



BOROUGH OF LEONIA

COUNCIL- Regular Meeting
~ Minutes ~

Trina Lindsey, Borough Clerk

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

April 3, 2023

7:30 pm

Leonia Senior Center

A Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Leonia was held in person at the Leonia Senior Center at 305 Beechwood Place, Leonia, NJ, and virtually via GoToMeeting on April 3, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 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. Notice of this meeting by the January 8, 2023 Sunshine Notice containing the time, date, and access information was published in the Record, Star Ledger and has been posted at Borough Hall and on the Borough website."

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

ABSENT: Council President Louis Grandelis, Councilwoman Maureen Davis

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Auditor Ralph Piccone,
Dan Lagana for Borough Attorney Brian Chewcaskie
Chief Financial Officer Cameron Keng
Borough Administrator Andrea Wardrop
Borough Engineer Drew Di Sessa
Borough Clerk Trina Lindsey
Deputy Clerk Jonathan Mandel

Public Comment

Lydia Maurice, 392 Grand Avenue, inquired as to whether or not there will be a shredding truck for Leonia Day. Ms. Maurice also wished to know about redevelopment, if an individual is living in a condominium and they do not wish to leave would eminent domain be considered in that situation?

Mayor Zeigler answered Ms. Maurice's first question by confirming that a shredding truck will be at Leonia Day.

Mayor Zeigler responded that any transactions in the redevelopment area would be private transactions between property owners and potential developers. Imminent domain will not be used as stated by ordinance.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Councilman Fusco, second by Councilwoman Terrell, and all members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of February 6, 2023 Regular Meeting were approved.

Motion by Councilwoman Terrell, second by Councilman Ziegler, and all members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of February 22, 2023 Work Session Meeting were approved with a correction being requested to an error in numbering for the pages.

Reports

Councilman Fusco

Building Department

Please see attached the March 2023 Construction Permit Activity Report and the Cash Receipts Audit Report.

[March 2023 Construction Permit Activity Report](#)

[March 2023 Cash Receipts Audit Report](#)

Department of Public Works

Please see the attached Department of Public Works Monthly Report.

[March 2023 Department of Public Works Report](#)

Planning Board

No applications were heard but a few were continued.

Councilman Hesterbrink

Historic Preservation Commission

The Historic Preservation Commission owns maps of Leonia dating from 1840 onwards.

Councilman Hesterbrink learned more about the history of Moore Street and the Leonia Tennis Club.

The Historic Preservation Commissions collection continues to grow.

Library Board

The library program's participation numbers have increased substantially over what they were pre-pandemic.

Councilwoman TerrellBoard of Education

The Board of Education met twice in March, setting goals and planning for the budget.

Law and Ordinances Committee

The Law and Ordinances Committee's recent work can be seen through the ordinances at tonight's meeting.

A discussion over fees and fines will be held at the next Work Session of the Leonia Mayor and Council.

Councilman ZieglerFacilities Committee

Great progress has been made by the contractors building the new municipal building. The municipal building is both under budget and on time. Concrete slabs were poured on the first and second floors of the building.

In the next few weeks, various improvements including the installation of elevator walls and electric boxes are to be performed.

When the monitoring wells were placed in as per guidance from the GZA, the heavy machinery to drill the well broke a couple of the pavers. GZA was spoken to about this and they have resolved the issue.

Environmental Commission

Regarding Overpeck Park Section IV, the Borough of Leonia has yet to receive a response from the County.

A discussion was held about the Shade Tree Commission and Environmental Commission collaborating on organizing the Leonia Day Event.

Chair William Russel gave an update to the Environmental Commission on the Planning Board, as he serves as a member.

DPW Superintendent John Villareal provided a comprehensive presentation on waste recycling. Currently little money is being made on paper and Leonia is currently still subsidizing the recycling of paper and commingled containers.

Councilman Hesterbrink commented that when looking at the alternative cost, if plastics were not recycled and instead placed into garbage the municipality would be paying higher tipping fees. Costs are still saved on putting recyclables in the proper bin.

Shade Tree Commission

A group of middle school students presented to the Shade Tree Commission a project they worked on with their teacher. The students created a comprehensive map of all infestations in Leonia Parks. This information was provided to the DPW and is currently being acted upon.

A discussion was held over the tax mailer having additional shade tree information on it.

A Nixle message is being drafted to stay consistent in both communicating and enforcing the Shade Tree Ordinance.

Spring Planting was done in April and there has been a large amount of interest in the private property planting program.

Councilwoman Terrell made mention of a broken paver by the Leonia Library, asking if it is considered part of the municipal building project. Councilman Ziegler confirmed this and explained that repairs will be performed as soon as they are sure that the area does not need to be dug up again.

Councilman Ziegler mentioned that some fiber lines may need to be installed in the area of the broken paver. Councilman Fusco stated that he believes that the piping has already been completed and that the fiber lines would be installed.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Zeigler reported that he was able to see Senator Gordon Johnson who informed him that Governor Murphy is looking to introduce new liquor license legislation that would increase the number of licenses. Mayor Zeigler stated that he believes that the legislation the Governing will be introducing is ill-conceived. Senator Johnson has different legislation that he will be proposing. Mayor Zeigler suggested that a provision be made that allows municipalities to sell unused liquor licenses to other municipalities that need them. Mayor Zeigler believes that legislators must ensure that they are protecting those who have already spent substantial sums on their licenses.

Borough Administrator's Report

Please see attached the Borough Administrators Report for March 2023

[Borough Administrator Report – March 2023](#)

Borough Attorney's Report

A comprehensive chart was provided to the Governing Body the week prior if any questions needed to be asked concerning it.

Councilman Ziegler wished to follow up on a question he proposed last month on whether or not letters associated with the vacant land analysis have been sent out and asked that the Borough Attorney provide an answer when he returns.

Borough Engineer's Report

A walkthrough was completed the week prior for the Broad Avenue Section 10 project. In attendance were members of the Shade Tree Commission, DPW, the Borough Administrator, the Borough Engineer, and the contractor. The purpose of the walkthrough was a discussion of improvements relating to the concrete and trees that needed to be removed for the project.

The Broad Avenue Section 11 project is upcoming and work on it will begin in approximately a month.

The Recreation Center roofing project will begin work shortly. Currently, materials are being ordered by the contractor.

Councilman Ziegler wished to receive an update from the Borough Engineer as to a proposal that was being reworked for the Wood Terrace Drainage Improvements project. Borough Engineer Di Sessa stated that he is currently looking into more economical ways of performing the pipe camera inspection and resolving other cost issues. The Borough Engineer is expecting to have the updated quote at the next meeting or the following at the latest.

Councilwoman Terrell inquired as to an update about tax maps. Borough Administrator Wardrop explained that it is currently at the capital budget level and that the costs associated with having these maps digitized were not too high.

Adoption of Ordinances

Ordinance 2023-04

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

“AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT CHAPTER 194 OF THE ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF LEONIA ENTITLED “VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC”, SECTION 194-30 ENTITLED “SCHEDULE I: NO PARKING””

Mr. Lagana explained that this ordinance came from a recommendation made by the Chief of Police. Currently, there is a prohibition on parking at the cul-de-sac on Warwick Lane. This ordinance will remove this parking prohibition, with the cul-de-sac still subject to alternate-side parking regulations.

Councilwoman Terrell motioned that ordinance 2023-04 be adopted on second reading. Seconded by Councilman Fusco.

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

Council President Grandelis:	absent	Councilman Hesterbrink:	aye
Councilwoman Davis:	absent	Councilwoman Terrell:	aye
Councilman Fusco:	aye	Councilman Ziegler:	aye

Introduction of Ordinances

Ordinance 2023-06

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

BOROUGH OF LEONIA BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY CALENDAR YEAR 2023
ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE AND
TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A-4-45.14)

Borough Auditor Piccone explained that this particular ordinance is common for all municipalities to do. This ordinance allows the budget to go up 2.5% and allows an additional 1% to 3% to give the flexibility to increase. Whatever is not used can be banked and used in the following two years.

Motion by Councilman Ziegler, Second by Councilwoman Terrell that ordinance 2023-06 be introduced and passed on first reading, and setting April 17, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard for second reading and adoption.

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

Council President Grandelis:	absent	Councilman Hesterbrink:	aye
Councilwoman Davis:	absent	Councilwoman Terrell:	aye
Councilman Fusco:	aye	Councilman Ziegler:	aye

Non-Consent Resolutions

RES. 2023-99 Computation of Reserve for Uncollected Taxes – 2023 Budget [2023-99 Computation of RUCT.pdf](#)

Borough Auditor Piccone explained how this resolution is required by municipalities who wish to use an alternate method for the computation of reserve for uncollected taxes.

Motion by Councilwoman Terrell, second by Councilman Fusco, that Resolution #2023-99 be approved.

Councilwoman Terrell wished to know if the resolution is to be performed on an annual basis. Borough Auditor Piccone explained that in some years it is beneficial to perform an alternative calculation but it is not required every year.

Councilman Hesterbrink inquired if the adoption of this resolution allows for more room in the budget than is normal. Borough Auditor Piccone replied that there is a budget appropriation that must be raised called a reserve for uncollected taxes which is based upon prior years. Since there was a need to raise appropriations if this resolution is not done the municipality would have to raise even more.

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

Council President Grandelis:	absent	Councilman Hesterbrink:	aye
Councilwoman Davis:	absent	Councilwoman Terrell:	aye
Councilman Fusco:	aye	Councilman Ziegler:	aye

RES. 2023-100 Introduction of 2023 Operating Budget

[2023-100 Introduction of 2023 Budget.pdf](#)

[Leonía 2023 Introduced Budget.pdf](#)

[Tax Impact – 2023 Introduced Budget.pdf](#)

Borough Auditor Piccone explained the introduced budget, highlighting that the current budget as it stands is \$17,763,313, or a 9.5% increase in budget from what was introduced last year.

Motion by Councilman Ziegler, second by Councilwoman Terrell, that Resolution #2023-100 be approved.

Mayor Zeigler clarified that there was no cut to the library budget or any budget, there was a set of alternatives put forward by the Chief Financial Officer that was discussed and decided on.

Mayor Zeigler wished to thank the staff and Finance Committee for putting forth the hours of work to bring the budget to where it is today. Due to the state, the Borough of Leonia is not in a position to be happy about any budget that would have been brought forward for approval.

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

Council President Grandelis:	absent	Councilman Hesterbrink:	aye
Councilwoman Davis:	absent	Councilwoman Terrell:	aye
Councilman Fusco:	aye	Councilman Ziegler:	aye

Consent Resolutions**~~RES. 2023-101 Authorize Bill List~~**

[~~2023-101 Authorize Bill List.pdf~~](#)

[~~Bill List Backup.pdf~~](#)

RES. 2023-102 GZA Environmental – Authorize Proposal for Remedial Investigation & Reporting

[2023-102 GZA Environmental Yamato Site.pdf](#)

[Memorandum GZA Reporting Proposal.pdf](#)

[NJDEP Texaco Site Notice of Technical Deficiency.pdf](#)

[24-034 Borough of Leonia Yamato NJDEP Reporting.pdf](#)

Motion by Councilwoman Terrell, second by Councilman Fusco, that Resolution # 2023-102 be approved.

Councilman Ziegler wished to point out that due to an error by a Borough Attorney for a previous administration, the Borough of Leonia must continuously pay for expenses relating to the remediation of a situation that should have not been its expense.

Councilwoman Terrell wished to point out that the current legal counsel provides great service.

Councilman Ziegler replied that he is confident that the Borough of Leonia's current attorneys would never let an issue like this occur.

On a roll call, the vote on Resolution # 2023-102 was recorded as follows:

Council President Grandelis:	absent	Councilman Hesterbrink:	aye
Councilwoman Davis:	absent	Councilwoman Terrell:	aye
Councilman Fusco:	aye	Councilman Ziegler:	aye

RES. 2023-101 Authorize Bill List

[2023-101 Authorize Bill List.pdf](#)

[Bill List Backup.pdf](#)

Pulled by Councilwoman Terrell for a separate vote.

Motion by Councilman Hesterbrink, second by Councilman Ziegler, that Resolution # 2023-101 is approved.

On a roll call, the vote on Resolution # 2023-102 was recorded as follows:

Council President Grandelis:	absent	Councilman Hesterbrink:	aye
Councilwoman Davis:	absent	Councilwoman Terrell:	aye
Councilman Fusco:	aye	Councilman Ziegler:	abstain

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilman Ziegler, second by Councilman Fusco, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Mandel,
