



BOROUGH OF LEONIA

COUNCIL- Work Session
~ Minutes ~

Trina Lindsey, Borough Clerk

312 Broad Avenue
Leonias, NJ 07605
<http://www.leonianj.gov/>

December 19, 2022

7:30 pm

Leonias Senior Center

A Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Leonias was held in person at the Leonias Senior Center at 305 Beechwood Place, Leonias, NJ, and virtually via GoToMeeting on December 19, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Mayor Zeigler.

Those present were led in the Flag Salute by Councilman Fusco.

Mayor Zeigler read the following 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 Reorganization Meeting, are posted on the public bulletin board in Borough Hall and on the Borough website, published in the Record within the first 10 days of the New Year, and copies are sent to the Star-Ledger. Notice of this meeting was published in the January 11th edition of the Record, sent to the Star-Ledger, and posted on the public bulletin board in Borough Hall and on the Borough website."

PRESENT: Mayor Judah Zeigler, Councilwoman Maureen Davis, Councilman Pasquale Fusco, Councilman Louis Grandelis, Councilman Christoph Hesterbrink, Councilwoman Joanne Terrell, and Councilman William Ziegler

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Attorney Brian Chewcaskie
Borough Administrator Andrea Wardrop
Borough Engineer Drew Di Sessa
Borough Clerk Trina Lindsey

Public Comment

The record will reflect that no such comments were entered into the chat window accessible through GoToMeeting nor via the United States Postal Service or Email.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Councilman Fusco, second by Councilwoman Davis, Councilman Hesterbrink abstaining, and all members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of July 6, 2022 Regular Meeting were approved.

Motion by Councilman Fusco, second by Councilwoman Terrell, Councilman Hesterbrink abstaining, and all members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of July 18, 2022 Work Session Meeting were approved.

Motion by Councilman Grandelis, second by Councilwoman Terrell, Councilman Hesterbrink abstaining, and all members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of October 3, 2022 Regular Meeting were approved.

Motion by Councilman Grandelis, second by Councilwoman Terrell, Councilwoman Davis, and Councilman Hesterbrink abstaining, and all members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of October 17, 2022 Work Session Meeting were approved.

Motion by Councilman Ziegler, second by Councilwoman Terrell, and all members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of November 9, 2022 Regular Meeting were approved.

Motion by Councilwoman Terrell, second by Councilman Fusco, Councilman Ziegler abstaining, and all members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of November 21, 2022 Work Session Meeting were approved.

Motion by Councilwoman Davis, second by Councilman Ziegler, and all members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of December 5, 2022 Regular Meeting were approved.

Adoption of Ordinances**Ordinance 2022-20**

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

“An Ordinance adding chapter 96 ‘Business Insurance Registration’ to the code of the Borough of Leonia”

Borough Attorney Chewcaskie explained that this ordinance was necessary to establish a system for business insurance registration, a requirement imposed by the state. This ordinance sets fees forward for registration.

Let the record show that no members of the public came forward either virtually or in person during the public hearing of Ordinance 2022-20.

Councilman Grandelis motioned that ordinance 2022-20 be adopted on second reading. Seconded by Councilwoman Terrell.

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

Councilwoman Davis: aye
Councilwoman Fusco: aye
Councilman Grandelis: aye

Councilman Hesterbrink: aye
Councilwoman Terrell: aye
Councilman Ziegler: aye

Consent Resolutions

RES. 2022-271 Authorize Bill List

[2022-272 Authorize Bill List.pdf](#)
[Bill List Backup.pdf](#)

RES. 2022-272 Change Orders #16 & #17 – New Municipal Building Construction Project

[2022-272 Authorize Change Orders 16 & 17.pdf](#)
[Change Order #16.pdf](#)
[Change Order #17.pdf](#)

RES. 2022-273 Change Order for Sally Port Structural Design Services – Arcari & Iovino

[2022-273 Additional Architectural Fees – Arcari & Iovino – Sally Port.pdf](#)
[Arcari & Iovino \\$2750 request for add fees.pdf](#)

RES. 2022-274 Authorize Contract with Granicus Inc. for Peak Agenda & GovAccess 2022/2023

[2022-274 Authorize Contract with Granicus, Inc.pdf](#)
[NJ Leonia Website Vision NJ.pdf](#)
[NJ Leonia NJ Q-227418-2022SEP26.pdf](#)

RES. 2022-275 Authorize Accuscan Proposal(s) for Records Management

[2022-275 Authorize Accuscan Proposal\(s\).pdf](#)
[Leonia Borough Construction Permit and Zoning Scanning.pdf](#)
[SORTING – PROPOSAL.pdf](#)

~~RES. 2022-276 Leonia Senior Center – Lower Level Improvements~~

~~[2022-276 Lower Level Senior Center Improvements](#)
[Lower Level Senior Center Flooring & Walls Quotes.pdf](#)
[Lower Level Renovation Three Quotes.pdf](#)~~

RES. 2022-277 Authorize Disabled Person Parking Space

[2022-277 Authorize Disabled Person Parking Space.pdf](#)

RES. 2022-278 Authorize Disabled Person Parking Space

[2022-278 Authorize Disabled Person Parking Space.pdf](#)

RES. 2022-279 Authorize Disabled Person Parking Space

[2022-279 Authorize Disabled Person Parking Space.pdf](#)

RES. 2022-280 Authorize Disabled Person Parking Space

[2022-280 Authorize Disabled Person Parking Space.pdf](#)

RES. 2022-281 Authorize Termination of Professional Services – C2 Operator

[2022-281 Authorize Termination of Professional Services – C2 Operator.pdf](#)

RES. 2022-282 Crossing Guard Union Agreement[2022-282 Crossing Guard Union Agreement.pdf](#)[Crossing Guard Union Agreement.pdf](#)**RES. 2022-283 Authorize 2022 Appropriation Transfers**[2022-283 Authorize 2022 Appropriation Transfers.pdf](#)

Motion by Councilwoman Davis, second by Councilman Fusco, that the Consent Agenda

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

Councilwoman Davis:	aye	Councilman Hesterbrink:	aye
Councilwoman Fusco:	aye	Councilwoman Terrell:	aye
Councilman Grandelis:	aye	Councilman Ziegler:	aye

RES. 2022-276 Leonia Senior Center – Lower Level Improvements[2022-276 Lower Level Senior Center Improvements](#)[Lower Level Senior Center Flooring & Walls Quotes.pdf](#)[Lower Level Renovation Three Quotes.pdf](#)

Councilman Ziegler pulled RES. 2022-276. There was a discussion within the Historic Preservation Commission where Councilman Ziegler made note that the work for waterproofing the lower level of the Senior Center was completed successfully. Councilman Ziegler wished to confirm with Borough Engineer Drew Di Sessa that this statement was true.

Borough Engineer Drew Di Sessa confirmed that the work was completed and the waterproofing was done successfully.

Councilman Ziegler inquired as to the three provided quotes, asking if there was one in particular that was being approved and if the others were for comparison.

Borough Administrator Wardrop explained that the proposal from T.J. Metzdorf in the amount of \$25,250.00 is being recommended for acceptance as reflected in RES. 2022-276.

Motion by Councilman Ziegler, second by Councilman Fusco, that RES. 2022-276 be approved.

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

Councilwoman Davis:	aye	Councilman Hesterbrink:	aye
Councilwoman Fusco:	aye	Councilwoman Terrell:	aye
Councilman Grandelis:	aye	Councilman Ziegler:	aye

Unfinished Business**Area in Need of Redevelopment (AINR) Resolution Discussion – Brian Chewcaskie / Pasquale Fusco**

Borough Attorney Chewcaskie explained the current state of this topic of discussion, stating that the Planning Board adopted the resolution and held an open hearing. The Planning Board recommends that the area as delineated in the study be designated as an area in need of redevelopment. The next step following the Planning Board's recommendation is for the Governing Body to take action by resolution. At this point, the Governing Body may confirm what the Planning Board has done and recommended in declaring the area in need of redevelopment or adopt a resolution stating that the area is not found an area in need of redevelopment. A third option is to modify the scope and extend the redevelopment area as outlined in the resolution.

Mayor Zeigler asked for clarification on the steps of the process and wished to know if what will be approved next year will be a resolution simply declaring an area in need of redevelopment. Borough Attorney Chewcaskie stated that the draft resolution prepared designates the area as an area in need of redevelopment and authorizes the Planning Board to prepare the redevelopment plan.

Mayor Zeigler asked for confirmation that what the Governing Body would be approving through this resolution is an area in need of redevelopment and not a redevelopment plan. Borough Attorney Chewcaskie confirmed this fact and spoke more as to the process. Public participation is expected at the Planning Board meetings and when the plan is approved through an ordinance. The draft resolution being proposed at this stage is simply to affirm the Planning Boards' recommendation that the area is designated as an area in need of redevelopment as well as give direction to the Planning Board to prepare a redevelopment plan for consideration by the Governing Body.

Councilman Ziegler questioned the scope of the proposed area, asking if some of those areas were already improved upon by resolution and had a created plan. Borough Attorney Chewcaskie stated that there have been areas in the past that have been designated as an area in need of redevelopment but never arose to having a plan. Councilman Fusco stated that he believes that the resolution was created to include those parcels of land in the designation of an area in need of redevelopment.

Councilman Ziegler mentioned the action by NJ Transit in appropriating a substantial amount of money for transit-oriented development planning around a light rail. Councilman Ziegler wished to be assured that whatever the Mayor and Council decide to do that there will be significant coordination and leverage held to appropriate as much of this funding as possible. Councilman Ziegler queried for more information as to how this process works. Councilman Fusco responded by stating that Borough Planners H2M will be involved in the creation of a study and creation of a proposal for the Borough of Leonia to better understand what funding is obtainable. Mayor Zeigler confirmed with Councilman Fusco that H2M will be working on the behalf of the Borough of Leonia for this purpose with NJ Transit.

Councilman Ziegler asked Mayor Zeigler if he is part of any forums where he worked tangentially or directly with any members of NJ Transit. Mayor Zeigler stated that there are currently no official forums for ensuring that local elected officials or the public can give their input. The county has expressed a strong desire in the past to put a parking structure on the south side of Overpeck Park. The County has in the past not been transparent with the public over plans for the park so we must ensure they do not create a parking deck that is left to the municipalities to take care of.

Councilman Ziegler wished to know if there was an opportunity for the Governing Body to provide some perspective and preferences to the Planning Board as to what they are looking

for in the redevelopment plan. For example, the Borough of Leonia has learned the hard way that any development that invites extra school children into the education system increases costs exponentially. Councilman Ziegler stated that certain considerations and thoughts as to how to offset these developments are examples of what he believes the Governing Body should request in the redevelopment plan if possible. This would help to ensure that the final plan provided for approval is favorable.

Mayor Zeigler responded that he would defer to the Borough Attorney for an answer but as the Planning Board is an anonymous body, he believes the intent is to let them do their work and have the Mayor and Council review it after. The Mayor and Council are well aware of the zoning laws of the municipality and are abiding by them. Borough Attorney Chewcaskie stated that it is a possible action that the Mayor and Council can take but the resolution intends to charge the Planning Board to create a plan and make recommendations, as they have an intent knowledge of the area in question. The Planning Board itself would be well aware of the desires of the community on its own. Councilman Fusco added that there is a built-in component of resiliency in these plans for green energy and green spaces that are incorporated.

Councilman Hesterbrink stated that as the area in question is a flood area, whatever is built there needs to have a certain resiliency to last through the years. Councilman Hesterbrink believes that some guiding principles can be helpful as he expressed concern over developers putting in traditional developments that won't survive in this area. Councilman Hesterbrink expressed concerns over potential lobbying within the Planning Board for development. Mayor Zeigler called Councilman Hesterbrink to order and stated that as a member of the Planning Board, he is completely unaware of any lobbying efforts. Mayor Zeigler also asked Councilman Fusco, as a Class II Member of the Planning Board, if he was aware of any lobbying to which Councilman Fusco responded that he had not. Mayor Zeigler advised members of the Governing Body to stay clear of any strident rhetoric of this kind.

Councilman Hesterbrink stated that his concern arises from the potential of being provided with a Redevelopment Plan that is not in the best interest of the Borough of Leonia, thus agreeing that some guidelines should be provided to the Planning Board. Mayor Zeigler asked that Councilman Hesterbrink explain further as to whether he had any evidence as to lobbying. Councilman Hesterbrink explained that he was not stating that the Planning Board is involved in any lobbying activities but rather that the Mayor and Council should be aware of the potentiality of developers trying to sway things in their favor. What must be done should be in the best interest of the community, which may not be necessarily what is best for the developers. Councilman Hesterbrink stated further that he is not claiming that any member of the Planning Board is being lobbied but that his concern is more generalized to ensuring the communities best interest is kept in mind.

Mayor Zeigler stated that the resolution would best be discussed at the January 2023 Work Session as it would not be fair to the public to have it be part of the Reorganization Meeting. Mayor Zeigler asked that further thoughts or directions be given to the Planning Board at the January 2023 Work Session and incorporated into the resolution.

Councilman Ziegler stated he would be in favor of putting together some thoughts to be further discussed at the January 2023 Work Session. Mayor Zeigler agreed and encouraged other members of the Governing Body to also do the same.

Councilwoman Terrell asked Borough Attorney Chewcaskie if in other municipalities there are materials that can be leveraged as a starting point for giving directions and ideas to the

Planning Board. Borough Attorney Chewcaskie stated that he does not believe so as every area is unique. The Mayor and Council can certainly provide guidance but it will most certainly be unique to the area itself.

Councilwoman Davis stated her willingness to follow through with the regular process, having confidence in the Planning Board's ability to prepare a worthwhile plan. It is her opinion that the best process might be to have the Planning Board present its plan to the Mayor and Council, so that there may be further discussion and increased transparency to the public. Nothing in the recommendations should be cause for alarm as the Governing Body will approve what is appropriate and anything else will be sent back. Councilwoman Davis looks forward to a creative version of the plan without a large amount of guidance from the Mayor and Council.

Mayor Zeigler responded that there is not one right answer but probably the pure letter of the process is to respect the very clear statutory requirements that mandate an autonomous Planning Board. However, the ultimate responsibility lies with the Governing Body and it would be a shame for the Planning Board to do any work with the potential for it to be not what is desired. On the other hand, giving guidance could be presupposing what is desired by the public and creates a potentiality for criticism. Mayor Zeigler said that there are benefits to both approaches and believes that the process currently being set in place can be used, where the guidelines are provided during an executive session at the January Work Session.

Tax Increase Relating to Budget – Mayor Zeigler

Mayor Zeigler stated that if the Mayor and Council were to accept all the requests of the various departments, there would be a substantial increase in the budget. It is the charge of the Finance and Human Resources Committee to reduce the budget, but the mayor found it pertinent to discuss theoretically what amount of an increase would be comfortable for the Governing Body.

Councilman Grandelis noted that a meeting was held by the Finance and HR Committee, where before creating a goal there was a projected 8-9% increase as it stands. The goal that is being strived for is a 4-5% increase.

Councilman Ziegler agreed with the statement made by Councilman Grandelis and mentioned that over the past few budget cycles that the 2% cap has not been broken. It is a testament to the hard work of the Governing Body for getting the most value out of each dollar. Due to state-mandated insurance and pension increases, this will not be a luxury afforded this upcoming year. Councilman Ziegler stated that to achieve the goal of 4-5% there will need to be substantial sacrifices made and that it is not likely that a lower percentage can be achieved.

Mayor Zeigler is aligned with the goal of 4-5% and reiterated the fact that a great deal of sacrifice must be made as the Borough of Leonia already keeps its budget lean. Mayor Zeigler asked Councilwoman Terrell if she had any comments as to the discussion.

Councilwoman Terrell stated that she is waiting on more information at this point.

Councilwoman Davis wished to make two points concerning the budget. First, for reasons of transparency to the public wished to state that the operating budget is what is being discussed and that what will be driving tax increases is not based on decisions made by the

Borough of Leonia but an unfunded mandate from the state increasing health insurance and pension costs. Secondly, as the Mayor and Council look at the budget the hope is that the decreases that are made to the operating budget limit the impact on the services the public receives the most.

Mayor Zeigler agrees that the desire is to make the changes that have the least amount of impact, but to the point of Councilman Ziegler, there may be a potential impact on services. The Mayor and Council will be transparent to the public as to any potential impacts.

Councilman Fusco made a point that the Borough of Leonia is not immune to the inflationary costs of the present and that currently, we are dealing with an unprecedented inflationary period which should be taken into consideration.

Mayor Zeigler confirmed that there were no disagreements with the 4-5% goal and asked that the Finance and HR Committee continue discussions using this target.

Plans for Broad Avenue Section 11 – Bill Ziegler

Councilman Ziegler wished to ask Borough Engineer Drew Di Sessa when the Shade Tree would be able to see the plans for Crescent Ave to Hillside Ave with the suggestions made during the walk along Broad Avenue. Borough Engineer Di Sessa stated that the plans are available now for review and that it has gone out to bid with the changes incorporated. This project is referred to as Section 11.

Councilman Ziegler asked that the plans be sent to the Mayor and Council, Shade Tree Commission, and the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Pedestrian Safety.

Broad Avenue Section 10 – Bill Ziegler

Councilman Ziegler noted that the Shade Tree Commission was involved in the planning of this project and asked if the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Pedestrian Safety has been involved as well.

Borough Administrator Wardrop responded that Chair Alec Melman is advised of when plans are drawn up and that she will send an email to him so that he is clear on the plans for the Broad Avenue Section 10 project.

New Business

New Jersey Transit Power Plant in the Meadowlands – Christoph Hesterbrink

Councilman Hesterbrink explained that in 2020 the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Leonia passed a resolution against the building of a Gas-Fired Power Plant in the Meadowlands. The Governor of New Jersey asked for a much more sustainable energy source after visiting the site himself. Councilman Hesterbrink also noted that the bidding process has begun and that the members of the Governing Body should have most likely already received notice of the same. Councilman Hesterbrink asked that the Governing Body reaffirm this stance and give permission for him to write a resolution stating the same.

Mayor Zeigler asked that if there is any objection that the resolution is added to the January Work Session as a non-consent resolution to be further discussed before adoption, to which there was none.

Mayor and Council Proposed 2023 Meeting Dates – Mayor Zeigler

Mayor Zeigler made note that as the Reorganization Meeting is coming up soon that discussion of meeting dates is necessary. Mayor Zeigler asked the Mayor and Council to review the proposed meeting dates and offer any suggestions or changes.

Councilwoman Davis asked that a note be sent to the various Boards and Commissions that they keep into consideration that if they wish for their liaisons to attend their meetings that they take these Mayor and Council Meeting Dates into consideration.

After further discussion these changes in the proposed meeting dates were made:

June 5, 2023 to Jun 7, 2023

July 3, 2023 to July 5, 2023

November 6, 2023 to November 8, 2023

Bulk Waste Pickup – Change in Schedule

Councilman Hesterbrink asked that a discussion be held at a future Work Session about potentially changing the two bulk waste pickups to once a month. This potential change is being done due to budgetary and environmental concerns.

Mayor Zeigler stated that it certainly is an interesting suggestion but there is always the possibility the public will object.

Shade Tree Ordinance Suggestions

Councilman Ziegler requested that at a future executive session, the Shade Tree Ordinance be discussed. The Shade Tree Commission has had a thorough communication on the ordinance and has amendments that they wish to be discussed. It was requested that this be on the agenda for the January Work Session.

Mayor Zeigler stated that originally this discussion was to be held in February as the Mayor and Council were unsure if they would be ready to present at an earlier date, but sees no issues with having their suggestions be made sooner. Mayor Zeigler asked that the Shade Tree Commission provide a bullet list of their recommendations.

Closed Session

RES. 2022-284 Authorize Closed Session

[2022-284 Authorize Closed Session.pdf](#)

BE IT RESOLVED in compliance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Leonia entered into Closed Executive Session to discuss the following matters:

- A. Contract Negotiations

B. Personnel

Minutes will be taken of the meeting and released to the public at the time that the matter is resolved. After the Closed Executive Session, the Mayor and Council will reconvene to adjourn this meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Council, on a motion from Councilman Grandelis, seconded by Councilman Fusco, and all present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned to the Closed Executive Session at 8:28 p.m.

RES. 2022-285 Authorize Salary Increase for Technical Assistant **2022-285 Authorize Salary Increase for Technical Assistant**

Motion by Councilman Grandelis, Second by Councilwoman Davis, that RES. 2022-285 be approved.

On a roll call vote, the vote on RES. 2022-285 was recorded as follows:

Councilwoman Davis:	aye	Councilman Hesterbrink:	aye
Councilwoman Fusco:	aye	Councilwoman Terrell:	aye
Councilman Grandelis:	aye	Councilman Ziegler:	aye

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilman Ziegler, second by Councilwoman Davis, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Mandel,
