

**City of Beverly  
Burlington County  
June 9, 2020 – 5:00PM  
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 via conference call with the following in attendance: Mayor Randy H. Miller, 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 Coleman, and Municipal Clerk Caitlin Midgette.

Council President Bancroft called the meeting to order at 5:03PM.

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, transmitted 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. Notice that this meeting will be held via conference call at 5:00PM was published in The Burlington County Times on May 3, 2020, transmitted to the Courier Post, posted on the City’s official website, and sent to all persons requesting same.”*

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- **Regular Session: May 26, 2020**

A motion was offered by Councilman Schwedes and seconded by Councilwoman Heron to approve the above listed set 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**

There being no comments, a motion was offered by Councilman Schwedes and seconded by Councilwoman Williams to close the preliminary public comment on agenda items only. Motion carried.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

City Administrator Wolbert stated that the chicken keeping ordinance will be placed on a future agenda for consideration.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was presented.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

**Resolution 2020-54:** Resolution Authorizing the Tax Collector to Prepare and Mail Estimated Tax Bills in Accordance with P.L. 1994, C.72

Councilman Schwedes inquired if the estimated tax bills will include the anticipated increase in the 2020 Municipal Budget. City Administrator Wolbert stated that the estimated tax bills do take into account the proposed budget increase.

A motion was offered by Councilman Lowden and seconded by Councilman Schwedes to adopt Resolution 2020-54. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, as follows:

Aye: Heron, Lowden, Schwedes, Williams, Bancroft

Nay:

Abstain:

Absent:

## **BILL LIST**

A motion was offered by Councilman Schwedes and seconded by Councilwoman Heron to approve the Bill List for June 9, 2020. Motion carried on a Roll Call Vote, as follows:

Aye: Heron, Lowden, Schwedes, Williams, Bancroft

Nay:

Abstain:

Absent:

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

City Administrator Wolbert read into the record a letter from the Palmyra Police Department thanking Officer Wagner for his knowledge and professionalism during a call in which he assisted Palmyra.

## **MAYOR/COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS**

Mayor Miller hoped that everyone was staying safe during these unprecedented times.

Councilwoman Heron, in response to the current social climate in the country, stated that she is proud of Beverly's Police Department and feels safe living in the community. However, Ms. Heron expressed that she feels police in general should be held to a higher standard, particularly when it comes to issues of police brutality.

Councilwoman Lowden stated that Beverly's Police Department has come a long way, and commended City Administrator/Public Safety Director Wolbert for his efforts in bringing about

change within the department. Additionally, Mr. Lowden stated that he looks forward to the reopening of City Hall now that COVID-19 cases statewide seem to be on the decline.

Councilman Schwedes expressed pride in Beverly's Police Department and Public Safety Director, and commended the professionalism of the officers. Mr. Schwedes also thanked the Public Works employees for their efforts during the latest storm that caused some damage around the City.

Councilwoman Williams stated that she feels safe with Beverly's Police Department and in the City. Ms. Williams also noted that her thoughts are with the country and police officers during this time of social unrest, and feels concerned for all parties involved.

City Administrator Wolbert stated that when Beverly's Police Department was restructured, it was made more diverse, and he's proud to say that half of the department is made up of minorities. Last year, the department implemented software that tracks officer performance statistics, and all use of force reports are analyzed to determine if the responses of officers can be improved. Additionally, Mr. Wolbert stated that the City will have to purchase a new fingerprinting machine and a new alcohol breath test machine for the Police Department. Regarding the recent storms, Mr. Wolbert stated that the Municipal Building does not have an emergency generator, and recommended that funds already encumbered for the waterfront acquisition be reappropriated to purchase same.

Furthermore, Mr. Wolbert stated that though the Governor has lifted the stay at home order, businesses are yet to be opened. As there has been an increase in COVID-19 cases in the City, it may not be until July when the Municipal Building will reopen to the public.

Councilman Schwedes inquired if the City would consider implementing a robocall system to reach residents in the event important information needs to be disbursed. City Administrator Wolbert stated that he will discuss this matter with Mr. Schwedes at a later date.

City Administrator Wolbert asked for an update on the in-rem foreclosure process. City Solicitor Coleman stated that due to one of the Governor's executive orders related to COVID-19, the process has been temporarily placed on hold.

The March and April 2020 reports for Endeavor EMS were reviewed.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Council President Bancroft opened public comment.

Lawrence Carlbom, 434 Jennings Street, stated that the Burlington County Health Department plans to spray for mosquitoes in the near future, and inquired if the City will be able to inform residents of the anticipated spray dates, especially since the chemical to be used can be harmful. City Administrator Wolbert responded that in previous years, once the City was notified of the spraying by the County, a reverse 911 was sent out to residents who signed up for the service. Additionally, to ensure that more residents are reached in the future, the City is continuing to build its service database through multiple resources.

Angela Buzovsky, 623 Spruce Street, inquired if the City would be willing to reduce property taxes during the public health crisis, as some individuals have been out of work due to same and have yet to receive unemployment through the State. City Administrator Wolbert stated that the taxes that are currently due were set in last year's budget, and though the Municipal Building and the School District have been closed to the public, both continue to operate with no lapse in service. Additionally, there have been many negative impacts to the municipal budget due to the pandemic, such as increased purchases of safety materials and cleaning supplies, a reduction in tax collection, and the reduction of municipal and state aid. Discussion ensued on the budget process, specifically on how independent authorities, such as the School District, Fire District, and County contribute to the tax rate.

There being no further comments, a motion was offered by Councilman Schwedes and seconded by Councilwoman Williams to close the public comment portion of the meeting. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was offered by Councilwoman Heron and seconded by Councilwoman Williams to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:04PM.

**Respectfully Submitted By:**

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

Approved: June 23, 2020