

FEBRUARY 2, 2016

PAULSBORO, N.J.

7:00 P.M.

REGULAR MEETING

Council Chamber:

Mayor Stevenson presided at the regular meeting of Council held on the above date and place.

Mayor Stevenson called the meeting to order.

Clerk VanScoy read the opening statement regarding the Open Public Meetings Act.

The Opening Prayer was given by Gloucester County Freeholder Jim Jefferson.

Mayor Stevenson asked all those present to join him in a Moment of Silence for former Councilperson/Council President Jeanne Giampola who has passed away.

Mayor Stevenson asked all those present to join in the salute to the flag, which was conducted by Borough Clerk VanScoy.

Gloucester County Freeholder Jim Jefferson officiated the Swearing in of Councilman Eric DiTonno.

Members present were: Council President Giovannitti, Councilman DiTonno, Councilman Giampola, Councilman Haynes, Councilman Holloway. Absent: Councilman Kidd.

Proclamation: Black History Month

At this time, Mayor Stevenson read the Black History Month Proclamation.

Gloucester County Freeholder Jim Jefferson spoke regarding the Black History Month Proclamation.

Mayor Stevenson stated Gloucester County Freeholder Director Robert Damming was present and invited him to come forward.

Gloucester County Freeholder Director Damminger stated former Councilwoman Jeanne Giampola has passed away. He was in the “trenches” with Jeanne and he felt it was great Mayor Stevenson extended the invitation to him to help remember her. He further stated every football Sunday he was at the Giampola house. He was always at the Giampola house. His daughter called Jeanne her 3rd Grandmom. Jeanne would do anything for you if she liked you. He served 11 years on Council and when he was elected Freeholder he brought Jeanne with him to serve as his Administrative Assistant. Jeanne could find a way to help people and she wanted to help others. He is so proud that the Borough of Paulsboro is recognizing Jeanne and there won’t be a day he won’t think about her. He has a 40 year friendship with Councilman Alfonso Giampola. He also stated the people of Paulsboro are unique people. He will miss Jeanne and he loves her. He felt everyone should strive to be half the person she was.

Mayor Stevenson stated Jeanne oversaw the Christmas Basket Program. She would find residents help and never asked for a thank you. Everyone knew where they stood with Jeanne as she was straightforward and honest. He further stated that Councilman Alfonso Giampola was like a brother to him and on behalf of the Governing Body, past and present and the employees, he presented the American Flag that flew at ½ staff the day Jeanne was laid to rest.

Councilman Giampola thanked everyone.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR.

Council President Giovannitti moved and Councilman Holloway seconded to open the floor to the public at 7:18 p.m. All were in favor of the motion.

Mayor Stevenson opened the floor to the public, asked anyone speaking to give their name and address and reminded everyone there was a five (5) minute time limit.

Darlene Ayers spoke on behalf of her mother regarding the house at 320 Beacon Avenue. She asked when Paulsboro was going to hold the banks accountable for abandoned houses. This house is filled with furniture but the roof is falling in, there are rodents living in the house, etc. The place has been empty for 8-10 years. She questioned why her mother had to live next to this and what is Paulsboro going to do.

Mayor Stevenson stated this is probably his #1 priority for him. There is a property on the 500 block of Beacon Avenue that has a tree growing through the roof for five (5) years. He wants to streamline the process and the Borough is making great progress. There are almost 200 vacant houses and property and there are 20 layers of red tape. His goal is to hold these people accountable. He has met

with development groups to rehabilitate some of the properties and get them new owners. He asked Mrs. Ayers to leave her phone number with Code Enforcement Officer Bender. The Borough has to get the laws and ordinances together in order to fine these people to the max. He will stay in contact with her.

Code Enforcement Officer Bender stated there are a lot of houses that sit and get piecemealed as they are dealing with third parties. The Borough has to start fining the banks. He further stated he will be on this property.

Barry Corradetti, 1820 Overbrook Avenue, congratulated everyone on Council and wished Mayor and Council good luck. He discussed the ordinance regarding the escalating fees for abandoned properties and asked if the Borough was using any of that money to fix these issues and if the Borough could go on private properties, to use that money to fix the properties.

Mayor Stevenson stated the Borough no longer is using the escalating fees. There are options such as using a landscaping company and he will delve into these options. There is a proposal coming before the Council. He further stated the Borough has to make the quality of life better as vacant houses promote filth and crime. The Borough needs to put the right people in place and he would like to see the escalating fees come back.

Mr. Corradetti applauded the Mayor as this is the Mayor's #1 priority and he is happy to see it is getting addressed.

There wasn't any further public participation.

Councilman Giampola moved and Councilman Haynes seconded to close the floor to the public at 7:31 p.m. All were in favor of the motion.

Minutes of the Swearing in Ceremony held on January 2, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. Council President Giovannitti moved and Councilman Giampola seconded to receive, file and adopt the above minutes. All were in favor of the motion.

Minutes of the Reorganization and First Regular Meeting held on January 5, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. Council President Giovannitti moved and Councilman Giampola seconded to receive, file and adopt the above minutes. All were in favor of the motion.

Minutes of a Work Session Meeting held on January 19, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. Council President Giovannitti moved and Councilman Giampola seconded to receive, file and adopt the above minutes. All were in favor of the motion.

R. #48.16: RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT OF BILLS OUT OF THE 2016 TEMPORARY BUDGET. Council President Giovannitti moved and Councilman Haynes seconded to pay all bills properly signed and adopt R. #48.16. Roll call: Ayes: Council President Giovannitti, Councilman DiTonno, Councilman Giampola (abstained on any bills regarding the Fire Department), Councilman Haynes, Councilman Holloway. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Summary of reports and copies of minutes of meetings. Council President Giovannitti moved and Councilman Holloway seconded to receive and file. All were in favor of the motion.

R. #49.16: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF PAULSBORO, COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER, STATE OF NEW JERSEY. Council President Giovannitti moved and Councilman Haynes seconded to adopt R. #49.16. R/C: Council President Giovannitti, Councilman DiTonno, Councilman Giampola, Councilman Haynes, Councilman Holloway. Nays: None. Motion carried.

1. Personnel – Employee Grievance
2. Pending Litigation – Police Department EEOC Complaint
3. Pending Litigation – Ruggeri vs. Borough of Paulsboro

OLD BUSINESS: There wasn't any old business at this time.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:

Mayor Stevenson welcomed Councilman DiTonno to the dais and he is looking forward to working with him.

Public Safety Committee: Councilman DiTonno, Chairman:

Councilman DiTonno stated he wanted to address the Police Department's Facebook page. He commended the Police Chief and his staff on the page. He also read in the newspaper regarding thieves stealing rock salt from a business in town and the Police Department caught the thieves.

Finance Committee: Councilman Giampola, Chairman:

Councilman Giampola discussed advertising for the Administrator's position two (2) times in the South Jersey Times and also post on the New Jersey State League of Municipalities website which would run for one (1) month. He stated the Borough is only asking for resume's to be received by the Borough Clerk.

Councilman Giampola moved and Councilman Haynes seconded to advertise for the position of Administrator as stated above. All were in favor of the motion.

Councilman Giampola stated CMFO/Acting Administrator Boyer is doing a good job. The bills and the budget have been rolled over to 2016 and the Department Heads have to be notified to get their budget information into Ms. Boyer and Councilman Giampola.

Public Property Committee: Councilman Holloway, II, Chairman:

Councilman Holloway did not have anything to report at this time but he would be giving a report for the Community Betterment Committee which is usually given by Councilman Kidd.

Community Betterment Committee: Councilman Kidd, Chairman:

Councilman Holloway stated the Black History Program will be held on Saturday, February 13th at 1:30 p.m. in the auditorium at the Paulsboro High School.

Public Works Committee: Councilman Haynes, Chairman:

Councilman Haynes discussed and recommended a merit increase promotion for Water and Sewer Department Employee Daryl DeBerry.

R. #50.16: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A MERIT INCREASE PROMOTION TO DARYL DEBERRY TO THE POSITION OF WATER AND SEWER REPAIRMAN 2ND GRADE FOR THE BOROUGH OF PAULSBORO. Council President Giovannitti moved and Councilman Holloway seconded to adopt R. #50.16. Roll call: Ayes: Council President Giovannitti, Councilman DiTonno, Councilman Giampola, Councilman Haynes, Councilman Holloway. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Councilman Haynes discussed and recommended the promotion of Street and Highway Department Employee Herman Schoch.

R. #51.16: RESOLUTION UPGRADING HERMAN SCHOCH TO THE POSITION OF HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE SECOND GRADE FOR THE BOROUGH OF PAULSBORO. Councilman Giampola moved and Councilman Holloway seconded to adopt R. #51.16. Roll call: Ayes: Councilman DiTonno, Councilman Giampola, Councilman Haynes, Councilman Holloway. Nays: None. Abstained: Council President Giovannitti. **Motion carried.**

Councilman Haynes stated two (2) shredding events have been scheduled. One (1) will be held in May and one (1) in October. He further stated the Borough has also scheduled a sweeper rental for the week of March 21st to March 25th and again September 5th to September 9th. Also, the Borough scheduled a vacuum truck rental for the weeks of May 2nd to May 6th and again October 3rd to October 7th. These will be posted on the Borough's website.

Councilman Haynes discussed increasing the water and sewer rates. The Gloucester County Utilities Authority's rate is greater than the rates the Borough charges the residents. He recommended an increase in the sewer rate of \$10.00 per quarter, \$40.00 per year at a total cost of \$314.00 per year.

Borough Engineer Erik Biermann explained the sewer rate is currently \$274.00 per year and it would increase to \$10.00 per quarter for a total cost of \$314.00 per year. Currently, the Borough is subsidizing the fee to the GCUA. He further stated the water rates would increase on the commercial end from \$2.04 to \$3.25 per gallon but it would not affect the residential end.

Mayor Stevenson stated the Borough is paying more for the sewer than it is getting back. He commended the Committee for coming up with the rates as they kept it very minimal and on the water side, the rate hasn't changed only for commercial use.

Cheryl Scott, 1645 Swedesboro Avenue, questioned if the water was safe to drink as she is still not drinking the water.

Borough Engineer Biermann stated yes the water is safe to drink as well #7 is not on line but once the carbon filters are installed, well #7 will be back on line.

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING:

O. #01.16: ORDINANCE TO AMEND PORTIONS OF CHAPTER 61, "SEWERS" AND CHAPTER 78, "WATER" OF THE BOROUGH CODE REGARDING WATER AND SEWER RATES. Councilman Haynes moved and Council President Giovannitti seconded to adopt O. #01.16 on introduction and first reading and schedule the second reading and public hearing on February 16, 2016. Roll call: Ayes: Council President Giovannitti, Councilman DiTonno, Councilman Giampola, Councilman Haynes, Councilman Holloway. Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Councilman Haynes thanked the Departments for the removal of the snow. He stated some people complained about being plowed back in but it was coming down two (2) to three (3) inches an hour. It was white out conditions but overall the department did an excellent job. He thanked the Police Department, the Street and

Highway Department, the Water and Sewer Department and all those involved with the snow removal.

Mayor Stevenson congratulated Council President Giovannitti on his appointment to the Gloucester County Housing Authority Board.

Construction and Licensing Committee: Council President Giovannitti, Chairman:

Council President Giovannitti stated the appointment is a non-paid appointment. He gave “kudos” to the Departments on the snow removal. He further stated the School Board recognized former Councilwoman Jeanne Giampola yesterday at their meeting.

Council President Giovannitti reported that he had a Code Committee Meeting and Code Enforcement Officer Bender gave a demonstration on the Community Champions Program which has had some success. He stated Mr. Bender is just one person. The Borough will be re-instituting the Landlord Licensing Ordinance and he would like to give the Solicitor the opportunity to review and adopt a new Ordinance. He further stated he would like Solicitor Maley to draft the new abandoned property ordinance that is used in Collingswood.

Solicitor Maley stated he will have the revisions for the Landlord Registration Ordinance for introduction at the next meeting as well as the Abandoned Property Ordinance. He further stated the Banks for the most part are still paying their taxes on the abandoned properties. The Abandoned Property Ordinance would involve creating a list of properties and to send notice to the banks which then the Borough could move to take possession of these properties and can lien the property but it would all take time.

Council President Giovannitti also stated he would also like Solicitor Maley to review and re-evaluate the “Cherry Hill” Ordinance or it is also called the escalating fee ordinance.

Councilman Giampola moved and Councilman Holloway seconded to authorize Solicitor Maley to review, recommend and prepare the three (3) ordinances for introduction. All were in favor of the motion.

Council President Giovannitti further stated the Borough will do everything it can for the residents. He thanked the Department and the Committee.

Mayor Stevenson thanked all the workers involved during the snow storm. The Borough is not going to please everyone. The snow on the sidewalks will be addressed and summonses were issued three (3) to four (4) days later as the kids

should not have to walk in the street. The Borough doesn't want to fine people either but the issue has to be addressed. He apologized to anyone who received a summons.

Mayor Stevenson thanked the Chief and the Police Department for the couple of raids it held and they are doing a great job. He has received a long text message from a resident commending the police department.

Mayor Stevenson stated he has talked about economic development and he has had meetings with Triad and the State. He is meeting with Triad again next week. They are discussing taking two (2) to three (3) abandoned houses as a template for the process and Solicitor Maley will guide the Borough. He has had meetings with developers and a new roof is being completed at the Plaza. He asked the residents to be a little more patient. He had a meeting with USDA regarding Thomson Avenue. He congratulated all of the Governing Body on the work they have been doing.

Mayor Stevenson discussed having a public portion at the beginning and at the end of the Regular meetings. He will place this on the Work Session meeting for more discussion.

Mayor Stevenson stated the Governing Body will now convene in Executive Session.

Mayor and Council recessed at 8:03 p.m.

Mayor and Council convened in Executive Session at 8:07 p.m.

Mayor and Council reconvened the Regular Meeting at 8:35 p.m.

There wasn't any further Borough business.

This is a brief summary of the Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Paulsboro held on February 2, 2016 and should not be considered a verbatim transcript of the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy A. VanScoy, RMC/CMC
Borough Clerk

Gary C. Stevenson, Mayor