



BOROUGH OF LEONIA

COUNCIL- Regular Meeting
~ Minutes ~

Trina Lindsey, Borough Clerk

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

August 7, 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 August 7, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Mayor Zeigler.

Those present were led in the Flag Salute by Council President Grandelis.

A moment of silence was observed for Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver.

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, Council President Grandelis, Councilwoman Maureen Davis, Councilman Pasquale Fusco, Councilman Christoph Hesterbrink, Councilwoman Joanne Terrell and Councilman William Ziegler

ABSENT: Councilman Christoph Hesterbrink

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Attorney Brian Chewcaskie
Borough Administrator Andrea Wardrop
Chief Financial Officer Issa Abbasi
Borough Clerk Trina Lindsey
Deputy Borough Clerk Jonathan Mandel

Public Comment

Peter Tasca, 153 Lakeview Avenue, was questioned as to a certified letter he received from the Borough Attorney relating to borough-owned property near his property. Mr. Tasca spoke as to the efforts he has gone into maintaining the property and its surrounding area.

Mayor Zeigler for clarification stated that no member of the Borough of Leonia Governing Body is interested in selling the property and developing upon it.

Borough Attorney Chewcaskie explained he has had a conversation with Mr. Tasca and his neighbors in relation to the property and as the mayor stated this property will never be sold for development. An analysis was performed of all borough-owned properties and it was desired to see how they were being utilized. At this point, no decision or formal action has been made as to what to do with the property. If a decision were to be made it would need to be formally noticed and part of an agenda of the Mayor and Council.

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.

Appointments

RES. 2023-175 Appointment of Jr. Auxiliary Firefighter [2023-175 Appointment of Jr. Auxiliary Firefighter.pdf](#)

Motion by Council President Grandelis, second by Councilman Fusco, that Resolution #2023-175 be approved.

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

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

RES. 2023-176 Appoint Crossing Guards for 2023-2024 School Year [2023-176 Appointment of 2023-2024 Crossing Guards.pdf](#)

Motion by Councilwoman Davis, second by Councilman Fusco, that Resolution #2023-176 be approved.

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

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

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Councilman Ziegler, second by Councilwoman Terrell, and all members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of May 15, 2023 Work Session Meeting were approved.

Motion by Council President Grandelis, second by Councilman Fusco, and all members present voting in favor, with Councilwoman Terrell abstaining that the Minutes of June 7, 2023 Regular Meeting were approved.

Reports

Council President Grandelis

Recreation Commission

Met on July 18, 2023, with the next meeting set for August 15, 2023.

Summer Camp ended with it being a great success.

Council President Grandelis spoke about the various upcoming Recreation Commission events and important dates.

An update was provided as to the Sports Boosters carnival.

EMS

In the month of July there were 72 incidents that required the services of EMS.

Fire Department

The Leonia Fire Department met on July 20, 2023, with its next meeting scheduled for August 16, 2023.

The Leonia Fire Department responded to 32 alarms.

Items currently being discussed include the 2023 Capital Budget, Recruitment, and other matters.

On July 25, 2023, the Leonia Fire Department hosted the mutual aid meeting for all municipalities participating.

Board of Health

The Board of Health does not meet again until September.

Finance & Human Resources Committee

The Finance & HR Committee met on July 11, 2023, with its next meeting to occur on August 8, 2023.

Capital Budget continues to be discussed and PBA Negotiations are beginning to be discussed.

Councilwoman Davis

Police Department

Councilwoman Davis presented the July 2023 Police Committee Report

There have been 11 external applications to the SLEO I position advertisement.

Councilman Fusco

Department of Public Works

Please see attached the Department of Public Works Monthly Report for July 2023

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

Building Department

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

[July 2023 Construction Permit Activity Report](#)

[July 2023 Cash Receipts Audit Report](#)

Planning Board

Councilman Fusco was unable to attend the Planning Board Meeting.

Councilwoman TerrellBoard of Education

The Leonia Board of Education did not meet in July.

Laws and Ordinances Committee

An amendment to the Noise Ordinance was passed and further ordinances are being discussed.

Welcome Committee

Next month virtual welcome packages are set to be delivered.

Councilman ZieglerFacilities Committee

There were three renderings of the new Municipal Court that was distributed to the Mayor and Council and shall be released publicly. The Mayor and Council reviewed the renderings.

GPC will be finishing the east wall, installing window frames, and completing additional items for the New Municipal Center. The Borough and other independent inspectors will review electrical and framing.

The Project has an expected completion date during the end of October, including the security and audiovisual technology. CTCI and Aton Consulting are closely collaborating to ensure the security and audiovisual side of things is completed correctly.

Environmental Commission

The Environmental Commission did not meet in July due to a technical issue.

Shade Tree Commission

The Shade Tree Commission did not meet in July.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Zeigler congratulated Seoulful Hearts on a successful and well-coordinated event. Mayor Zeigler, Councilwoman Terrell, and Councilman Ziegler were in attendance along with other guests.

Borough Administrator's Report

Please see the Borough Administrators Report for July 2023

[Borough Administrator Report – July 2023](#)

Borough Attorney's Report

Borough Attorney Chewcaskie provided a summary of updates to the Mayor and Council relating to the complaint filed with the Council on Local Mandates, Lease Agreements, as well as other items.

Borough Engineer's Report

The Broad 11 Project has a preconstruction meeting set up, intending to begin the project at the end of August. A public information session relating to the project and reverse-angled parking is scheduled to occur on August 22, 2023.

For Broad Avenue, the TAP Grant project is still under environmental review from the Department of Environmental Protection and once it is complete it may proceed to the final design phases.

Adoption of Ordinances**[Ordinance 2023-13 Capital Ordinance – Broad Avenue Section 11](#)**

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

“BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE IMPROVEMENT OF BROAD AVENUE (SECTION 11 – FROM CRESCENT AVENUE TO HILLSIDE AVENUE) IN, BY AND FOR THE BOROUGH OF LEONIA, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$500,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS.”

The Borough Administrator provided an explanation of the ordinance and its time-sensitive nature due to the contract and project it provides for.

Robin Barbosa, 443 Fort Lee Road, inquired as to the project's proposed start time in late August and what its impact would be on the elementary school.

Borough Administrator Wardrop explained that there will be a walkabout with Chief Tamagny and discussions will be held as to how to work with the pedestrians and traffic. The planters on Broad Avenue will be moved to provide additional walking space. Mayor Zeigler

requested that the School Building leadership be included in the discussions on the project, to which the Borough Administrator confirmed they have already begun that process.

Let the record show that no further members of the public came forward for the public comment portion of the adoption of ordinance 2023-13

Councilman Ziegler motioned that ordinance 2023-13 be adopted on second reading. Seconded by Councilwoman Terrell.

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

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

Ordinance 2023-14 Capital Ordinance – Senior Center ADA Improvements

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

“BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE UNDERTAKING OF ADA IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SENIOR CENTER IN, BY AND FOR THE BOROUGH OF LEONIA, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$165,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS.”

Borough Administrator Wardrop explained the ordinance and its necessity.

Robin Barbosa, 443 Fort Lee Road, applauded Senior Coordinator Margaret Browne for her wonderful performance in her role.

Let the record show that no further members of the public came forward for the public comment portion of the adoption of ordinance 2023-14.

Council President Grandelis motioned that ordinance 2023-14 be adopted on second reading. Seconded by Councilman Fusco.

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

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

Introduction of Ordinances

Non-Consent Resolutions

RES. 2023-177 Authorize Borough Digital Sign [2023-177 Award of Digital Sign.pdf](#)

Motion by Councilman Ziegler, second by Councilwoman Terrell, that Resolution #2023-177 be approved.

Borough Administrator Wardrop explained that the facilities committee and project team for the New Municipal Center have been working with KC Signs & Awnings to configure a way to disseminate information to the public. What is being proposed is a digital sign in the amount of \$58,995.00.

On a question from Councilman Fusco, it was confirmed that this digital sign will replace the current sign and will be in a slightly different location. As it is digital it will require a contractor to assist in powering it.

Mayor Zeigler confirmed with the Borough Administrator that the Library Board is formally in agreement with the sign and all other aspects of the proposal, asking that the Library Board also pass a resolution approving the placement of the sign.

Councilman Ziegler provided further information as to the work that is currently underway for deciding the location of the sign.

Councilwoman Davis asked if the sign would be solar panel powered, to which it was answered that solar power is most likely not an option for the quality of resolution desired for the LED.

Councilwoman Terrell inquired as to the angling of the signage. Borough Administrator Wardrop explained that it would be two signs placed in a V-shape, with one facing people driving up Broad Avenue and vice-versa.

Councilman Ziegler and Borough Administrator Wardrop explained that there will be no light pollution but it is still a very visible and detailed sign that will serve as a great communication tool.

Mayor Zeigler stated that there is a need for a very detailed ways of working guide as to who and how the content of the sign will be populated. Decisions must be made such as rules as to whether community organizations can request to have messages placed on the sign.

Borough Administrator Wardrop explained that a digital sign has been part of the Library Capital Budget for some time.

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

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

RES. 2023-185 Authorize Emergency Repairs of Sewer Line at Leonia Library
[2023-185 Authorize Emergency Repairs of Sewer Line at Leonia Library.pdf](#)

Motion by Council President Grandelis, second by Councilman Ziegler, that Resolution #2023-185 be approved.

Borough Administrator Wardrop provided a historical background as to the sewer problems faced by the library and the urgent need for the resolution to be passed as an emergency.

Council President Grandelis explained that there are some complicating factors as part of the project, such as a potential PSEG electrical conduit. Borough Administrator Wardrop responded that it was found that there was no need to break into the vault and that the cost of the project in total was much less than initially thought.

Councilman Ziegler inquired as to whether the work that is to be authorized will correct the “sag” or “belly” that has been mentioned as part of the sewer backup problem.

Borough Engineer Di Sessa confirmed that it would be corrected as part of the problem, with additional backflow protective material able to be placed.

Councilman Ziegler agreed with the proceeding with work but wished to make a motion to amend the initial proposal, striking the provision requiring the municipality to pay for attorney fees.

Motion by Councilman Ziegler, Second by Council President Grandelis that the proposed amendment be made.

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

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

Council President Grandelis asked the price of installing a valve to prevent sewage from backing up. Borough Engineer Di Sessa explained that it is not a large item and would most likely be within the \$200-300 range.

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

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

Consent Resolutions

~~RES. 2023-178 Authorize Bill List~~

[2023-178 Authorize Bill List.pdf](#)

[Bill List Backup.pdf](#)

RES. 2023-179 Authorize Award of Contract for CDBG Senior Center ADA Improvements

[2023-179 Award of Contract.pdf](#)

RES. 2023-180 Authorize GPC Inc. – Change Order 32, 33, 34

[2023-180 Change Orders #32, 33, 34.pdf](#)

RES. 2023-181 Authorize FY24 NJ DCA ROID Application

[2023-181 Authorize FY24 NJ DCA ROID Application.pdf](#)

RES. 2023-182 Authorize Proposal – Wood Terrace Drainage Improvements

[2023-182 Wood Terrace Drainage Phase One.pdf](#)

RES. 2023-183 Authorize Extension of Project Management Services – Pennoni

[2023-183 Authorize Extension of Project Management Services.pdf](#)

Motion by Councilwoman Terrell, second by Councilman Fusco, that the Consent Agenda be approved.

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

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

RES. 2023-178 Authorize Bill List

[2023-178 Authorize Bill List.pdf](#)

[Bill List Backup.pdf](#)

Pulled by Councilwoman Davis for a separate vote.

Motion by Councilwoman Davis, second by Council President Grandelis, that the Consent Agenda be approved

On a roll call, the vote on resolution #2023-178 was recorded as follows:

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

Unfinished Business**Fort Lee Road Fire Damage**

Councilman Ziegler raised the point that the office building across the street from Anna C. Scott School is still showing significant fire damage that is visible. Councilman Ziegler questioned why no efforts have been made by the owner to paint over the building as it is an eye sore.

Mayor Zeigler requested that this concern be referred to property maintenance.

New Business**Amendment to Chapter 136-12 Required Inspections; Fees – Joanne Terrell**

Councilwoman Terrell gave an update to the Mayor and Council to advise them of an upcoming revision to the section referred to. Borough Attorney Chewcaskie suggested that the ordinance be authorized to be introduced at the following Mayor and Council Meeting.

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.

Closed Session

RES. 2023-184 Authorize Closed Session

[2023-184 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. Borough Owned Property
- B. Affordable Housing Litigation
- C. Personnel – Borough Administrator

Minutes will be taken of the meeting and released to the public at the time that the matter is resolved. After 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 Council President Grandelis, seconded by Councilwoman Terrell, and all present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned to the Closed Executive Session at 8:35 p.m.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilman Ziegler, second by Council President Grandelis, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 10:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Mandel,
