

CITY OF PORT REPUBLIC
6:30 p.m. JUNE 15, 2021
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Adequate notice of this meeting was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. On the motion of Council President 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, Jacob Nass

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: Donna Riegel

ACTING MAYOR: Stanley Kozlowski

MUNICIPAL CLERK: Kimberly A. Campellone, RMC

ATTORNEY: Ray Went, Esq.

Council President 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 APRIL 13, 2021 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO APPROVE APRIL 13, 2021 EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING MINUTES:

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO APPROVE APRIL 27, 2021 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES:

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO APPROVE MAY 11, 2021 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO APPROVE JUNE 2021 BILL LIST

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

YES: Allgeyer, Giberson, Kozlowski, Kurtz, Nass

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN: Bugdon (PO #21-00247)

MOTION TO PAY ALL SIGNED BILLS

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

YES: Allgeyer, Giberson, Kozlowski, Kurtz, Nass,

NO:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN: Bugdon (PO #21-00247)

PROCLAMATION

Proclamation Acknowledging Carol Rott for Her Volunteerism and Induction into the Atlantic County Women's Hall of Fame

Acting Mayor Kozlowski presented Carol Rott with a proclamation acknowledging her volunteerism and her induction into the Atlantic County Women's Hall of Fame. Mrs. Rott thanked Mayor and Council and her family. She reminded the audience to be the light and to be kind to one another.

PRESENTATION

Presentation by James Ferguson Regarding Countywide Municipal Court System

James Ferguson thanked Mayor and Council for allowing him to present to them tonight. The initiative to have a countywide court system was started last summer by County Executive Levinson. The central location would be at the old courthouse in Mays Landing. This would be an agreement between the County, the court system and the participating municipalities. This is voluntary and is not being forced. The County would provide the facility and take on cost of capital improvements to outfit the facility to serve as multiple courtrooms. The County would also be responsible for the purchasing of security devices and provide court security. The administrative offices of the court

would provide funds for the installation of IT equipment needed and the special recording systems utilized by the courts. There will be two committees: the governance committee and the personnel committee. These committees would be made up of five (5) municipal representatives. The governance committee would be the liaison with the court system and will hold quarterly meetings and report back to the various municipalities as to how the court is functioning. They would also assist in the budget process. The personnel committee would be in charge of meeting with the court officials of the AOC to determine, depending on the number of participating municipalities, how many employees are needed. They would also come up with salary recommendations for the various positions. They would also be involved in the hiring process.

At this time, the County is still awaiting legislation from the State to allow the County to move forward. They should know more with the next week or so. They have been granted funding to help them with this project.

With Port Republic being as small as it is (if we chose to opt in) the savings are not as big dollar wise or percentage wise as some of the larger municipalities.

Acting Mayor Kozlowski asked if we were to choose to opt in with the Countywide court system, is there going to be any residual equipment or obligation on the part of the City's physical court. Mr. Ferguson responded that their plan is to set up kiosks in the municipal buildings, if the municipalities deemed, they want them. This would give someone the ability to go online to enter their plea or provide testimony virtually without having to go out to Mays Landing. This would be able to be used by Police Officers as well.

Councilmember Giberson asked if funding would be obtained by fees assessed to each municipality or if it would be coming out of the County tax levy. Mr. Ferguson responded that the budget would be created and that each municipality would be assessed by their percentage of cases compared to the total number of cases. For example, if our municipality represented 5% of the cases, 5% of the budget would be billed to our municipality. Furthermore, the way the legislation is written, any fines and costs that stay with the municipality would be allocated by the central court to our municipality. They would be held by the Court Administrator and at the end of the year applied to the charges for the ensuing year. If there is a surplus in there, the surplus would go back to our municipality. If not, then charges would be owed January or February of the following year.

Councilmember Giberson stated that they have 16 participating municipalities, so how many days of the month are they planning on holding court sessions? Mr. Ferguson responded that they are anticipating running the court 5 days a week, Monday – Friday. There would be morning, afternoon, and possibly evening sessions.

Councilmember Giberson asked what they are anticipating the staffing requirements of the court will be. Mr. Ferguson responded that they are estimating they would need 2/3 of the staff of all the participating court offices.

Councilmember Nass made point that we currently hire our own Judge and Prosecutor. He asked if the Governor would be responsible to hiring the Judges and Prosecutors of the Countywide Court System. Mr. Ferguson responded that the Governor would be tasked with that responsibility.

Acting Mayor Kozlowski thanked Mr. Ferguson for his time and stated that we would be in touch.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Police/Emergency Management:

Council President Kozlowski read the report received from Station Commander Charlee-Jo Steet for the month of May. The report reads as follows:

Tuckerton Station Troopers responded and handled several calls for service in Port Republic during the month of May.

These calls included numerous motor vehicle stops, one of which resulted in the arrest of DWI. There was one Motor Vehicle Accident. Troopers investigated a theft. Additionally, there were multiple calls for service, which included: 911 Hang ups, ATV complaint, Juvenile complaint, Fireworks complaint, (9) Medical Assists, suspicious vehicle complaint, and (3) Well Being checks.

Administrative/Personnel:

Council President Kozlowski reported that we have collected \$492,513.00 in taxes, year to date. The Clerk's Office collected a total of \$64,881.56 to date.

Public Works:

Council President Kozlowski reported that for the month of May, DPW:

- Took delivery of the new Kubota mower.
- Cleaned swale from Mill Bridge Ct. to Nacote Creek (multiple times).
- Continuing to monitor dam levels - raising and lowering sluice gates as needed. We are in the middle of a dam study project which we should be receiving some sort of a report over the next couple of weeks. The next step will be to analyze the stormwater regions and supplies of water. Thereafter, a recommendation will be made to actually fix the dam. This is a big project for Port Republic.
- Hired one temporary employee for the summer months (AJ).
- Expecting delivery of the new dump truck in August/September.
- Prepped the Port beach for summer.
- Prepped, assisted, and cleaned up the Jersey Genesis Triathlon.

Recreation:

Councilmember Bugdon reported beach badges are still being sold. The two lifeguards and beach badge attendant are doing well.

Fire and Ambulance:

Councilmember Allgeyer stated that the Fire Department would like to thank everyone for their support during their last dinner. They sold out.

Councilmember Allgeyer added that the Fire Department has ordered two new oxygen/carbon monoxide monitors.

Board of School Estimates:

Council President Kozlowski stated that there have been a couple of meetings with an adhoc committee. Councilmember Allgeyer and Councilmember Giberson are being kept up to date as the other members of the Board of School Estimates. They are starting to look into the funding issues that the school is facing.

Council President Kozlowski believes that the school administration is contacting consultants with a LEAP grant that they received to help us look at different ways of funding the school. They are planning on having a City Hall meeting once there is more to discuss.

Planning Board:

No report

Construction Department / Code Enforcement:

During the Month of May , a total of 7 inspections were done by the Construction Office: Alterations (2) Demos (0) New (2) Additions (1) Zoning Permits (2) CO Inspections for Resale (1) Total of (8)

There are no code enforcement issues for the month of May.

Senior Services/Clean Communities:

Councilmember Bugdon reported that she has had quite a few requests for physical aides in the past month. She is happy to have such a wonderful service for people in need.

Councilmember Bugdon added that she has hired four city youth which will make up the Clean Team. They will be working four days a week: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:00 am until 12:00 pm. They will be starting Monday, June 21st.

Marijuana Legalization & Licensing:

Councilmember Kurtz stated that he is excited to have the ordinance to vote on and he thinks it is well written. He is happy we are making progress prior to the State's deadline.

Council President Kozlowski explained that the way the law is written right now, if we make the decision to ban the marijuana licenses that will give us the option to change our mind any time in the next 5 years. If someone was to come up with a compelling reason to buy, sell, distribute marijuana we could entertain it. If we did not do anything, we would have been prevented from acting within the next 5 years. We are having the second reading of that Ordinance tonight.

Additionally, we will be having the first reading of an Ordinance to ban the consumption of cannabis in public.

Historical:

No report

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION

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

Nicole Rose, 15 Shell Landing Road, thanked Mayor and Council for taking the time to listen to some concerns. Her family moved to Port Republic 4 years ago for many reasons, small town environment and their number one reason being the Port Republic School. She is a teacher within the district, not at Port Republic School. At the high school she teaches at, they can typically tell who the Port kids are as they are above educationally and usually the most respectful in the building. She wanted her children to be "Port kids". Her concerns are that many of the community members have attempted to raise questions during the School Board meetings and they are shut down. Even teachers are shut down and not allowed to ask questions. They feel that this is one of the forums they can come to and have someone listen to their concerns. She is concerned for her children's safety within the building. For instance, there was recently a technology breach at the school building. Parents were not notified of this. Her nine-year-old child came home from school to express that she was questioned alone by the male principal. Her daughter was upset and scared. Nicole wrote an email where the response was that her daughter would be questioned as many times as he likes and that a parent does not have to be present. After her emailing and phoning the school, that is when the parents were made aware that there was a problem with the technology. When returning to school her daughter was again called to the principal's office to be questioned alone. She came home crying. Both of her children did not want to return to school. She instructed her children to respond that they are not allowed to be questioned unless a parent or another individual is in the room. Again, her nine-year-old daughter was told she needed to be questioned and she refused and was crying. Nicole found this out from another parent. Since this, her children have been attending fully virtual. She has contacted the school to find out what kind of safety measures are in place for technology and she is not permitted to have that information. She is not finding the school to be a safe environment for her children currently. There are many more concerns she has, but it would take more than her 5 minutes. She speaks on behalf of the special education students in that building with IEP's. They are grossly being neglected and not receiving the services they need. She has spoke with

parents who are going through different means to get their children the services they need. The school is not in compliance with IEP's. The school has no curriculum. She has asked for curriculum and she receives copies of books they are using. As an educator, she has an issue with that. Their Board of Education does not listen and cuts them off. They do not want to hear their concerns, so here they are, trying to utilize Mayor and Council as a voice for them because they are getting no where within the building.

Council President Kozlowski thanked Nicole for speaking.

Matthew Burton, 101 Mill Street, also has concerns over the curriculum. Since they do not have access to a curriculum it is hard to assess what they are missing out on and what is supposed to be provided. They do know by the State Department of Education, what is supposed to be provided to their children. He has brought this up at Board of Education meetings and the responses he has received are unsatisfactory in his opinion. Music, theatre, visual arts, media arts and dance are five requirements by the Department of Education. Their children should have equitable access to these disciplines, and they do not. He pays for his child to get musical instruction. There was access at one point, but to say because of the pandemic it is hard to provide these is falling short of what the situation actually is. They have been falling short for quiet some time. His children have no introduction to world language. This is also a mandate that they are supposed to have access to. When he brought this up before, he was told that this is a small community and our budget is tight. He does understand this, but these are requirements that their children are due.

Ron Stetser, 333 Delker Boulevard (not a resident but his child attends Port Republic School as a choice student), the IT in the school during March, April and May, a child in third grade sees pornography and then a child in seventh grade sees pornography. He wants to know who the IT person is and if he is even doing his job. How is it even possible that this could even happen at a school. Another issue he has heard from a lot of parents is there was a separation of special needs kids where they are putting them in one day but they shouldn't be doing that, they should be putting them through so they are comfortable. He thinks everyone is going to come to Mayor and Council because this isn't right.

Acting Mayor Kozlowski stated that this is the first time that many Councilmembers are hearing a lot of these details. He has spoken to some parents but not everyone has the same exact story, so he is glad everyone is here tonight to share. Councilmember Giberson added that this is the place to do it because Council likes to hear this one on one and not on Facebook or online. Issues for the communities should be brought to Mayor and Council during their meetings. If they know, they can address them accordingly. Attorney Went made a suggestion that a concerned parent could take the lead to provide Mayor and Council with a bullet point list of all their concerns regarding the school. It would help to have all the issues in front of us in writing. The list should be emailed or given to Clerk Campellone.

Mike Stetser, 201 Delker Boulevard, his child is a choice student at Port Republic School. Listening to all the of the other parents shows that there are a lot of problems going on at the school. The Board of Education has dropped the ball. These kids are friends and play together. He wants Mayor and Council to hold the School Board accountable. He feels this is turning to a big mess and spreading like a disease.

Ms. Cairns, 473 Chestnut Neck Road, she grew up in Port Republic and went to the school and it was wonderful. She was prepared for High School and her academics were great. Her sixth grader is no where near the levels she was at her age. She also has a stepdaughter who went to Galloway schools, so she can compare the curriculums between them, and we are beyond subpar. To the point where her youngest, who is special needs and sent out of district, the ultimate goal as a special needs mom is for your child to be functioning enough to be in general ed. Ultimately her goal would be to have him come back to this school, but she does not want that. she does not want her child to function well enough to come back to this school which is a horrible feeling. As far as Mr. London, she will say nothing because she cannot be respectful, it is that bad.

Brian Hartman, 118 Old New York Road, his son has an IEP and a couple years ago he started substitute teaching in Galloway Township to be able to better help his son. With his IEP, his understanding is that if you have an IEP you are not allowed to be separated with all IEP children. You have to be included; it's called inclusion with general education children. His son was separated and put in the Monday/Tuesday cohort. His therapist was speaking with him and asked him to name all of his friends and he names about ten kids. He told his son that his therapist is looking for the people in his cohort. His son responded that those are the people in his cohort. He knows there are only fourteen kids in the whole class, so how could there be ten going on Monday and Tuesday. Afterwards, he looked into it and there were ten kids in his class going on Monday and Tuesday. There were only four kids going Thursday and Friday. The majority of kids attending on Monday and Tuesday all has IEP's, except for their siblings. None of the kids attending on Thursday and Friday has IEP's and that is illegal. He wants his son to be modeling regular behavior. He wants him in a class where he can settle down to listen and learn. On October 1, 2020, Mr. Hartman requested to have his son moved to Thursday and Friday cohort. On October 2nd he received a response from Mr. London stating that the change could not be met because they would not be able to accommodate his IEP on those days. Mr. Hartman requested that his IEP be removed, and he be sent to school on Thursday and Friday. Mr. London never responded. Mr. Hartman conveyed his concerns to his son's therapist in hopes that she could convey those concerns to Mr. DiDonato, the school child psychologist. He got back to Mr. Hartman on October 27th. His son was finally moved to the Thursday Friday cohort on November 9th. At his son's IEP review last month he was told it was the smartest thing he had ever done because he adjusted so well. You cannot get an answer to anything. The School Board shuts you down when you ask things, or you are dismissed, or they do not answer because they do not have to. The parents need answers as to what is going on in the school. The parents no longer trust the school.

Felicity Neil, 245 Liverpool Avenue, her child is a choice student of Port Republic School. She thanked Mayor and Council for allowing her to share her concerns she has as a parent. In 2016 her family moved which caused a transition to a new school system. They were lucky enough to be given a choice student spot in Port Republic. She was warmly greeted by the then interim principal. Over the years she has gotten to know her son's teachers and some of the other Port parents. Her family loves the school, its teachers, and its community. Sadly, over the past couple of years there has been a shift with the new school principal. Things started to really change for her a little over a year ago. In the beginning, she attended many of the virtual school board meetings to keep apprised to the ever-changing circumstances as well as offer her voice as a parent. It became evident, almost immediately, that if anyone was to offer an opinion contrary to that of the administration, they would be shut down right away. So many concerns were unaddressed, and concerns were ignored or unanswered. The most frustrating part to her, was a lack of communication. The phrase often uttered by the principal at the end of a meeting would be "feel free to reach out to me", and yet emails would go unanswered and phone calls unreturned. How can an environment of animosity not be created when you refuse to communicate with the parents of your school? The school system is so small it should be a fairly easy task to get to know each child on a personal level and have an open dialog with each parent. This is a very big part of the job which is absolutely lacking in this case. One of only a handful of times she received a response to an email which was in the school year, she was addressed as Mr. (*ineligible*) and at that time she was a serving member of the PTS. This shows the clear lack of effort put forth to get to know the parents. Secondly, she has concerns regarding the security of issuing and monitoring of school issued devices. Just as students are responsible for caring for their chrome books, the principal is responsible for the connection and applications loaded onto the equipment. Apart from the most recent incidents that were investigated, there have been many other incidents which occurred previously. It begs the question of, where is the oversight? Is no one monitoring these devices until just recently? And why weren't programs shut down for the safety of all students when these security issues were discovered? There was a stipend to assist in this additional security, but she is not clear on what exactly was provided. They need to be more thoughtful and proactive. During many of the school board meetings she heard parent after parent offer assistance in any way they could. The community coming together and trying desperately to help. Time again it seems it was dismissed. She cannot speak for everyone there, but her husband and her feel there is a huge lack of communication. There were a few times when questions or concerns raised to the principal went unanswered, so they felt the only other option they could think of was to show up at the school. They did so only to find the principal absent. They never received any communication to say sorry that he missed them. She prays that their voices are heard and change is considered.

Paul Smisek, 111 Moss Mill Road, he cannot speak to the security issues that people are discussing as he has no knowledge of them. He agrees that there seems to be a confrontational situation going on between parents and the board and principal since they started their son in September. His interpretation is that parents are attacking the principal and school board and their decisions. There were a lot of demands. He

understands they want for the children to attend full-time but given the regulations, it wasn't reasonable. A lot of the issues he is hearing today sound like personal issues between people and the principal, which have to be handled on their own. With the pandemic, they cannot provide the level of education they normally would in 5 hours a day, 2 days a week and the rest of the week virtual. We are a small town with not a ton of teachers, but we also have 15 kids per class instead of 30. When you have 30 kids to a classroom in a municipality you can afford to have a band teacher, a chorus teacher, a French and a Spanish teacher. Part of the reason he moved to Port Republic is the small class sizes and the personal attention. He would hate to see our school have to consolidate with another district to try to provide that, if necessary, and they are not meeting the standards they need to, he would rather find a way for them to pay more. He has found that, in his opinion, the school board did the best it could with all the regulations that were handed down from the State. As far as the curriculum goes and what they had to do in that time period, those are valid concerns that people can bring up and talk to Mayor and Council about, but he cannot speak to those as that is not his background. What he can say, is that students all over are struggling with online learning and shorter hours. It's a universal concern. When there is bad blood to begin with, it just makes everything else worse. He has not had any issues personally with Mr. London in the couple times he has discussed things with him. He is not dismissing anyone else's experience, but he found him to be responsive and respectful.

Councilmember Kurtz stated that people are here because they love Port, because they love the school and because they love their kids. This is a small town. We are all neighbors, but he still does not know a lot regarding these issues. The first time in this building that he has voiced a complaint, he did so because he was passionate and concerned about something. He urged the audience to not be intimidated. He asked people if they have something to share, to please do so.

Jennifer Williams, 340 Upper Pomona Avenue, said that she is very excited to see all the faces of the parents here. She likes to see community involvement. She expressed to Mayor and Council that she has felt over the last 15 months or so, that there has been a lot of personal frustrations. COVID has not helped those issues. She has been involved in the school for the past 8 years or so. She loves this town. The school is the reason they moved here. She loves every one of those teachers. The teachers and staff are amazing. She has served on the PTS as a board member for the last 2 years and she will continue to serve as the president. She is excited to do so. She wants to bridge the community and the school. She wants to bring everyone together for the benefits of the kids. There have been severe, ongoing, issues over the last several months. A lot of the issues involve technology concerns and curriculum concerns. She is hopeful that by them sharing their concerns, there is something the City can help do. No one wants to see the school go away.

Attorney Went asked the audience to show by hand how many are there due to their concerns regarding the school. Council President Kozlowski reiterated that if there is some way the parents could create a concentrated list to Mayor and Council. If not, an email or letter sent would be sufficient to get a combination of thoughts and feelings

about everything. He further explained that City Council has two responsibilities to the school and the school board. The first is the Mayor's job of appointing the school board. They are appointed for 5-year terms. He has been in the role of Acting Mayor for a month to a month and a half. There is no oversight or governance of the school board, per say. The oversight and the governance begins with the school board. The second thing is there is a board of school estimates. The current board of school estimates consists of the Mayor and two councilmember, Steve Allgeyer and Roger Giberson, along with two members of school administration. This group decides on the final operation budget of the school. We have a Type I school district. In this type of district, we negotiate the budget with them, but the school administration is responsible for that budget. The Board of School Estimates looks forward to the budget discussions that occur towards the end of the year, every year. It is a good legislative effort. Those are the responsibilities of City Council. That does not mean they will not listen to the concerns of the residents. They will be listening to their concerns. That is officially where they stand. He too is learning as they go along. They are taking their concerns seriously and will do what they can do. It has been a difficult time with COVID in many aspects.

Brian Hartman, 118 Old New York Road, is baffled listening in on the school board meetings on the explanations of how they got to point A to point D with certain decisions on how they kept certain people and let certain people go. He questioned if there is no oversight or if no one can sit in on that. Councilmember Giberson responded that it is Council and that they are the oversight. He said that if this many people show up to a Council meeting, it is time they look at what is going on at the school. He himself is a graduate of Port Republic Elementary School. All his children as well. He says this is the best school in the State of New Jersey, if not the whole nation. One of the best teachers in the whole country is here tonight along with people who care about their children. Once in a while we get someone like a bad school administrator, we have been down this road before. Being a small school district, we have a hard time holding onto a good school administrator. We have had a few good ones, but unfortunately, they usually tend to be filling in on the tail end of their career. That's often where we run into an issue. But that doesn't mean we can't root out a bad seed. We'll make that happen as a community, as Mayor and Council, as a school board. The school board are volunteers who are appointed by the Mayor. He would love to see anyone who has a true concern to speak with the Mayor. There will be some appointments that will be opening. They sometimes have to make decisions that are not popular, but they do what they can with what they have. What makes this school system so great are the parent who care and the good teachers. Other communities do not compare. Councilmember Kurtz added that the members on the school board are our neighbors, they are volunteers. You can disagree with any decision they make, but do not doubt their love for the education of the student of Port Republic.

Councilmember Giberson stated that they brought up good points. There is no reason they should not be able to get an answer about the curriculum. There is no reason that the administrator should not be getting back to them. The things that were brought up are ridiculous and it needs to be dealt with.

Council President Kozlowski added that we need to come up with a plan that is structural and not emotional. He wants to find out what the official recourse is so they do not end up with a counter issue that will cost the City. It will be taken care of. This door is always open, if someone has concerns, they should come and express them. He is glad everyone is there.

Jamie Jarrin, 345 Riverside Drive, she is new and moved into Port Republic about a year ago. She moved to town for many of the reasons that Nicole had mentioned previously. She had heard Port Republic was a good school and that was one of the draws that made her family decide to buy a home here. Her experience sitting on the first board of education meeting on zoom, a parent made a comment before the meeting even began stating "are we going to get somewhere with this or is this going to be another dog and pony show". That set her mind up that this is all for show. Trying to get answers as to why the school was not opening were vague and they were told that there is an air purification system on order. Parents were left in the dark. When the Governor made the decision that all kids are going back to school, the solution from the board or administrator was to cut the day 10 minutes short. The day would now be ending at 12:20 pm, rather than 12:30 pm. Parents were now required to login at 8:00 am to do a health and wellness check. They also needed to login at 1:40 pm for attendance. Parents are now checking attendance and health. This is disappointing and wreaked of a backhanded attempt to make and already difficult virtual life, more difficult for parents. There is a real problem getting answers from the board. Parents don't attend because of this. The teachers are amazing, as well as her son's aides.

Councilmember Kurtz added it has been a rough two years. He is glad everyone showed up. He has learned many issues that he was not aware of before.

Kevin Shockey, he has kids who have graduated from Port Republic School and some who are in the school currently. He attended the meeting because he was told he should by the teachers. The teachers told him if he wants something done about Mr. London then he needs to show his face. If the teachers have a problem with Mr. London, then he has a problem. There is an issue here, and it's his opinion it is Mr. London. Something needs to be done here.

CLOSED TO THE FLOOR FOR TOPICS FOR PUBLIC PORTION:

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

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

RESOLUTIONS:

58-2021 Appointment of Emergency Management Coordinator (Scott Winneberger)
On the motion of Councilmember Giberson, seconded of Councilmember Allgeyer and carried.

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

59-2021 Resolution Providing for the Insertion of a Special Item of Revenue amount of \$4,000.00 in the Budget of the City of Port Republic Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 (Chapter 159, P.L. 1948) Regarding Clean Communities

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

60-2021 Approval to Submit a Grant Application and Execute a Grant Contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for a Portion of Mill Street Project

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

61-2021 Resolution Authorizing Requested Leave of Absence Without Pay to James Milton (from June 14, 2021 return date September 26, 2021)

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

62-2021 Resolution Providing for the Insertion of a Special Item of Revenue amount of \$1,363.19 in the Budget of the City of Port Republic Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 (Chapter 159, P.L. 1948) Regarding Alcohol Education

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

ORDINANCES – Adoption / 2nd Reading:

03-2021 An Ordinance Prohibiting the Operation of Any Class of Cannabis Businesses Within Its Geographical Boundaries and Amending Section 160-6 of the Code of the City of Port Republic

2nd Reading / Adoption

On the motion of Councilmember Giberson, to open public portion seconded of Councilmember Kurtz and carried.

On the motion of Councilmember Giberson, to close public portion seconded of Councilmember Nass and carried

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

ORDINANCES – Introduction / 1st Reading:

04-2021 Adding Chapter 71 of the Port Republic Municipal Code to Prohibit the Smoking of Marijuana in Public Places

1st Reading / Introduction

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

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

NO:

ABSENT: Riegel

ABSTAIN:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Beach Storm Drain

A proposal was received from Engineer Matt Doran which includes drawings. The goal is to move the storm drain from its current location near the beach to further up near the bridge. This will go through the normal grant process and be presented to Council at a future date.

Gravel mine Site

Council President Kozlowski explained that he met with Engineer Matt Doran along with Councilmember Allgeyer, regarding more details and potential for a lease agreement for filling in the gravel mine site. Engineer Doran will be getting back to the City with a draft. Councilmember Giberson feels we need to put out an RFP in order to do our due diligence. He added that the City should look into City-owned properties that can be put up for sale. He feels that the dredge spoil thing will be an issue for residents. Council President Kozlowski added that more detail is needed to create the RFP. This is a work in process. Councilmember Giberson added that we need to be careful of

contamination that can come along with the dredge spoils. Council President Kozlowski responded that we are being careful.

NEW BUSINESS:

Atlantic County Hazard Mitigation Plan

Council President Kozlowski explained that every 5 years, we join with other communities at the County level to show effort on the City's part to reduce future damages from hazardous events, storms, etc., that will inevitably occur. Typically, it will be composed of a list of projects that show that we are trying to elevate houses for example. We are looking into repairing the dam. This is the type of project we are looking to put on this list. When we submit the City's revised and updated plan to the County, it then goes to FEMA and we become an eligible applicant for not only immediate funds, but funds for long term damages and grants. There will be more information coming out.

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded by Councilmember Kurtz and carried.

Niki Giberson, 300 Sooy's Landing Road, is on the school board. She is really glad that she came to the meeting tonight because many of the things she heard tonight, she had never heard before. It did not fall on deaf ears. She wants everyone to understand that with COVID there was so much unknown with trying to reopen the school. They didn't know that it may not affect the kids, but it could affect their grandparents. They had to be cautious. The three main things she did get tonight are: problems with technology, the parents feel like they're the enemy and they have a special ed problem. All those things will be taken back to the school board. She truly feels they have a good school board. Their counsel tells them that they cannot comment on so many things and that is why people feel like they are being shut out. The parents are not the enemy, they are what keeps this school going. She is starting a new program next year called PREP where people can volunteer to help make up the gaps that they cannot afford. Councilmember Giberson asked Nikki as far as extracurricular activities like music and arts, does that have to be a teacher or could it be a community volunteer. Niki responded that it could be a volunteer if it is an afterschool program. The goal is for the children to be as enriched as possible.

Paul Smisek, 111 Moss Mill Road, expressed his opposition to any commercial business being at the now gravel mine site. Council President Kozlowski clarified that he misspoke and only meant that they want to open up the property for an RFP for other land use that would be acceptable to the community, other than the dredging spoils. Mr. Smisek also added that he has a 5-acre property and a lot of times he has trees that he takes down or come down on their own and he normally can cut it up and throw it into the woods. But he has seen seniors digging in the wood pile at the transfer station looking for firewood. He is wondering if there is a way if someone has fallen wood, there could be an area for this at the transfer station and make it available to residents.

Councilmember Giberson stated that he is sure it could be put off to the side for residents to take.

Bob Haviland, 316 English Creek Road, thanked Mayor and Council for the repaving of Pomona Avenue. They did a very nice job. He was also expecting that they would have cleared the right-of-way out to where it should be, but that has not happened. The right-of-way he is speaking of is if you turn the corner of Mill Street and go west, there are a bunch of evergreen trees that are planted in the right-of-way. If you are driving a decent size truck with a mirror sticking out, you'll hit your mirror. Councilmember Kurtz responded that he thinks the trees were just cut. Council President Kozlowksi said he could meet with Mr. Haviland to find out exactly where he is speaking of. Clerk Campellone explained to Mr. Haviland that the issue is there are so many trees in the City's right-of-way, and it was looked at by Construction Official Kevin Cain and he would have to write a lot of residents up for that. Councilmember Giberson stated that the City would investigate this.

CLOSED TO THE FLOOR FOR TOPICS FOR PUBLIC PORTION:

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

ES 6-2021 Authorization to Enter into Executive Session Regarding

1. Port Day / Mayor
2. Port School Update
3. DPW Department

ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Councilmember Bugdon moved, seconded of Councilmember Giberson and carried to enter into executive session.

CLOSE EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Councilmember Allgeyer moved, seconded of Councilmember Bugdon and carried to close executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Councilmember Allgeyer, seconded of Councilmember Bugdon and carried to adjourn at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly A. Campellone, RMC
Municipal Clerk