

MINUTES
BOROUGH OF NORWOOD
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
WORK/EXECUTIVE SESSION
AUGUST 10, 2022
7:00 PM

MAYOR BARSÀ	
COUNCILMAN ASCOLESE	COUNCILMAN BRIZZOLARA
COUNCIL PRESIDENT FOSCHINO	COUNCILWOMAN HAUSMANN
COUNCILMAN KIM	COUNCILMAN SULJIC

The Public Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Norwood was held at Borough Hall on the above date.

Mayor Barsa called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led those in attendance in a salute to the American Flag and asked for a moment of silence

Mayor Barsa stated:

“Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Law, P.L. 1975, Ch. 231, setting forth the time, date, place and purpose of this Public Meeting through a legal notice published in the Record and Star Ledger, filing a copy in the Borough Clerk’s office, and posting on the bulletin board.”

Roll Call:	Mayor Barsa	Present
	Councilman Ascolese	Present
	Councilman Brizzolara	Present
	Council President Foschino	Present
	Councilwoman Hausmann	Present
	Councilman Kim	Present
	Councilman Suljic	Present

Mayor Barsa’s Opening Remarks

Mayor Barsa reminded residents that students are set to return for the new school year on September 6th and to be mindful of children crossing the street. The Mayor also urged all residents to follow procedures when dropping off and picking up students from school.

Mayor Barsa mentioned that the Fall recreation sports are set to begin with football, cheer, and soccer starting practices to prepare for their upcoming seasons. If you would like to come out and support our local teams, the schedule of their home games will be available on the Borough website.

Mayor Barsa stated that after the success of the first movie night, Norwood Recreation Committee has scheduled a second movie night for October 14th at Kennedy Field for the showing of the original Ghostbusters. More information on the event will follow shortly.

Mayor Barsa announced that Norwood's next Mayor's Wellness event, in conjunction with the American Red Cross, will be a blood drive that will be held at the Norwood Community Center on September 7th from 2PM-7PM. To register, please visit our Borough website or Facebook page. Registration is preferred but not required.

Mayor Barsa informed the residents that the Norwood Public Library is offering upcoming programs for both youth and adults. For adults, chair yoga is available every Tuesday beginning at 1PM. On August 15th, there will be representatives conducting memory screenings from 10AM-2PM. For children 2 years old and younger, story time will be held on Wednesdays at 11AM. Children 3-5 years old have a story and craft event on Wednesdays at 1PM. Today, August 11th, there will be a screening of Spiderman: No Way Home beginning at 3:15PM. For further information on the programs available, please contact the library.

CONSENT AGENDA

Matters listed below are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion of the Council and one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member requests an item be removed.

Approval of the Following Minutes:

July 13, 2022 Mayor & Council Meeting

Approval of the following Resolutions:

2022:139 Authorization to Submit an Application and Enter Into a Grant Agreement with the Department of Community Affairs' American Rescue Plan Firefighter Grant Program

2022:140 Authorizing the Approval of Change Order No. 3 – Replacement of the Blanch Ave Culvert over Dwars Kill

2022:141 Approving Construction Management Services Proposal for Norwood Dog Park Improvements

2022:142 Payment of Vouchers

Councilwoman Hausmann had a question regarding Resolution 2022:141 asking if there was any way to incorporate water to the proposed dog park within the agreement. The Borough Engineer stated that only the base bid was awarded for that project and that bid did not include water services.

Approval of Resolutions 2022:139 through 2022:142 and approval of the July 13th Mayor & Council Meeting Minutes was motioned by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Tree Removal Application – 41 Millbrook Circle:

A tree removal application was conditionally approved for 41 Millbrook Circle with the homeowner required to obtain any necessary permissions from the State of New Jersey being that the trees are located within 300 feet of Dwars Kill Stream. The conditional approval was motioned by Councilman Foschino and seconded by Councilman Ascolese. Mayor Barsa requested a roll call vote. All members of the council approved the motion with the exception of Councilman Suljic who rejected the motion.

Norwood Compost Facility – Tobar Agreement:

The Mayor and Council agreed with the recommendations from the Borough Engineer to move forward and have a new contract drawn up between the Borough of Norwood and Tobar Excavating regarding the Norwood Compost Facility. The agreement was motioned by Councilman Foschino and seconded by Councilman Brizzolara. Mayor Barsa requested a roll call vote. All members of the council approved the motion with the exception of Councilman Ascolese who abstained.

Proposed Layout – Kennedy Park Restrooms:

The proposed layout of the new Kennedy Park Restrooms designed by the Borough Architect was approved with the Mayor and Council requesting the inclusion of an adult changing station along with a time-released locking mechanism placed on the doors of the restrooms for safety reasons. Mayor Barsa asked for a motion to move forward. The request was motioned by Councilman Suljic and seconded by Councilwoman Hausmann. All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

Borough Administrator/Clerk Report:

The Deputy Borough Clerk reminded the residents that reservations are still being accepted for the Norwood Senior Picnic in the Park that is being held on Sunday August 21st.

Donations are currently being accepted for Norwood Day which is taking place on Saturday, September 24th and applications to reserve a space to promote local organizations and businesses are available on the Borough website and in the Clerk's office for those who are interested.

Borough Attorney Report:

A shared service agreement is currently in the works for Northwoods and should be completed shortly.

The Borough has received an extension from the plaintiff's council regarding the Jones Court lawsuit.

Borough Engineer Report:

Project closeout with the NJDOT is underway for the Blanch Avenue Bridge.

The Knickerbocker Baseball Field construction is complete and now open to the public. Installation of the dugouts and fencing are now complete, and gates will be installed by the end of the week.

Contracts for the Norwood Dog park are completed, and the contractor will begin procurement of construction materials with work to begin on or about September 6th.

The 2022 Municipal Road Program is currently in the design phase. The bid opening is scheduled for September 7, 2022 and construction is expected to begin later that month.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilwoman Hausmann

- Zoning Board – Approved Valley Transportation parking application on Jay Street. The next meeting will be held on August 17th.
- BOH – Has not yet held their August meeting .

- Environmental Commission – Meetings are being held every other Saturday to perform maintenance at the community garden. The next meet-up is scheduled for August 13th at 9:30AM. The commission is looking to have the members of Spectrum for Living get involved with the community garden. Hikes are planned for every weekend this month beginning at 10:30AM. EV grant opportunities are available through the state and Rockland Electric in the fall. Bryan Electric presentation is postponed until the September 28th Mayor & Council Meeting. Tree Preservation Ordinance subcommittee met and have incorporated the notes of Walter Deptuch and Christopher Jackson of the Construction Office. The Commission is looking to present the ordinance at the October 26th Mayor & Council Meeting. On October 1st, a clean-up event will be held in the central woods off of Broadway.

Councilman Suljic

- Finance – Councilman Suljic stated that the audit will be available by the end of this month.

Councilman asked to make a statement regarding the antiblack and antisemitic graffiti that was found at the basketball courts and Kennedy Park on July 21st and July 26th respectively. Councilman Suljic proceeded to condemn the crime and suggested that the perpetrator, when apprehended, should be punished to the greatest extent of the law. Councilman Suljic went on to say that the graffiti does not speak for our community and asked parents to educate their children regarding this incident.

Councilwoman Hausmann asked if there has been any update on whether or not anyone has been apprehended regarding the incident.

Norwood Police Chief Krapels responded that there is some evidence with possible photographic leads but stated those photos are of poor quality. Detectives have been bringing the photos to regional detective group meetings and distributing the pictures within the law enforcement intranet in an attempt to obtain a match. The actual crime was not captured on film but there are people of interest.

Councilman Ascolese

- Personnel Committee – Councilman Ascolese stated that the committee met two weeks ago and will meet again either next week or the week after depending on the availability of the Borough Administrator and the other members of the committee.

Councilman Kim

- Board of Education – Councilman Kim stated that the NVHS construction on roof and parking lot are continuing. All curriculum changes coming in the

fall will be available on their website. NPS has also had substantial additions to their personnel since last school year. Councilman Kim went on to say the NPS website is being revamped and should be up and running soon.

- Norwood Public Library – Councilman Kim stated that the library requested the town assist with the water bill due to the increased water consumption for the community garden. Mayor Barsa asked to have a copy of the water bill and the Borough would pick up the monthly difference with the other members of the council in agreement. The library is also having issues with their HVAC units and feel that it is not 100% repaired as one unit seems to not be functioning properly. Council President Foschino stated he would address the issue.

Councilman Brizzolara

- Construction Department – Councilman Brizzolara stated that the Jones Court properties have had streetlights installed and landscaping is scheduled for next week. Adam's Bagels opened last month and business has been brisk. A dental office is under construction at The Grande on Livingston Street. Councilman Brizzolara went on to say that major renovations are currently underway at Intarome on Chestnut Street.

Council President Foschino

Council President Foschino requested to have a notice sent to the Jones property along Broadway to have the grass cut.

- DPW – Council President Foschino stated that the Knickerbocker Field improvements are complete and the field is ready for use. Council President Foschino thanked the DPW Director and Borough Engineer for all their assistance with the project. A grand opening ceremony will be held in the near future once school is back in session. The Municipal Roof Replacement Projects is continuing with the triplex building about 90% complete. Work on the Borough Hall building is expected to start on Monday. The library may need to invest in new AC and heating units and pricing will be available next meeting. A new sidewalk was installed on Briarwood Avenue by the DPW. The Brook Street pump station experienced some issues over the last few days and the DPW has been working to resolve the issues.
- Fire Department – A tremendous amount of money has been used to repair the Assistant Chief's car due to engine and air conditioning issues. Council President Foschino stated that all engines have been sent out and serviced.
- EMS – The Borough of Hillsdale requested an ambulance on loan for a couple of days. The EMS Chief will send the Police Chief an email confirming that one of the ambulances will be sent out to assist them.

Council President Foschino commented on the graffiti issue at the basketball court stating that it goes without saying that we are all upset with what occurred.

Council President Foschino commented that the Police Department and the entire team had a phenomenal response regarding the incident. Council President Foschino went on to state that prior to going to social media, we should let the Chief and his staff do their job.

Councilman Brizzolara asked the Chief what his thoughts were.

The Chief of Police stated that the people of interest are juveniles, and the video footage cannot be broadcasted to the public as it is an active investigation involving juveniles. The Chief stated that a new high definition, high resolution camera is to be installed to monitor the basketball courts and nearby portions of the park which is approximately four times better than the current camera.

Councilman Suljic added that he wished he was informed earlier regarding the incident and questioned why it took a couple of days to react. Mayor Barsa stated it was very saddening to hear the news and fortunately he has not seen something like this before in the past. Mayor Barsa went on to state that as soon as he was made aware of the issue, the DPW was contacted to have the graffiti removed.

Council President Foschino went on to say that prior to putting out a statement, we should clear it with our Chief of Police.

Councilman Suljic stated that things of this nature happen in other parts of the country and other officials condone the incidents without commenting on the investigation.

Chief Krapels stated his responsibility at that time was to notify both Mayor Barsa and Councilman Ascolese which was done.

Councilwoman Hausmann stated that she will always condone hate speech or activities. Councilwoman Hausmann went on to ask whether or not making a statement would hinder an investigation. Councilwoman Hausmann added that she feels the issue should have been exposed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Barsa asked for a motion to open the meeting to the public. The motion was forwarded by Councilwoman Hausmann and seconded by Councilman Brizzolara. All councilmembers present voted in favor of the motion

Birgitha Tray – 125 Dyer Court

Ms. Tray expressed her concern with the water buildup issues on her property. The resident believes the recent modifications of her neighbors' properties have caused the water issues to become more frequent. The Mayor asked the Construction Official and Borough Engineer to review the properties in question and have a full report made available, including correcting any improper modifications that were made to the properties involved.

Angie Alberti – 328 Westwind Court

Ms. Alberti asked Councilman Kim who had declined the offer regarding the Korean school. In response, Councilman Kim replied he did not know the details of who declined the deal. Ms. Alberti stated she would love to see the adult changing table and other items on the wish list from August 2020. The resident also expressed her concern about another similar issue that took place last summer related to the graffiti that was found on the basketball court. Ms. Alberti also asked if there are other locations that we could place a camera that would be beneficial. Ms. Alberti thanked Councilwoman Hausmann and Councilman Suljic for making statements regarding the graffiti incident. Ms. Alberti asked if a sign could be put up stating that the area is under surveillance in order to deter future occurrences.

Council President Foschino stated that such signs have been ordered.

Heather Garcia – 15 Dwars Kill Lane

Ms. Garcia came forward to clear up the confusion with the Korean school. The resident stated that the Korean school had asked for 15 classrooms and Norwood had offered 10 classrooms due to security and cleaning reasons. The Korean school then decided that they were able to work out a deal with Closter. Ms. Garcia went on to state that Korean classes will be offered as an extracurricular activity after school in Norwood.

Rosemary Engmann – 76 Briarwood Avenue

Ms. Engmann stated the Council could have put out a statement similar to what Councilman Suljic did earlier in the meeting. Ms. Engmann stated this would have kept people from speculating online. Ms. Engmann stated that the town needs to hear from the council and where we stand and it has nothing to do with an investigation.

Mayor Barsa asked for a motion to close the meeting to the public. The motion was forwarded by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese. All councilmembers present approved the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Barsa asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was forwarded by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilwoman Hausmann. All councilmembers present approved the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:41PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Buginsky
Deputy Borough Clerk