensing will begin on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, the application for which can be completed online through GovPilot. This application must be completed by January 31<sup>st</sup> in order to avoid a late fee. The Board of Health will be holding a free rabies clinic on January 11<sup>th</sup> from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ambulance Corps Building and 2020 pet licenses may be obtained at that time. The Finance Department has been working on closing out the year financially as well as preparing the 2020 budget. Notification was received that the budget introduction and adoption dates have been revised to March 30<sup>th</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup> respectively. The Menorah Lighting will take place on December 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6 p.m. in front of Borough Hall.

#### D. Staff Reports

Ray Wiss, Municipal Attorney, advised that he has been working with Mr. Kistner on property maintenance and personnel matters as well as contract negotiations. He further advised that he has also been assisting Ms. Dodd with OPRA requests.

Anne Dodd, Municipal Clerk, reported that she has received 29 OPRA requests to date this month and 490 OPRA requests to date year.

Ron Kistner, Administrative Officer/Director of Operations, provided an update on the Orange and Rockland project and announced that it should be completed no later than next Friday. He advised that Heights Road is expected to be paved in the spring.

Councilman Strauch inquired whether the sidewalks will be reopened and Mr. Kistner responded that they are expected to be reopened this weekend.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilman Strauch, second by Councilwoman Homan, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Anne Dodd, RMC  
Municipal Clerk