

**BOROUGH OF WESTWOOD
WORK MEETING OF THE MAYOR & COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 6, 2011 MINUTES
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
101 Washington Avenue
7:30 PM Executive Closed Session/8:00 pm Work Session**

1. Opening of the Meeting:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Birkner at 7:30 pm. Mayor Birkner then read the Open Public Meetings Law Statement: "This meeting which conforms with the Open Public Meetings law, Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975, is a regular Borough Council meeting. Notices have been filed with our local official newspapers and posted on the municipal bulletin board."

2. Roll Call:

Mayor Birkner – Present
Councilmember Grefrath – Excused Absence
Councilmember Phayre - Present
Councilmember Quinn - Present
Councilmember Sciara - Present
Councilmember Waneck - Present
Council President Miller - Present
Borough Administrator Hoffmann – Present
Borough Attorney Huntington - Present
Deputy Borough Clerk Holmes - Present

Committee Assignments:

Finance, Administration & Capital Projects
Public Properties
Health & Recreation
Fire & Ambulance
Land Use
Police & OEM

3. Resolution #11 - 195: Executive Closed Session

Motion: Council President Miller Second: Councilmember Sciara

Roll Call: Councilmember Grefrath – Absent Councilmember Phayre - Yes
 Councilmember Quinn – Yes Councilmember Sciara - Yes
 Councilmember Waneck – Yes Council President Miller – Yes

4. Reopen the Meeting:

Motion to reopen the meeting: Council President Miller Second: Councilmember Sciara

Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.

The time was 8:10 pm.

5. Roll Call II:

Mayor Birkner – Present
Councilmember Grefrath – Excused Absence
Councilmember Phayre - Present
Councilmember Quinn – Present
Councilmember Sciara – Present
Councilmember Waneck - Absent
Council President Miller - Present
Borough Administrator Hoffmann – Present
Borough Attorney Huntington - Present
Borough Engineer Boswell- Present
Deputy Borough Clerk Holmes – Present

6. Flag Salute

Mayor Birkner led those present in the salute to the flag.

7. Reports of Committees and Officials:

A) Mayor's Report

1) HUMC

Mayor Birkner reported on the process of the application for the reopening of the hospital and that the Department of Health's questionnaire is considered thorough and fair. He also reported that HUMC's Executive Department is in the process of compiling the answers requested and that most of questionnaire should be done the Friday, September 9. Mayor Birkner relayed to the Governing Body and the residents of Westwood and the surrounding communities that HUMC and their partners are confident that their application will express the need for the hospital in this area.

2) Hurricane Irene Report

Mayor Birkner reported that Hurricane Irene caused extensive flooding and damage throughout Westwood and all along the East Coast. He estimated that approximately 350 homes and apartments and 50 businesses were damaged. Mayor Birkner thanked all of the emergency services as well as the police dispatchers and the DPW. He gave special thanks to Social Services Director Kathie Elgert and volunteers Maria and Ann Costello for their work at the shelter in assisting residents and their pets. He also thanked OEM Coordinator Darren Blankenbush who was remarkable for his around the clock presence around Westwood and for coordinating efforts with all the emergency service personnel. Mayor Birkner reported that last Monday Congressman Scott Garrett toured the affected areas and pledged he would push to secure the appropriate funding from FEMA. Mayor Birkner also commented that Governor Christie declared a State of Emergency and President Obama declared portions of New Jersey disaster areas.

Mayor Birkner reported that dumpsters were placed in the affected areas around town. He announced that Social Services Director Mrs. Elgert would be accepting donations of food, cleaning supplies & school supplies.

3) Mayor's Emergency Declaration

Mayor Birkner stated that on the consent agenda for approval is the Mayor's Emergency Declaration which will waive all municipal permit and inspection fees for the victims of Hurricane Irene. A copy is attached.

4) Pascack Valley Waterway Task Force

Mayor Birkner reported that the Task Force is still looking at dates for a public meeting with a panel of experts but because of the hurricane and the cleanup no date has been finalized. Mayor Birkner stated that he would like the Governing Body to approve the authorization of Boswell Engineering to proceed with a more detailed study of the Woodcliff Lake and Oradell dams, which would expound on their

April presentation. It would also address the standard operating procedures for United Water relating to their operations of those dams and their utilization of the Pascaek Brook as a conduit of conveyance for their product. Mayor Birkner stated that he believes that the only way the Borough can effectuate any type of change is through the appropriate bureaus of the NJDEP. After much discussion the Governing Body gave their consensus for Boswell Engineering to proceed with the study.

Mayor Birkner left at 9:10pm.

5) Restaurant Week Proclamation

Borough Administrator Hoffmann read the proclamation. Council President Miller presented the proclamation to Joseph Abou-Daoud, a member of the Chamber of Commerce.

B) Engineer's Report

1) Bi-weekly Report

Dr. Boswell reviewed the bi-weekly report, a copy of which is attached.

2) Westvale Park Lights

Dr. Boswell requested that Borough Attorney Huntington write a letter to the contractor to try and resolve the issue of the lights at Westvale Park.

3) Street Signs

Dr. Boswell reported that the Federal Government has mandated that all street signs must be a capital first letter followed by lower case letters and must be retro reflectivity, which is the reflection of the sign coming back. He stated that this is going to cost billions of dollars nationwide. Originally all signs had to be replaced by the year 2016 but Dr. Boswell reported that the Federal Government has relented so there is now no time frame. However, the change still has to be done.

4) Pascaek Brook Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation

Councilmember Phayre asked whether the vagueness on the September/October completion dates is because of the weather or contractor availability. Dr. Boswell responded that while this is the ideal time the rain would cause trucks to make ruts in the soft dirt.

5) 2011 Road Resurfacing Program

Councilmember Phayre asked if the paving will be done by the end of the month. Dr. Boswell responded that it depends on the rain. He explained that it only takes thirteen work days from start to finish. The curb cut work has been done. The milling and paving remain, which takes a week.

C) Council Liaison & Committee Reports

1) Finance, Administration and Capital Projects:

Councilmember Grefrath was absent.

2) Police and OEM:

a) Temporary Traffic Pattern

Council President Miller reported that the Police Department indicated that they are working on a temporary traffic pattern with the Board of Education and residents for the start of the school year by the Middle School and Berkeley School. He stated that the Middle School is going to be particularly difficult because there are 60% more students now in that building and they are not all from Westwood. He asked the parents to please be mindful of the directions of the Police Officers on duty.

b) Insurance – Workers’ Comp

Council President Miller discussed the Worker’s Compensation Insurance rates. He explained the positive and negative effects of being in an insurance pool.

c) HRA Savings

Council President Miller reported that the Borough expects to save approximately \$153,000 this year from switching to the HRA health insurance plan.

d) Police Dispatch

Council President Miller reported that the Chiefs of six communities are exploring the idea of shared dispatch services. They will be consulting the fire department, ambulance and other users for their input. Although much has already been done it’s still in the early stages. Councilmember Sciara commented that the Police Chiefs understand the costs of having communication centers in each town, so they are looking at trying to keep the dispatch within the control of the communities. Councilmember Waneck asked when an actual plan would be presented. Council President Miller estimated there should be more information by the end of the month. Two of the communication providers still have not received any financial proposals. Councilmember Waneck commented that this is something the Governing Body wanted to have implemented in the new fiscal year. She’s concerned that it will remain in the talking stages over the next three months.

3) Fire and Ambulance:

a) Emergency Services Update

Councilmember Sciara acknowledged the Fire Department and Ambulance Corp for their selflessness through the hurricane and all the flooding.

4) Public Properties:

a) DPW Update

Councilmember Phayre stated that while the praises are still coming in for the DPW they are victims of this hurricane too. The DPW building took in 19 inches of water, but luckily they were able to move all the vehicles and take some precautions. Councilmember Phayre asked that residents be patient if they get behind in pickups since they are working in adverse conditions.

5) Land Use:

a) Community Garden Grant

Councilmember Waneck reported that through the Environmental Committee the Borough submitted an application for a Community Garden Grant. If it is awarded, the project will move forward in the spring.

b) Borough Website

Councilmember Waneck thanked Lorraine Flannery for working around the clock posting hurricane updates on the website, although without power a lot of people couldn't read them.

Councilmember Phayre reported that the technology committee is working on getting a twitter account some day.

6) Health and Recreation:

a) Board of Health Update

Councilmember Quinn reminded the residents that the Board of Health can be a research center for answers regarding cleanups and concerns of health risks.

D) Attorney's Report

No Report

E) Administrator's / Clerk's Report

1) 2011 NJDOT Cooperative Road Improvement Program

Mr. Hoffmann reviewed the timetable for the NJDOT grant-funded road project bid.

2) DPW Building

Mr. Hoffmann advised that a crack has appeared in the DPW building as a result of the flooding. The Construction Official and insurance company are inspecting it.

Mr. Hoffmann suggested that after the storm cleanup abates the protocols for emergencies be reviewed and updated based on experience. Councilmember Phayre noted there has been an impact on the DPW budget.

8. Agenda/Public Forum:

Motion to open the Agenda/Public Forum: Councilmember Phayre

Second: Councilmember Sciara

Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the Affirmative.

Kevin O'Brien, 48 Summit Avenue – commented that during his review of the documents presented to the Task Force, there was no mention of how many homes are affected or Blue Acres.

Mr. O'Brien suggested that even if the Borough pays the entire cost of the flood study, it might be more effective for a letter on it to come from the Pascack Valley Mayors.

Mr. O'Brien announced that he is an Independent not aligned with a political party. He complimented the Governing Body on as a caring group of people that works together.

Mr. O'Brien referenced the "June 25 Pascack Valley Mayors Association", where it referenced data collected during the May 13th walk, and also that collected during the recent floods of March, April and June. He OPRA'd those documents but was told there are none. Mr. O'Brien said there was also reference to a flood review meeting but there were no documents from that meeting. He feels there should be records in both instances and it is a violation of OPRA. Council President Miller said if records exist and releasable to them they are distributed.

Mr. O'Brien said he has asked how gallons of water and inches of rain related to flood levels and not received answers, so he sympathizes with those being flooded. He is disturbed that members of the public are not part of the task force. Council President Miller said the Governing Body is listening.

Motion to close the Agenda/Public Forum: Councilmember Phayre

Second: Councilmember Quinn

Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.

9. Presentation of Bills, Financial Reports and Resolutions:

Council President Miller advised that the following Resolutions would be enacted in one motion. Councilmembers who wished to remove any Resolution(s) to be voted upon separately, had the opportunity to do so at this time, and said Resolutions would be considered separately.

Resolutions as Consent Agenda:

- a) **Resolution #11 -196: Bill List & Statement of Cash**
- b) **Resolution #11 -197: Authorize Refund of Taxes-55 Palisade Avenue**
- c) **Resolution #11 -198: Authorize Refund of Taxes-78 Washington Avenue**
- d) **Resolution #11 -199: 2010 Audit Corrective Action Plan**
- e) **Resolution #11- 200: Endorsement of Community Development Projects - Westwood Senior Citizen Program 2012-2013**
- f) **Resolution #11 -201: Chapter 159 – Recycling Tonnage Grant**
- g) **Resolution #11 -202: Chapter 159 – Alcohol Education & Rehabilitation Fund**
- h) **Resolution #11 -203: Endorsement of Bergen County Open Space-Community Garden**

Grant

- i) Resolution #11 -204: Governing Body's Emergency Declaration**
- j) Resolution #11 -205: Authorize the Borough of Westwood to Join the National Moment of Remembrance of the 10th Anniversary of September 11th**

Motion to adopt resolutions #11-196 through #11-205: Councilmember Sciara
Second: Councilmember Waneck

Roll Call: Councilmember Grefrath – Absent Councilmember Phayre - Yes
 Councilmember Quinn – Yes Councilmember Sciara - Yes
 Councilmember Waneck – Yes Council President Miller – Yes

10. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Councilmember Sciara Second: Councilmember Waneck

Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.

The time was 9:45 pm.

Attest:

(signed) Denise Holmes

Denise Holmes, Deputy Clerk

Proofed by: Karen Hughes, RMC, Borough Clerk