

CITY OF PORT REPUBLIC
6:30 P.M. AUGUST 13, 2024
CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Doris Bugdon, Roger Giberson, Eugene Hawn, Donna Riegel, Jeffrey Ropiecki, Michael Turner

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: Steven Allgeyer

MAYOR: Monica Giberson

MUNICIPAL CLERK: Brandy M. Blevin, RMC

ATTORNEY: William Kaufmann, Esq.

Council President Giberson 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 Hammonton Gazette, a meeting notice setting for the time, date, and location of this meeting.

MOTION TO APPROVE JULY 9, 2024, CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Riegel and carried to approve the July 9, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes.

YES: Bugdon, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN: Ropiecki

MOTION TO APPROVE AUGUST 2024 BILL LIST:

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Ropiecki and carried to approve the August 2024 Bill List.

YES: Bugdon, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

MOTION TO PAY ALL SIGNED BILLS:

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to pay all signed bills.

YES: Bugdon, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Police/Emergency Management:

Scott Winneberger reported that there was a storm over the weekend of August 9th, but everything turned out alright.

Mayor Giberson has asked Scott to look into the safety of the intersection of Mill Street and Pomona Avenue after receiving concerns from residents. He contacted the State Police to collect some data on that intersection and additionally the intersection of Mill Street and Main Street. He had them provide data from January 1, 2019, to current. Mill and Pomona had only one accident during that timeframe and Mill and Main had 3 accidents during that timeframe. All were nonlife threatening injuries. They are safe intersections. Councilmember Riegel asked if a pedestrian crosswalk could be painted there to help slow traffic down. Scott responded that there is not an actual walking path, but he could ask a traffic engineer to see if they would have any recommendations. Councilmember Riegel stated that even signage may be helpful. Council President Giberson added that the City had approached the County many years ago to request that the intersection of Main Street and Mill Street be a 4-way stop and they refused. Mayor Giberson added that if there was an interest, we could budget next year for the flashing red stop signs.

Administrative/Personnel:

Council President Giberson reported that Council received monthly reports from the Municipal Clerk, Tax Collector, and Chief Financial Officer.

The Municipal Clerk's report for July 2024 showed a total amount received of \$68,028.62.

The Tax Collector's July 2024 report showed a total amount received of \$156,301.21.

The Chief Financial Officer provided the Budget to Actual Report through July 31st.

There was a discussion regarding the keys and locks with the recent change in employees.

Public Works:

Councilmember Hawn reported that he saw that they painted the dumpster and that everything looks good.

Councilmember Bugdon questioned what the millings are being used for. Council President Giberson responded that they will be used for the roads or where they are needed throughout town.

Recreation:

Councilmember Bugdon reported that everything is going well. She has reviewed and approved the applications for the Fall Baseball season.

There was discussion of the ordinance that needs to be drafted so the City can charge for the usage of the ballfield. Attorney Kaufmann stated that he needs to know what the season will consist of. Councilmember Bugdon stated that the seasons are already set.

Fire and Ambulance:

Councilmember Hawn reported that the past month was busy. They had a couple bad accidents on the Parkway and a tree down recently on Mill Street.

Planning Board:

Councilmember Riegel reported that the Planning Board met on Monday, August 12. They approved the resolution for Blueberry Hill Campground.

Construction/Code Enforcement:

Construction Official Richard Stevens submitted a report for the month of July. During the month, a total of 20 inspections were done, and the following permits were issued:

- 2 Alterations
- 0 Demos
- 0 New
- 0 Additions
- 2 Zoning Permit
- 5 CO Inspection for Resale
- Total of 9

The following code enforcement issues were notated:

- 65 Clarks Landing Road – fence issue. Spoke to both parties. Waiting for a survey.
- 836 Chestnut Neck Road –septic issue. Abated.
- 137 Clarks Landing Road – intersection sight triangle block with hedges. Abated.

Senior Services:

Councilmember Bugdon reported she has had a couple requests, and she filled those.

Land Use:

Council President Giberson stated that there are a couple things on tonight’s agenda regarding land use.

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION:

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to open public portion.

CLOSE TO PUBLIC PORTION:

Hearing nothing from the public, on the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to close the public portion.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Email from Borough of Beach Haven Deputy Borough Manger/Clerk Regarding Outreach to Governor and Legislature
Clerk Blevin will draft a letter to the Governor from the City stating our non-support of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act and supporting municipalities such as Beach Haven Borough who are having issues in their towns.

RESOLUTIONS:

78-2024 Governing Body Certification of the Annual Audit

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Ropiecki and carried to adopt Resolution 78-2024.

YES: Bugdon, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

79-2024 Authorizing the Tax Collector to Extend the Third Quarter Grace Period
(extended until August 15, 2024)

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded of Councilmember Bugdon and carried to adopt Resolution 79-2024.

YES: Bugdon, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

80-2024 Resolution Providing for the Insertion of a Special Item of Revenue in the Budget of
the City of Port Republic Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 (Chapter 159, P.L. 1948)
Regarding FY2024 Local Recreation Improvement Grant

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded of Councilmember Bugdon and carried to adopt Resolution 80-2024.

YES: Bugdon, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

81-2024 Authorizing City Clerk to Advertise for Receipt of Bids on Contract to Install Park
Avenue Stormwater Outfall

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded of Councilmember Bugdon and carried to adopt Resolution 81-2024.

YES: Bugdon, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

82-2024 Authorizing City Clerk to Advertise Request for Qualifications and Proposals for
Redevelopment Project

Attorney Kaufmann explained the process and reiterated that many portions of the agreement will be able to be negotiated with the Redeveloper. Additionally, there is now language that allows the City and the Redeveloper to enter into a separate agreement with a public agency for a separate land reclamation project simultaneously. The deadline for receipt of RFQs/RFPs will be October 1, 2024.

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded of Councilmember Bugdon and carried to adopt Resolution 82-2024.

YES: Bugdon, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

ORDINANCES – 1ST READING/INTRODUCTION:

05-2024 Amending Ordinance #04-2024 to Correct Typographical Errors

On the motion of Councilmember Turner, seconded of Councilmember Bugdon and carried to introduce Ordinance 05-2024.

YES: Bugdon, Giberson, Hawn, Riegel, Ropiecki, Turner

NO:

ABSENT: Allgeyer

ABSTAIN:

ORDINANCES – 2ND READING/ADOPTION:

NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- Rebid for the Reconstruction of the Tennis, Pickleball & Basketball Courts at Park Avenue – Alternate: Paving Parking Lot

This project will be rebid and the bids will be accepted prior to the next City Council meeting. No resolution is required as the previous resolution rejecting all bids received previously, authorized the City Clerk to readvertise.

NEW BUSINESS:

- N/A

MAYORS REPORT/PROCLAMTIONS:

Mayor Giberson reported:

- There are two choice openings for Port Republic School.
- The City's Duct Tape Boat Regatta will be held on Sunday, September 15th.
- She followed up with the County via email regarding the DEP application and the bridge work. She has not yet heard back.
- A letter was received from the County regarding the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan. They are asking the City to confirm municipal cross-acceptance participation. She will be writing a letter expressing our intent to cooperate.

OPEN TO PUBLIC PORTION:

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded by Councilmember Ropiecki and carried to open the public portion.

Joe Martin, 5 Mill Street, asked if a performance bond will be required for the project at 400 English Creek Road. Attorney Kaufmann responded that the draft lease has two performance guarantees in it. One is a security deposit and one is a performance bond. The amounts are negotiable and will probably be dependent on the value of the lease.

CLOSE TO PUBLIC PORTION:

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

ES 8-2024 Authorization to Enter into Executive Session Regarding:

1. Request for Proposals for Professionals

Attorney Kaufmann informed the public that at the close of executive session there is a possibility that official action may be taken.

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded by Councilmember Turner and carried to enter into executive session.

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded by Councilmember Riegel and carried to close executive session.

Councilmember Turner wanted to discuss any avenues of revenue for the town. There was a discussion of possibly having an indoor cannabis grow facility within the City. Councilmember Turner would like to have the company he met with make a presentation to Mayor and Council. Council President Giberson reminded Council that they had previously voted to opt out of having any kind of cannabis licenses within the City. They can opt back in at any time by way of Ordinance. Councilmember Riegel added that the company only requires 5-acres for the facility. Councilmember Turner and Councilmember Riegel had discussed the possibility of using land by the Transfer Station, however it is deed restricted.

Mayor Giberson added that she has been to many meetings about this and she is disappointed because there are no good answers if something was to go wrong. The facilities are managed by the DEP, and we all know they take time to handle issues. Overall, she is willing to listen to anything anyone will say. But if this is something that isn't good for the residents, do they want to even entertain it.

Council President Giberson questioned if any other municipality has a grow facility that is on municipally owned land. He has only seen them individually owned and run. Councilmember Turned stated that this is a good point, but in speaking with them, our property offers many things that other towns are unable to provide.

Council President added that the company can bring their proposal when the Request for Qualifications / Request for Professionals are advertised for 400 English Creek Road. Council will hear their proposal along with any others we may receive.

Councilmember Riegel shared that the company's annual gross on the 5-acre property would potentially be \$35 million. If they City was able to collect 2% on that, that would be \$700,000 a

year. A larger piece of property, say the 25-acre piece of property, the earning potential for the City could be \$3.5 million annually.

Attorney Kaufmann will research if this type of business is allowed on municipally owned land and advise Council further.

Councilmember Turner questioned if the City had other properties we could possibly sell to gain revenue. Council President Giberson expressed that the City does not have much real estate left. And in the past, we had sold it as we needed it. We could also look into properties the City may be willing to sell.

Councilmember Turner also brought up potential partnerships with Stockton University.

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Councilmember Bugdon, seconded of Councilmember Turner and carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandy M. Blevin, RMC
Municipal Clerk