

MINUTES
BOROUGH OF NORWOOD MAYOR AND COUNCIL
Public Meeting
March 17, 2021

MAYOR BARSA

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ASCOLESE

COUNCILMAN ROONEY

COUNCILWOMAN HAUSMANN

COUNCILMAN BRIZZOLARA

COUNCILMAN FOSCHINO

COUNCILMAN KIM

The Public Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Norwood was held on the above date at Borough Hall and with Zoom access to the meeting.

Mayor Barsa stated that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, pointed out the exits and asked everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

All members were present at roll call.

Mayor Barsa gave his opening statement advising the public that first Healthy Norwood event will be held on Sunday March 21st at 10am and will include two different walking options, the request form for woodchip mulch delivery was available on the borough website, there is a clothing donation shed located in the DPW lot, and the borough is collecting resident email addresses to start a database for town wide mailing. He ended his opening remarks by congratulating Senator Holly Schepisi on her new appointment.

CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence is available in the Clerk's office.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilman Foschino gave explanation for the need of resolution 2021:75, Authorizing Emergency Purchase for Snow Removal on Borough Property. Due to multiple snow storms that left upwards of 26 plus inches of snow, as well several DPW employees out due to COVID quarantine, an outside contractor was used to help with the snow removal. The bill total reflects the multiple days of work.

Mr. Neglia said he reviewed the bill with Councilman Foschino and Director Tracy and feels that the invoice is fair and customary. He will also be submitting a vendor list for Council approval that will allow the borough to choose from the listed vendors for emergency situations. Mr. Neglia further explained the difference between emergencies, quotes and bids.

Councilman Rooney thanked Councilman Foschino for his quick thinking and getting the outside contractor.

Council President Ascolese informed the Council that resolution 2021:76, appointment of Richard Hess as electrical sub-code official, was discussed with the personnel committee and Construction Official Gino Tessaro. After reviewing all resumes, it was felt that Richard Hess had the most experience and would be the best choice.

Councilman Foschino made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilman Brizzolara seconded the motion and the Council unanimously agreed on a roll call vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Padovano updated the Council on the recent meeting of the Grant Writing Committee. The grant accounts were being updated and the committee were discussing the direction they would like to take with a grant writer. Mayor Barsa noted he has spoken with the CFO regarding the amount of money the borough could set aside for a grant writer.

Councilman Foschino said the DPW were beginning to prep the fields for the spring sports season. EMS responded 16 calls last month and gave mutual aid to the surrounding towns.

Councilman Kim said the Greenway Project had a meeting with the New Jersey Biking and Walking Collation. The NJEA will be involved in the hiring of a new superintendent for the Norwood Public School. Northern Valley Regional Old Tappan High School is still closed. Councilman Kim also noted that he met with Chief Krapels and Councilman Ascolese to discuss the recent events of Asian hate crimes.

Councilwoman Hausmann said she has spoken with the Mayors and Boards of Health of the surrounding towns and everyone is on board with pushing for priority vaccines for teachers and seniors. The Zoning Board meeting was cancelled due to no new applications.

Councilman Rooney said the budget was almost ready and had placeholders for the BCUA, hauler contract and the grant writer. The Fire Department has resumed their in-person meetings.

Councilman Brizzolara said the renovating and building of homes has picked up. The Daibes project has lot of interest from store owners. There are a few homes in town that are scheduled to be demolished and prior to the demo the Fire Department will use these homes for training.

Council President Ascolese said the only thing before personnel was the DPW contract that will be discussed in closed session.

Councilman Foschino thanked Mr. Michael Congiusti for stepping into a supervisory role within the DPW while the Director and other senior members of the department were under quarantine.

Councilwoman Hausmann asked what it means when it's said that the Daibes project is moving along.

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Mr. Tessaro said there are always men working and there is a lot of action for store rentals.

Councilman Brizzolara made a motion to open the meeting to the public. Councilman Foschino seconded the motion and the Council unanimously agreed.

Mr. Ermin Suljic said the current makeup of the school demographic is because of the many immigrants in town. These kids do not have the exposure of English at home, which will affect the vocabulary of the children, and ultimately the test scores. Federal money should be used towards COVID testing in Norwood.

Councilman Foschino made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Councilman Brizzolara seconded the motion and the Council unanimously agreed on a roll call vote.

Councilman Foschino made a motion to approve resolution 2021:79, authorizing the council to proceed in closed session. Councilman Rooney seconded the motion and the Council unanimously agreed.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Buginsky, Deputy Borough Clerk