

CITY OF PORT REPUBLIC
6:30 p.m. JUNE 9, 2020
REGULAR VIRTUAL (ZOOM) CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Adequate notice of this meeting was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. On the motion of Councilmember Kozlowski, seconded by Councilmember Bugdon and carried to close the workshop portion of the meeting.

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Steven Allgeyer, Doris Bugdon, Roger Giberson, Stanley Kozlowski, Thomas Kurtz, Donna Riegel

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: Kevin Wessler

MAYOR: Gary B. Giberson

MUNICIPAL CLERK: Kimberly A. Campellone, RMC

ATTORNEY: Ray Went, Esq.

Councilmember Kozlowski called the meeting to order and lead the flag salute. This is to advise the general public and to instruct that it be recorded in the minutes, in compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, entitled the "Open Public Meetings Act". The Municipal Clerk of the City of Port Republic posted at City Hall, 143 Main Street, Port Republic and mailed and/or faxed to the Atlantic City Press and the Current Newspaper, a meeting notice setting for the time, date and locations of this meeting.

MOTION TO APPROVE MAY 12, 2020 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Allgeyer and carried.

YES: Allgeyer, Bugdon, Giberson, Kozlowski, Kurtz, Riegel

NO:

ABSENT: Wessler

ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO APPROVE MAY 12, 2020 CITY COUNCIL MEETING EXECUTIVE MINUTES:

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Allgeyer and carried.

YES: Allgeyer, Bugdon, Giberson, Kozlowski, Kurtz, Riegel

NO:

ABSENT: Wessler

ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO APPROVE JUNE 2020 BILL LIST

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Giberson and carried.

YES: Allgeyer, Bugdon, Giberson, Kozlowski, Kurtz, Riegel

NO:

ABSENT: Wessler

ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO PAY ALL SIGNED BILLS

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Giberson and carried.

YES: Allgeyer, Bugdon, Giberson, Kozlowski, Kurtz, Riegel

NO:

ABSENT: Wessler

ABSTAIN:

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Police/Emergency Management

Mayor Giberson reported that he has been in communication with the New Jersey State Troopers. There have been problems on the bridge and on the beach, they have been patrolling those areas.

Councilmember Kozlowski reported that with the ongoing Executive Orders issued by the Governor, the one that most affects us here in town is primarily the June 22nd date when we will be able to open the baseball fields. Monday, June 15th they will be opening outdoor dining at restaurants and he believes there will be another Executive Order allowing increases in public attendance and a few other things from the Governor coming out this week.

Administrative/Personnel:

No report

Public Works:

Councilmember Kozlowski reminded the public that Public Works is repairing the storm drain on the corner of Mill Road and Pomona Avenue.

Recreation:

Councilmember Bugdon reported that two Lifeguards have been hired, one of which is an adult. One Beach Badge Attendant has been hired for weekends only. Two portable toilets have been ordered and they will be maintained according to State Regulations in regard to the Executive Orders. Public Works Director Bill Montag measured the beach and determined a maximum capacity of 160 at one time. The City will be selling seasonal beach badges at \$5 each for the season. There will be no discount for seniors or military for this year. Children 12 and under will still be free. Masks have been ordered, along with hand sanitizers. Since we were not open, the County had not been testing our water. Clerk Campellone spoke with the County and advised them that the City would be opening on Saturday, June 13th. With that information, the County tested the water on Monday, June 8th. The results for the water were good.

Councilmember Bugdon stated that Atlantic County has not yet reached its peak with cases of COVID-19. On Friday, May 15th we had 1,666 cases, with 104 deaths. As of today, Tuesday, June 9th we have 2,449 cases, with 170 deaths. That is 783 cases and 66 deaths in 25 days. She is adamant that the beachgoers practice social distancing and wear masks when needed. She hopes that all of Council will allow the Recreation Committee to open the beach.

Councilmember Riegel asked Councilmember Bugdon how we plan on regulating the 160 maximum persons count on the beach. Councilmember Bugdon responded that it would be up to the Lifeguards and there will be stakes showing the appropriate distancing of 6 feet. Families are able to gather as a group, but the next person or group to come must be at least 6 foot away from them.

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded of Councilmember Giberson and carried that the Port Beach open with the recommendations of Councilmember Bugdon and Mayor Giberson and that the signage requirements and requirements under the Executive Orders of the State are met.

YES: Allgeyer, Bugdon, Giberson, Kozlowski, Kurtz, Riegel

NO:

ABSENT: Wessler

ABSTAIN:

Councilmember Kozlowski asked Councilmember Bugdon when she felt the beach could be opened. Councilmember Bugdon responded she would like the beach to be opened beginning this weekend (Saturday, June 13th) and that we should start selling beach badges.

Councilmember Bugdon reminded the public that City Hall does not take debit or credit cards. They must pay by cash or check for their beach badges.

Councilmember Allgeyer asked how the Clerk and Deputy Clerk will be protected. Councilmember Bugdon responded that they have hand sanitizer and masks. They are also protected by the glass window at the office.

Attorney Went suggested that for in the future, the City look into opening up a Venmo account or other way of receiving money. Clerk Campellone will look into this application.

Councilmember Kozlowski thanked Councilmember Bugdon and the Recreation Committee for the hard work they have put into this issue.

Fire and Ambulance:

Councilmember Allgeyer reported that the Fire Department is doing fine. Chief Yochim has said that everything is running well. They had to buy a case of gloves.

Board of School Estimates:

Councilmember Giberson reported that the School Board Budget was approved, and the City is done as far as their budget goes.

Planning Board:

Councilmember Riegel reported there has not been a meeting.

Construction Department / Code Enforcement:

During the Month of April, a total of 1 inspection was done by the Construction Office: Alterations (3) Demos (0) New (0) Additions (0) Zoning Permits (0) CO Inspections for Resale (0) Total of (3)

During the Month of May, a total of 8 inspections were done by the Construction Office: Alterations (2) Demos (0) New (0) Additions (0) Zoning Permits (2) CO Inspections for Resale (2) Total of (6)

Kevin Cain is working on a Code Enforcement issue at 75 Clarks Landing Road.

Senior Services/Clean Communities:

Councilmember Bugdon stated she has nothing to report for Clean Communities. She will not have the Clean Team this year due to COVID-19.

Councilmember Bugdon is still receiving requests for equipment for the seniors and is still taking the equipment back. When the equipment is brought back it is being sanitized.

Building:

No report.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Letter from Virginia Otepka regarding keeping the Transfer Station open 1:00 pm to 9:00 pm all the time (on Wednesdays).

Councilmember Kozlowski stated that the Public Works Committee will meet to bring a recommendation to Council. Councilmember Bugdon added that she personally thinks it is a fantastic idea.

Consent Agenda: All matters listed under Consent Agenda, are considered to be routine by this City Council and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

RESOLUTIONS:

60-2020 Appointment of Alternate Public Defender, namely Jerry Steiner

61-2020 Appointment of Alternate Municipal Prosecutor, namely Daniel Alsofrom

62-2020 Appointment of Municipal Tax Assessor, namely William M. Johnson

On the motion of Councilmember Riegel, seconded of Councilmember Bugdon and carried.

YES: Allgeyer, Bugdon, Giberson, Kozlowski, Kurtz, Riegel

NO:

ABSENT: Wessler

ABSTAIN:

ORDINANCES – 1ST READING/INTRODUCTION

05-2020 Private Storm Drain Inlet Retrofitting Ordinance

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Giberson and carried.

YES: Allgeyer, Bugdon, Giberson, Kozlowski, Kurtz, Riegel

NO:

ABSENT: Wessler

ABSTAIN:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Pomona Avenue (letter attached)

Councilmember Kozlowski explained that the City received a grant to pave Pomona Avenue. The letter from the State lists 10 items which need to be addressed before they move ahead with the project. There may be a slight delay in the paving project.

NEW BUSINESS:

Postponement of Fireworks Display until June 19, 2021

Bamboo Ordinance

Councilmember Kozlowski explained that the City's Code Enforcement Officer, Kevin Cain, is recommending that Council add into the current Property Maintenance Ordinance a section pertaining to the growth of bamboo. There is a conflict currently going on in town with this issue. Clerk Campellone stated that an Ordinance for introduction will be ready for July's meeting.

Councilmember Bugdon stated that this is very important that we add this to our Property Maintenance Code. This plant is the most invasive plant in our area. She does not think we need to deal with a whole new ordinance, but an amendment to the City's ordinance.

Councilmember Riegel agreed with Councilmember Bugdon. She was looking at Egg Harbor's Code and she thinks that the least amount we put in there and not have it defining what bamboo is best. She was looking in Egg Harbor's section 213:5.1 a & b that talks about homeowners' responsibility and bamboo and also in Northfield's item 2 talks about the fines for non-compliance. She thinks it would be good to have those two items included in ours without making it so expansive.

Councilmember Allgeyer questioned if it would only be for bamboo since some of the codes provided from other towns as examples included mention of other species. Councilmember Riegel stated that she does not think that Council wants to get into specifics, only bamboo. It also talks about other invasive plants, like vines and bushes. She thinks that would be enough to cover it all.

PROCLAMATIONS:

Mayor Giberson stated that we should all enjoy each other's company and get through the crazy times all over the world and keep praying that someone comes up with an vaccine and that we can start our lives the way we want to live them. Have faith and help each other. Call your neighbor once in a while to make sure they are ok. And be safe.

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION

On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded by Councilmember Riegel and carried.

Attorney Went read a comment from the chat section on the Zoom meeting. The comment was from Jenny to everyone and read "Governor Murphy tweeted and announcement today anticipating being able to raise the limit on outdoor no protest gatherings of 250 on 6/22 and 500 people on 7/3. Why are we going to spend funds on something that with only last for a month?". Attorney Went responded he does not know what this comment is in reference to. Councilmember Giberson explained that the Governor raised a lot of numbers today and things are begging to open back up. Councilmember Riegel added that she believes indoor gatherings are now at 25% capacity. Councilmember Kozlowski stated that it is a 25% capacity, cap at 50. 100 people immediately and 500 by the end of the month for outdoor gatherings.

Jenny Williams, 340 Upper Pomona Avenue, discussed the School Board Meetings she has attended lately. The school is under financial distress. Her concern is how can our City cut funds where we can and use any funds to help the school. She stated that the trend with the Governor is that things are moving to a point of being more open and she would hate to see the City utilize a lot of funds for something that could only last a few days. It could change before our next meeting. Her second concern with the school is that, she knows the school was just able to present a second balance budget at their last meeting, but there is an anticipation of the Governor having to make further cuts come August. She wants to know if that would affect our budget and how as a town can we foresee those cuts for our school. Attorney Went stated that he believes that the safety concerns were addressed under the Recreation portion of the meeting. Councilmember Giberson stated that the school's budget for this year has already been approved and submitted. Of course, no one knows what will happen as far as funding cuts from the State. The Governor has floated around the figure of being down over \$10 Billion in revenue. We have no idea where we are going to end up and what will happen with his budget in August. We have already seen a substantial cut to school funding this year and we can probably say we are going to be looking at more cuts in

the school budget in August and also in municipal aid. A shut down in the economy like this has never been done before. The revenue that is not coming into the State of New Jersey is astronomical. Unfortunately, we are unable to deal with that kind of situation until we see what the actual numbers are. He thinks it is going to be a long drawn out process. 2021 may even be worse than 2020. This is going to affect us for a long time. We will have to deal with it accordingly. The school passed with a \$0.05 tax increase this year. We cannot move forward until we see the actual figures. We need to be prepared for it to get worse before it gets better. We are expecting a decrease in State funding. Jenny responded that she knows some members of Council have children in the school, but to see the demise of the school and it is happening so quickly, she feels the City should exhaust every option we possibly can. She does not want the City to turn our backs on the school. The school has made so many cuts and they have lost good teachers. She appreciates Council's efforts and wants the discussion to continue. She thanked Council for addressing it. Councilmember Giberson commented that as a graduate of Port School he guarantees no one is going to turn their back on the school. The School Board did a great job passing their budget. They worked very hard to get to where they needed to be. Unfortunately, the special education costs are through the roof. It is costing anywhere from \$40,000 - \$60,000 for one-on-one. Unfortunately, without that funding coming from the State, it is a lot to put on any municipality. But no one is going to turn their back on the school. Mayor Giberson agreed and stated that the school is so important to this town; it is an anchor for our youth. He thanked both the Board of School Estimates and the School Board for all of the hard work they have done. He is going to contact Jeff VanDrew to inquire if there is any Federal assistance for our school. Councilmember Kurtz added that there was a large turnout at the last school board meeting. He has personally talked to other members of Council, as a councilmember and as a parent, he has seen so much support and passion from the other councilmembers that they will do whatever needs to be done for the school. No one is happy about the consolidation of the upper grades. He knows that the teachers and the school are going to do an excellent job. Councilmember Allgeyer added that we will get through this, it will be temporary. Councilmember Giberson responded to Councilmember Kurtz stating that we still do not know what the school year will look like in the Fall. He stated that if there are any fundraisers that the PTS wanted to do, Council would be supportive.

Clerk Campellone read a comment from the chat section on the Zoom meeting. The comment was from Scott Summerill of 114 Central Avenue and read "I've seen Galloway Police in the town a lot lately. Are they patrolling?" Councilmember Giberson responded no. Councilmember Bugdon explained that they go from one area of Galloway to another and that is why they are being seen in town.

Frank Brown, 66 Pomona Avenue, thanked Mayor, Council and the City employees for the work they have been doing during this tough time. He thanked Councilmember Bugdon for helping seniors and others in need in our town with volunteers going grocery shopping and other things of that nature. He was grateful for the opportunity today to help out a fellow resident. Port Community Church has been renting the building at 118 Main Street. Their lease was from June 1, 2019 until May 31, 2020. The lease came to

an end and negotiations were not fruitful. They were unable to continue their lease. They were able to obtain a 60-day extension to utilize the building. This will end on July 31st. He is asking Council for their help finding an alternative location. He is asking what the congregation's process should be to begin accessing the pavilion and the grounds around it for their worship time. Attorney Went explained that they would need to complete an application similar to the Triathlon. They will need to provide their insurance.

CLOSED TO THE FLOOR FOR TOPICS FOR PUBLIC PORTION:

Hearing nothing from the public, Councilmember Bugdon moved, seconded of Councilmember Giberson and carried to close the public portion.

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Giberson and carried to adjourn at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly A. Campellone, RMC Municipal Clerk