

**BOROUGH OF WESTVILLE**  
**Council Meeting – Work Session**  
**165 Broadway**  
**January 20, 2020**  
*Meeting Minutes*

Mayor Welsh called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Deputy Clerk read the public notice and roll call was taken, with the following persons in attendance:

Mayor Russell W. Welsh, Jr., Council President Michael O. Ledrich, Council Members: Paul C. Mailley, Travis R. Lawrence, Bruce Nordaby and Fritz H. Sims, Jr., Deputy Clerk Kathleen Carroll, Administrator/Clerk Ryan J. Giles, Public Works Manager Martin Finger, Engineer Jon Bryson, Police Chief William Whinna, Lt. Michael Packer and Solicitor Jeffrey Krachun.

Absent: Councilman Charles Murtaugh

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:** No comments received

**OLD BUSINESS:** No old business

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- ❖ A motion to participate in the “Movies in the Park” event offered by the County of Gloucester on Friday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> (movie selected – Frozen II) was made by Councilman Murtaugh and seconded by Councilman Mailley. *The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.*

**Mayor Welsh identified some of the topics scheduled to be discussed.**

**1. REDEVELOPMENT**

**a. Deadline Drive**

Administrator Giles advised he will reach out to the individuals interested in purchasing the property to determine their level of interest. Administrator Giles also talked about the clean-up of the site and confirmed he will provide an update on the sale of the property at the February 3, 2020 council meeting. Discussion took place regarding the possible types of businesses that would utilize the property and the steps needed to acquire the property.

**b. 114 Crown Point Road**

Public Works Manager Finger confirmed he is working with PSE&G to have the electric turned off and that the “demo” permit was submitted and the water is off and he has plans on how to close off the sewer and further stated that after the electric is turned off, they will be ready for demolition. Administrator Giles also advised plans have been made for backfill after the building is down. Councilman Sims inquired about any documents left in the building and Administrator Giles confirmed what was left up in the attic is full of mold so will not be removed from the building but that all the Borough’s Vital Records were moved to 165 Broadway. Councilman Sims inquired about the Edgewater property and Administrator Giles advised same concept and they are waiting for the electric to be turned off.

## *Meeting Minutes*

**c. 114 Crown Point Road (Continued)**

Mayor Welsh asked about the condition of the Public Works (lower level) parking lot and Administrator Giles provided information on how repairs to that area could be included with the demolition project. Administrator Giles provided information on financing future Borough projects. Engineer Bryson and Administrator Giles provided a brief update on the CDBG project at the Soccer fields. A brief discussion took place on how CDBG projects are managed. Administrator Giles confirmed how important is it for residents to participate in the upcoming Census so that the Borough is awarded funding it may be entitled to receive. Public Works Manager Finger provided an update on the small garage on Crown Point Road by letting council know the purpose of the facility is to house electronic recycling items.

Mayor Welsh asked if there are any plans to fix up the Borough buildings and Administrator Giles commented that if the Borough is asking residents to clean up their properties then the Borough is also going to fix up their facilities starting with the Municipal Complex that is scheduled to be painted in the spring. Administrator Giles further commented the Public Works buildings will be power washed and some will be painted.

**d. Downtown area**

Mayor Welsh stated he spoke with Councilman Lawrence about whether to hire someone to improve the downtown area and confirmed that the Borough must continue to grow that area. Administrator Giles added that to develop the downtown area, parking needs to be created and that taking down the building at 124 Broadway (formerly Dicks' Sporting Goods store) would be a good solution to the parking issues. Administrator Giles added that the Borough could take out a redevelopment bond to help fund the project as well as addressing vacant property issues. Mayor Welsh gave Administrator Giles the approval to contact the owners of 124 Broadway to start a dialogue regarding the Borough purchasing the building. Councilman Sims expressed his support of taking down the building. Councilman Lawrence advised that he took a walk downtown and found many items that needed fixing up and those items should be addressed in the spring. Discussion took place regarding concrete work that should have been completed by PSE&G. Mayor Welsh added that Councilman Murtaugh is working with PSE&G regarding the lighting along Broadway. Councilman Nordaby asked Public Works Manager Finger to look at the grating along Broadway that may need to be replaced.

**e. Tennis Court/Parking Lot**

Engineer Bryson advised this project could be incorporated with the DOT project. Mayor Welsh commented that the plan is to keep one of the tennis courts and convert the remaining courts into parking spaces.

**f. River Drive**

Mayor Welsh asked if there are any grants available to make improvements to the area so that it could be used for Borough events (summer concerts or movies in the park). Discussion took place regarding the Friends of Israel project and funding for updating River Drive.

## *Meeting Minutes*

### 2. **COMMUNICATIONS:**

- a. Mayor Welsh asked council if there is information they need from Department Heads but not getting.

Councilman Sims commented that the weekly report council receives from Chief Whinna is helpful in providing information on his department's activities. Councilman Sims further stated that Council use to receive a weekly report from retired Superintendent Donna Domico and asked Superintendent Finger if he could start providing similar reports to Council. Discussion took place regarding Administrator Giles providing an Excel document to Council listing Action Items. Mayor Welsh advised he wants to know when things happen before he is approached by residents. Discussion took place specific to adding information to the agenda to explain the documents on the agenda.

Further discussion took place regarding changing the format on how council receives the agenda documents.

Mayor Welsh also asked that the web site be updated and Administrator Giles advised that project is in the works. General discussion took place regarding the purpose of the web site.

Councilman Sims asked how the Borough can defend itself on Social Media against inaccurate information being posted on other social media pages. Solicitor Krachun advised that Borough employees and Council Members not respond to those statements. General discussion took place regarding comments posted to social media pages.

Mayor Welsh expressed his concerns about having staff available when Michelle Waller is out of the office, being that she is the only one to work the desk. Discussion took place regarding the possible resolution to this issue.

### 3. **9/11 Memorial:**

Councilman Nordaby advised he and Councilman Lawrence went to the County to see if they could assist with funding on this project and was informed that the County of Gloucester could not provide assistance because the Borough currently had two outstanding Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) but they did recommend going to Lowe's and Home Depot to see if those organizations could help. Councilman Nordaby advised he met an individual from Habitat for Humanity who asked him to put together a proposal to see if they could provide support for the project. Councilman Nordaby discussed ways to reduce the expenses associated with the project and how to present the beams.

Mayor Welsh asked Administrator Giles if he could contact the owner of Brown's ShopRite to see if they would make a donation. Discussion took place regarding fund raising.

## *Meeting Minutes*

### **4. Protecting the Pond:**

Mayor Welsh asked Engineer Bryson if he had any ideas about protecting the Pond. Engineer Bryson stated if the intent is to install guide rails with the understanding they will prevent someone from driving through the park into the Pond then that solution may be an issue because guard rails are meant to be sideswiped rather than being hit head on. Engineer Bryson stated, there could be other options outside the NJDOT right of way down near the walking path. Administrator Giles asked about the possibility of installing bollards with lights to which Engineer Bryson responded that anything the Borough does should be outside the NJDOT right of way. Discussion took place regarding possible solutions to Council's concerns about a car crashing through the Park again and for Council to revisit the idea of installing a red light at Almonesson and Delsea Drive that may take 2-3 years to get through the permitting process. Chief Whinna provided crash details at the location of Almonesson and Delsea Drive by stating there were 31 accidents since January 2014 and most of them were rear-enders.

### **5. Solar Opportunities**

Mayor Welsh asked if the Borough could investigate the possibility of installing Solar on some of the Borough's vacant properties especially the property in the area of 600-700 Broadway (currently owned by Westwood apartments). Discussion took place regarding how solar opportunities could help supplement the budget as other towns are currently doing.

### **6. Timing of Water and Sewer Billing**

Administrator Giles discussed the possible of changing the billing cycle for the water and sewer payments that could possibly coincide with payment of taxes to save postage fees and time spent by the staff doing multiple billings. Mayor Welsh asked Councilman Sims to review the proposal with his committee and report back to council.

### **7. Office Hours**

Administrator Giles reported that everyone is comfortable with their working hours.

### **8. Ordinance Committee**

Administrator Giles highlighted the Ordinances scheduled for update:

- a) Background checks on multi-family dwellings (in rental agreements)
- b) Limit yard sales per days (e.g. items cannot be left out overnight and limit 6 per year)
- c) Block parties and closing of streets
- d) Update to Traffic ordinances
- e) Approving a fire lane at Broadway Commons
- f) Adopt Ordinance similar to Woodbury addressing Chicken Hens and how many a resident can have
- g) An Ordinance requiring all businesses to have the sq. footage of the building in the window (small lettering) for Fire Department information
- h) Update the Property Maintenance ordinance to reflect a five day response rather than ten day response

### *Meeting Minutes*

- i) "Do Not Knock" Ordinance that will allow residents to register with the Police to eliminate peddlers at their door
- j) Residential lighting - the strength of the illumines

Mayor Welsh asked about the status of the stop signs at Elm Street and Chestnut Street. Public Works Superintendent Finger stated he would have them installed.

- k) Ordinance regarding Little Chestnut Street

Mayor Welsh advised he was going to schedule a meeting with the Environmental Committee before Spring regarding the condition of the Pond.

Mayor Welsh advised he wanted to get back to conducting Department Head reviews and asked the Personnel Committee to explore the possibility. A discussion took place on how the evaluation process could be accomplished.

Administrator Giles talked about changing the wireless phones to AT&T and provided dates for council to come to the office to have the phones changed over and the purchase of six new Chrome books for council.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** None

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Joyce Lovell, 328 Summit Avenue, asked about various Environmental issues, the demolition of 114 Crown Point Road and the Westville census that were address by Administrator Giles and council. Ms. Lovell asked about a Fact Checker page to respond to messages on Social Media and Administrator Giles reaffirmed that the Municipality should not respond to Social Media posts. Ms. Lovell suggested Galbraith Park for the 9/11 Memorial and discussed the timing of the Water/Sewer bills and offered her suggestions on preventing people from driving into the pond.

#### **COMMENTS FROM GOVERNING BODY & DEPARTMENT HEADS**

- ❖ Councilman Sims advised Council covered a lot of issues tonight and had their work cut out for them.
- ❖ Mayor Welsh commented all the issues discussed tonight were for the benefit of the Borough and the residents.

## Meeting Minutes

### EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Deputy Clerk read **RESOLUTION No. 37-2020** - Authorizing an Executive Session to discuss Shared Services in Public Works, pending litigation and vacant properties.

A motion to approve Resolution No. 37-2020 was made by Councilman Mailley and seconded by Councilman Nordaby. *Motion unanimously approved by voice vote.*

<i>Time In: 9:30 p.m.</i>
---------------------------

<i>Time Out: 10:20 p.m.</i>
-----------------------------

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilman Lawrence and seconded by Councilman Mailley. *Motion unanimously approved by voice vote.*

*The meeting was adjourned at 10:21 p.m.*

*Respectively Submitted,*

*Kathleen Carroll*

*Kathleen Carroll  
Deputy Municipal Clerk*

*Next meeting scheduled for February 3, 2020  
Website: [westville-nj.com](http://westville-nj.com)*