

**City of Beverly
Burlington County
March 24, 2020 – 7:30PM
Regular Session**

MINUTES

The Regular Meeting of the Common Council of the City of Beverly, County of Burlington, and State of New Jersey was held on the aforementioned date with the following in attendance: Mayor Randy H. Miller (via conference call), Council President Robert H. Bancroft, Councilman Robert E. Lowden, Jr., Councilwoman Grace M. Heron, Councilman Mark Schwedes, Councilwoman Bernadine Williams, City Administrator/Public Safety Director Richard Wolbert, City Solicitor Thomas J. Coleman, Esq. (via conference call), and Municipal Clerk Caitlin Midgette.

Council President Bancroft called the meeting to order at 7:30PM.

The following opening statement was read by Council President Bancroft:

“The Provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met. Notice of this meeting, Resolution 2020-1, was posted on the Official Bulletin Board in City Hall, published in The Burlington County Times on January 12, 2020, emailed to the Camden Courier Post, filed with the Municipal Clerk on January 12, 2020 and was mailed to all persons requesting and paying for same.”

The above was followed by the Flag Salute and Roll Call.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Regular Session – March 10, 2020**
- **Executive Session – March 10, 2020**

A motion was offered by Councilman Schwedes and seconded by Councilwoman Heron to approve the above listed sets of minutes. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, as follows:

Aye: Heron, Lowden, Schwedes, Williams, Bancroft

Nay:

Abstain:

Absent:

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

No comments.

ORDINANCE – SECOND READING/PUBLIC HEARING

Ordinance 2020-3: An Ordinance of the City of Beverly Setting Forth Regulations for Tax Exemptions Related to Totally Disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses

Council President Bancroft opened the public hearing on Ordinance 2020-3. As no members of the public were in attendance at tonight's meeting, the public hearing was closed.

A motion was offered by Councilman Schwedes and seconded by Councilwoman Heron to adopt Ordinance 2020-3. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, as follows:

Aye: Heron, Lowden, Schwedes, Williams, Bancroft

Nay:

Abstain:

Absent:

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2020-47: Resolution Accepting Resignation of Gary Burgin as Fire Subcode Official for the City of Beverly

Upon inquiry by Councilman Schwedes, City Administrator Wolbert stated that Mr. Burgin has resigned from said position as he will be unable to work during daytime hours.

A motion was offered by Councilman Lowden and seconded by Councilwoman Williams to adopt Resolution 2020-47. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, as follows:

Aye: Heron, Lowden, Schwedes, Williams, Bancroft

Nay:

Abstain:

Absent:

Resolution 2020-48: Resolution Appointing Robert King as Fire Subcode Official for the City of Beverly

A motion was offered by Councilman Schwedes and seconded by Councilwoman Heron to adopt Resolution 2020-48. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, as follows:

Aye: Heron, Lowden, Schwedes, Williams, Bancroft

Nay:

Abstain:

Absent:

Resolution 2020-49: Resolution Authorizing Advance Payment to Endeavor Emergency Squad

City Administrator Wolbert stated that the current health crisis has resulted in extra expenditures for medical equipment and supplies by Endeavor Emergency Squad. Though the City's current contract with the organization states that donations to same shall be made on a quarterly basis each contractual year, this resolution will allow for the advance payment of two quarters to be made immediately. Councilman Schwedes inquired if, due to the current pandemic, payment to Endeavor for the year 2020 will be increased beyond the contractual amount. Mr. Wolbert stated that any increase in payment to the squad will be determined before budget adoption.

A motion was offered by Councilman Schwedes and seconded by Councilwoman Heron to adopt Resolution 2020-49. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, as follows:

Aye: Heron, Lowden, Schwedes, Williams, Bancroft

Nay:

Abstain:

Absent:

Resolution 2020-50: Resolution Providing for Temporary Emergency Appropriations for the Year 2020

A Motion was offered by Councilman Lowden and seconded by Councilwoman Williams to adopt Resolution 2020-50. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, as follows:

Aye: Heron, Lowden, Schwedes, Williams, Bancroft

Nay:

Abstain:

Absent:

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was presented.

NEW BUSINESS

City Administrator Wolbert stated that the Tax Assessor drafted a letter to the Director of Freeholders at the county disputing the change of the real property assessment calendar for the year. After slight discussion, it was determined by the Common Council that the letter is not to be sent to the county.

City Administrator Wolbert inquired if the Common Council would be in favor of cancelling the Memorial Day Parade given the current health crisis. After some discussion, it was decided that the event will be cancelled for this year.

BILL LIST

A motion was offered by Councilman Schwedes and seconded by Councilwoman Heron to approve the Bill List for March 24, 2020. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, as follows:

Aye: Heron, Lowden, Schwedes, Williams, Bancroft

Nay:

Abstain:

Absent:

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was presented.

MAYOR/COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS

Mayor Miller stated that he participated in a conference call with county and state officials regarding COVID-19. There is a nationwide shortage of preventative medical equipment, and the state will be conducting training courses with nursing students to help aid in the crisis.

Councilwoman Heron asked that individuals stay safe and practice social distancing.

Councilman Lowden reminded individuals to complete the 2020 census, and noted that both the Sewerage Authority Meeting and the Historical Society's appraisal event in April have been cancelled. Mr. Lowden thanked the staff for their efforts during the public crisis.

Councilman Schwedes inquired if Public Works employees will continue to operate under their normal schedule. City Administrator Wolbert stated that all City staff is operating under a modified schedule, and that the municipal building has been closed to the public. Furthermore, a drop box has been installed in front of the municipal building for public use during this time of closure. The Public Works employees are cleaning the municipal building on a daily basis, and all employees who feel ill have been instructed to remain home. While the City's parks remain open, the basketball court has been closed until further notice. All rental inspections have also been cancelled indefinitely. Additionally, Mr. Wolbert stated that future issues that will need to be addressed in response to the current health crisis are homeless individuals that fall ill, and the release of certain inmates by the county to avoid the spread of COVID-19 in the prison system. Councilman Schwedes stated that given all the sudden changes in the community, the City's website has been updated to provide useful information to the public, and that no complaints have been made by residents.

Councilwoman Williams questioned if a decision will be made to cancel all community events for the year. City Administrator Wolbert suggested that individual events be decided upon when the time for each approaches.

City Administrator Wolbert stated that in order to limit in-person contact, Council Meetings will be held electronically until future notice. Regarding same, City Solicitor Coleman noted that the agenda and instructions to partake in the electronic meeting should be published on the City's website so the public has the ability to review the agenda and make public comment.

Regarding the school district, City Administrator Wolbert informed the Common Council that even though the school is closed, the same has been distributing lunches to students while practicing social distancing. Additionally, crossing guards are being utilized during these times, and will receive the same pay though working hours have been decreased due to the school closure. Finally, Mr. Wolbert noted that the Fire District is working with seniors to ensure the same receive aid with food and groceries if needed.

Councilwoman Williams questioned if the water main replacement project on Laurel Street will continue during the health crisis. Mr. Wolbert explained that construction will continue, with officers present to secure the area. Additionally, officers will be enforcing all administrative and executive orders issued by the Governor's office regarding COVID-19.

Mayor Miller informed the Common Council that a COVID-19 testing site will be set up in an undisclosed area in Burlington County, and that as the number of available tests is limited, individuals must have a script from their doctor for same. City Administrator Wolbert also noted that hotels may be turned into places of recovery for the sick and to house emergency responders who need a safe place to stay if they choose not to return home if there's potential they may infect their family.

City Solicitor Coleman stated that other municipalities have had success in making emergency declarations as it relates to the closure of parks.

City Administrator Wolbert stated that there has been difficulty in finding contractors to fix the electrical and plumbing issues in the EMS building. Discussion ensued on the use of approved disinfectants and medical equipment to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was offered by Councilwoman Heron and seconded by Councilwoman Williams to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:21PM.

Respectfully Submitted By:

**Caitlin Midgette, RMC/CMR
Municipal Clerk**

Approved: April 14, 2020