

**BOROUGH OF DUMONT
BERGEN COUNTY, N.J.
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 23, 2021
6:30 PM**

Deputy Clerk Siek opened the meeting of the Dumont Mayor & Council and announced that we continue to conduct our meetings by electronic means. She is hosting this meeting from Dumont Borough Hall located at 50 Washington Avenue.

Council President Stewart called the meeting to order.

Flag Salute led by Councilwoman Rossillo.

Moment of Silence to reflect upon the loss of life in Atlanta and Colorado and to all those who suffered losses during the Pandemic.

Sunshine Law: The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey have been satisfied by the inclusion of the time, date and location of this public meeting of the Governing Body by means of communication equipment, N.J.S.A. 10:4-8(b). Notice was sent to the Record and the Ridgewood News, posted on the Borough website, Borough Hall and Facebook.

Roll Call:

Council members Chae, Englese, Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Stewart-present
Mayor Andrew LaBruno-absent

Motion to accept the agenda as presented: Councilman Chae

Second: Councilman Englese

All in favor.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the January 26, 2021 public meeting and closed session minutes:

Councilman Chae

Second: Councilman Englese

Roll call vote: Council members Chae, Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Stewart-yes

Councilman Englese: abstained

Motion to approve the March 9, 2021 executive meeting and closed session minutes:

Councilman Chae

Second: Councilman Englese

Roll call vote: Council members Chae, Englese, Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Stewart-yes

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Councilman Chae

Cultural Affairs Committee

They will be hosting their first event-the Easter Egg drive-through this Saturday.
Thanks to the DPW, Police, Fire and Ambulance.

- Councilman Englese

Police

There were 1,507 telephone calls for service, 82 telephone calls for medical reasons, 18 calls for fire and 5 calls for commitments in February. Patrol issued 321 traffic summonses-50 parking, 43 moving and 228 all-night parking. They investigated 28 motor vehicle crashes, responded to 8 burglar alarms and travelled 8,927 miles. The Detective Bureau conducted 50 firearms investigations, handled 27 criminal cases, investigated 7 domestic violence incidents with 1 mandated arrest. Police officers attended 93 hours of training.

Councilman Gorman

Shade Tree Commission

The Commission held a successful seminar last Saturday at the tree nursery. Arbor Day will be held April 24th. Their newsletter is posted on the Borough website.

Recreation Commission

We had a very productive meeting last night with our labor attorney and the Recreation By-laws Committee. He thanked Chairman Prulello for his leadership and the Committee for moving the by-laws forward. The next meeting will be held April 7th.

- Councilman Harvilla

Library

The Board of Trustees meeting was held February 24th. They reviewed the grant opportunities in support of the multi-year capital improvement plan. They also began discussions for updating their COVID-related policies in their employee manual and also discussed plans for the Library Director search. Their next meeting will be held March 24th.

Board of Health

They had their quarterly meeting and approved their 2021 meeting schedule. They also received an update from the Bergen County Health Services. In January they had thirteen COVID-related compliance issues, one non-routine investigation for food establishments, Chapter 24-cited inspections they had three at risk one, five at risk two, four at risk three. There were two animal-to-human animal bites.

Beautification Committee

The next meeting is scheduled for April 14th, details to be determined and announced.

- Councilwoman Rossillo

Dumont Volunteer Ambulance Corps

They had 100 calls in February.

Board of Education

Superintendent Triggiano announced his retirement. He will stay on through the 2020-2021 school year. During that time there will be a search for his replacement. Today Honiss School sent a letter that it would shut down due to two positive COVID cases and due to Spring break, they will not be returning for live instruction until April 12th. The next meeting is scheduled for April 22nd.

- Councilwoman Stewart

Social Services

We are continuing efforts with the food bank. They are engaged in a program with the County and delivering 400 hot meals every Tuesday to residents of Dumont and serving 300 families on a weekly basis. This Thursday Dumont will serve as the hub, located at the Swim Club, for the County program distributing 3,000 diapers throughout the County.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Nothing to report

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Tully thanked the DPW, Fire Department, Ambulance Corps and Recreation Commission, which will be helping out with our drive-through Easter event this Saturday. The annual rabies clinic will be held March 21st. The sign-ups for Recreation for the Spring look good. We had a successful Irish flag-raising, which was broadcast over Facebook live. The Finance Committee has been meeting to finalize our 2021 budget and our 2021 Capital Bond. The presentation for Gina's Field will be held April 13th. We have begun our long-term planning with our Borough Attorney and Building Department to update some of our ordinances. We are also cleaning out the Police trailer. The parking lot bids were received March 17th. The award of bid is on tonight's agenda. Mr. Norbut is on the call to address any questions.

Review of Consent Agenda Items: All items with an asterisk are considered to be non-controversial by the Council and will be approved by one motion. There may be further discussion prior to the vote upon request of a member of the public or a Council member. Also, any item may be removed for further discussion or for roll call vote in which case the item will be removed and considered in its normal sequence as part of the general order of business.

RESOLUTIONS

- #21-104 Authorization of William Yirce of McNerney & Associates to Perform an Appraisal on Block 604, Lot 24 *
- #21-105 Appointment of Mullin Coughlin, Esq. *
- #21-106 Award of Landscaping Quote-Mike Versace Landscaping, LLC *
- #21-107 Authorization of the 2020 Budget Transfer *
- #21-108 Authorization of Execution of CDBG Quackenbush Avenue Phase 2 Contract *
- #21-109 Adoption of 2021 Emergency Temporary Appropriations-Streets and Roads *
- #21-110 Approval of Permit for Limousine Company "Continental Ride Inc." *
- #21-111 Bills List *
- #21-112 Authorization of Execution of an ADA Cooperative Curb Ramp Grant Program Agreement *
- #21-113 Authorization of Execution of a Shared Services Agreement with the County Relating to Resurfacing of County Roads *
- #21-114 Award of Borough Parking Lot Bid to DS Meyer Enterprises *
- #21-115 Susan Connelly-Accept Letter of Retirement as Borough Clerk *
- #21-116 Authorization to Advertise for the Position of Borough Clerk *

Councilwoman Stewart asked for the address on Resolution #104. Mr. Leibman said he doesn't believe there is a street address. This is the property that we have been contemplating selling. It is a small parcel, which can't be developed.

Councilman Englese commented on Sue's retirement. He said he has worked with her for three years and she has been wonderful to work with. He wished her the best and many years of health and happiness in her retirement.

Council President Stewart and Councilman Chae concurred and said they will miss her.

Mrs. Connelly replied that she will miss Dumont.

Motion to open to the public on Consent Agenda Items: Councilman Chae

Second: Councilman Englese

All in favor.

1. Mary Normoyle, 106 Randolph, commented on the payment on the bills list of \$200,000 to Bennett. Will there be any more payments? She asked the address of the property in Resolution #104.

2. Lynne Vietri, 41 Wilkens Drive, asked about check #5124 for \$36,005 for two certified check payments to Northeastern Interior for the Municipal Building. Ms. Vietri thanked Sue, who she has worked with for many years. She said she will miss her and her professionalism and helpfulness. Any time she had a question Ms. Connelly would have the answer. If she didn't know, she would find out. She was always very prompt in responding to emails. Ms. Vietri thanked her for her service and hopes she has a great retirement. The Board of Education announced at their meeting that there will be a 0% tax increase for the taxpayer.

3. Bruce deLyon, 67 Beacon Street, asked about a payment of the bills list to Costco for janitorial supplies. Is this related to the new complex? He questioned Resolution #107-we've transferred \$274,000. He commented on the Emergency Appropriation. He asked that the way we're planning should be evaluated.

4. Karen Valido, 24 Overlook Drive, appreciated the Committee reports. She commented that she has been in town for twenty-two years and anytime she had to come to Sue for various things, she always had a smile, always gracious and very professional. She thanked her for all the years she's been working in Dumont and wished her all the best.

Motion to close to the public: Councilman Chae

Second: Councilman Englese

All in favor.

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda: Councilman Chae

Second: Councilman Englese

Roll Call vote: Council members Chae, Englese, Gorman, Harvilla, Rossillo, Stewart: yes

Motion to open to the public for General Comments: Councilman Chae

Second: Councilman Englese

All in favor.

1. John Sansone, 119 Beacon Street, asked about the parking lot bid. The bid was for \$115,000. Bennett gave us a credit of \$45,000. That's a \$70,000 added expense. The payment on the bills list for fencing-\$1,185 for pedestrian walk gate-where is the gate? Check #5125 to T&M for \$1,885 for LSRP. Was it noted incorrectly? When will we be opening up Borough Hall for Mayor and Council meetings? With the size of the Council Chambers, we should be able to socially distance. He thanked Sue. He said he's known her for a long time and she's been nothing but professional; handled yourself well.

During the last seven to eight years she's had a tough job and he gives her kudos for being very professional. He said to enjoy her retirement.

2. Bruce deLyon, Beacon Street, had questions about the town's debt. He asked if Mr. Abbasi could share some information with the public. What percentage of the bonds is for the municipal project? He commented about the parking lot bid. Looking back at some OPRA's he had requested, approximately \$190,000 was spent to install the trailers. What is the projected cost for removing the trailers?

3. Mary Normoyle said that Sue has been terrific. She has never been flustered. She's always been professional, kind and courteous. Ms. Normoyle will miss her presence and thanked her for the long and faithful service she has given to Dumont and hopes she enjoys her retirement. Ms. Normoyle thanked Mr. Leibman for his explanation of redevelopment. Is revitalization a land use term? She asked the status for the AARP grant. She asked again about the resolution regarding local governments taking back their affordable housing obligations and whether it could be revisited.

4. Michael Sullivan, 125 Andover Avenue, asked about the Wells Fargo building.

5. Jim Savage, 65 Howard Street, said there is a grassroots vigil, in support of our Asian-American community, planned for this Sunday at Sirosis Park. Candles will be handed out. He thinks it's a good time to return to in-person meetings.

6. Lynne Vietri, Wilkens Drive, asked if there will be Summer Rec. Could the taxpayers get a breakdown of the 1,700,000. She feels we should go back to in-person meetings. The room that the meetings would be held in holds 199 people. She also doesn't understand why people have to make an appointment to go to Borough Hall. The people who paid for the Borough Hall can't see it.

7. Tom Kelly, 70 Beacon Street, echoed the congratulations to Sue on her retirement. He asked if the meeting with CSX occurred and if so, what was the outcome? He inquired about the property for sale and how this came about. He would also like to resume in-person meetings. He just switched his cell to T-Mobile, which charges a penny a minute. He noticed that we paid for UV in the HVAC system.

8. Jennifer Grom, 20 Hickory Street, said she was able to attend the initial Cultural Affairs meeting. This is the first time she saw anything happening behind-the-scenes in town. She was very impressed by Anthony Schiraldi, Tony Como, Chief McKeary, Sgt. Lizette, P.O. Rufo because they go above and beyond the call of duty. She cited an article from yesterday stating that new COVID cases have increased to 4,000 per day. She doesn't feel it's safe to go to in-person meetings.

9. Maryann Russini, Roosevelt Avenue, commented that Sue has done so much for the town and will be a big loss. She was very helpful when Ms. Russini was on Recreation and when she had flooding issues with her property. Whoever is going to fill her position has big shoes to fill. She is glad Sue is able to retire and spend more time with her family. Ms. Russini is a big proponent of girls' softball. She has heard rumors about the Gina's Field project. The girls do not have a field 24/7 with lights. They share Columbia Field with the high school. She would like the girls to be treated the same as the boys. She feels there should be in-person meetings.

10. Lili Binney, State College, Pa., congratulated Sue and thanked her for all she's done for the town. She will miss her calming voice. She asked about the Library capital project. She feels the meetings should be in person.

11. Lynne Vietri feels it is important to move forward and have in-person meetings.

12. Jennifer Grom said she is not comparing school closures to Borough Hall closures.

13. Suzanne Riordan, 46 Harrison Street, asked why Zoom is not being used for meetings. She has no idea who is speaking. The schools in Dumont are using it. She feels the girls' softball is being discriminated against. Where is the Mayor and Council's accountability to answer the questions residents ask? She congratulated Sue and commented that she has done an amazing job. She wished her well in her retirement.

14. Karen Valido, Overlook Drive, said that the Board of Ed. holds in-person meetings and feels that the Council meetings can be socially distant and in-person.

Motion to close to the public: Councilman Chae

Second: Councilman Englese

All in favor.

Ms. Connelly thanked all those who wished her well.

Council President Stewart identified the property on Linden-it's on the north side between Charles and Howard. We are pursuing an AARP grant through our grant writers.

Mr. Abbasi explained that the Municipal budget is unlike the School budget. The Municipal budget only allows transfers between November and March. The Temporary Emergency Appropriation is a term adopted by the State Legislature. It is not really an emergency. We are almost at the end of the quarter. It would be unrealistic for us not to adopt Emergency Appropriations. The only two we have adopted besides the one tonight were for the CSX sewer project and pension payments, which is statutory; otherwise we are subject to an 8% interest penalty by the State. The one for \$25,000 for DPW is due to several line items where they are short and money can't just move money around. As far as the question about the stimulus funds is concerned, the only guidance we have at this time is that the funds cannot be used for reduction in taxes. It can be used for infrastructure and capital projects. The town receives half of the money this year and the other half next year. The funds have to be used by 2024.

Mr. Leibman said there is no definition of revitalization in the land use law. The term is used as a general term-we have to revitalize this area. He said his firm represents other towns and not one of them is meeting in person. Although we are really hopeful with people getting vaccinated, we're not quite there yet. At least two people in his office have come down with COVID. The Borough Attorney in Tenaflly died from COVID. Some professionals he knows has contracted COVID and therefore projects were delayed. We all would like to meet in person but this is a pandemic and is serious. There is no meeting of the Governing Body that is worth risking someone's health.

Mr. Norbut, Borough Engineer, stated that the parking lot bid was awarded tonight to D.S. Meyer Enterprises in the amount of \$115,112. When they put a project like this together, they put in a contingency amount in the bid document. If there is anything unforeseen, the money would be budgeted. If everything goes well, the cost could be as low as \$90,000.

Mr. Tully stated that the last payment to Bennett was the final payment. There are additional expenses for the building which should be finalized soon, including removal of the trailer. The janitorial bill was mainly for the new building. AARP deadline is April 14th. We had a meeting with our grant writer and finance committee and we intend to

move forward. Recreation is definitely moving forward with Spring and Summer sports this year. There are many contingencies on the latest federal package and he is waiting for clarification. He reached out to Congressman Gottheimer's office to get details. Right now, the legislation states that the money is to be used for COVID-19 emergencies and address services affected by COVID-water, sewer and broadband infrastructure. As far as in-person meetings of the Council, decisions are made with the advice of legal and our risk management. There has been no meeting with CSX to report. We continue to investigate to confirm our strong suspicion of CSX responsibility of the issue. We'll have details on Gina's Field at our next meeting. We do our best to answer questions at the end of each meeting or by the next meeting. Mr. Tully expressed his thanks and appreciation to Sue Connelly. She has been very helpful to the Borough over her years here but also to him personally in what has been a very unexpected time during his first year as Borough Administrator. He thanked her for all her guidance and help this past year and wished her all the best in retirement.

Councilman Harvilla said he does look forward to meeting in person. However, he has to weigh in as Director and V.P. of Infectious Disease Services and has been operating on a state, regional, national and global level and what we are seeing today between the vaccine rollout, the increased incidents of variants of COVID-19 and the fact that we have reached a plateau; we not seeing a consistent downturn in cases for mortality. This trajectory, in his opinion, warrants appropriate caution and prudence before we fully open meetings to the public. He does look forward to meeting people in person. As far as the Library capital improvements, we are in the process of vetting out the numbers with subject matter experts. He would be happy to give information about these plans at future meetings. He addressed Ms. Normoyle's question regarding Holly Shepisi's verbiage about overdevelopment. The definition of overdevelopment varies from municipality to municipality. He is currently vetting out those municipalities that have weighed in regarding their demographic outlay, business to open land relating to their current development. He said Ms. Normoyle should email him exactly what resolution she is referring to. He added that Sue Connelly is a gem and has been immensely helpful to him and while he is not an overly emotional guy, he was very close to curling up in a fetal position when he read she was retiring. He said that he is respectful of the people who call in to these meetings but at the same time has to keep in mind that there are 17,000 residents in Dumont who also have opinions and their voices are equally important.

Council President Stewart explained that when she first got on the Council she took a class on how to be a good Council person and the first note they give you is to make friends and get to know your Borough Clerk. She said that Sue has been there for them all along and thanked her once again.

Motion to adjourn: Councilman Chae

Second: Councilman Englese

All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Susan Connelly, RMC, Municipal Clerk