

**BOROUGH OF WESTWOOD
PUBLIC MEETING OF THE MAYOR & COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 18, 2020 MINUTES
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
101 Washington Avenue
7:30 pm Executive Closed Session /8:00 pm Public Session**

1. Opening of the Meeting:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Arroyo at 7:30 pm. Mayor Arroyo 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 Arroyo – Present
Councilmember Bicocchi – Present
Councilmember Collins – Present
Councilmember Dell – Present
Councilmember Hodges – Present
Councilmember Murphy – Present
Council President Montana - Present
Borough Attorney Huntington – Present
Borough Administrator Kezmarsky - Present
Borough Clerk Hughes – Present

Committee Assignments:

Land Use
Public Properties
Finance, Administration & Capital Projects; Shared Services
Health & Recreation
Fire & Ambulance
Police & Emergency Management

3. Resolution #20- 58: Executive Closed Session

Motion to Approve Resolution #20-58: Councilmember Dell Second: Councilmember Collins

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Yes
 Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes
 Councilmember Dell – Yes Council President Montana – Yes

4. Reopen the Meeting:

Motion to reopen the meeting: Councilmember Murphy Second: Councilmember Bicocchi

Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative. The time was 8:13 pm.

5. Roll Call II:

Mayor Arroyo – Present / Councilmember Bicocchi – Present / Councilmember Collins – Present /
Councilmember Dell - Present / Councilmember Hodges – Present / Councilmember Murphy -
Present / Council President Montana - Present / Borough Administrator Kezmarsky - Present /
Borough Attorney Huntington – Present / Borough Engineer Senkevich – Present / Borough Clerk
Hughes – Present

6. Flag Salute

Councilmember Dell gave the invocation. Mayor Arroyo led those present in the salute to the flag.

7. Approval of Minutes: January 2, 2020 Sine Die Meeting; January 2, 2020 Reorganization Meeting; January 7, 2020 Work Session; January 21, 2020 Public Meeting

Motion to Approve January 2, 2020 Sine Die Meeting Minutes: Councilmember Dell Second: Councilmember Bicocchi

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Abstain
 Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes

Councilmember Dell – Yes Council President Montana – Yes

Motion to Approve January 2, 2020 Reorganization Meeting Minutes: Councilmember Dell
Second: Councilmember Collins

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicchocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Yes
Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes
Councilmember Dell – Yes Council President Montana – Yes

Motion to Approve January 7, 2020 Work Meeting Minutes: Councilmember Bicchocchi Second:
Councilmember Dell

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicchocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Yes
Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes
Councilmember Dell – Abstain Council President Montana – Yes

Motion to Approve January 21, 2020 Public Meeting Minutes: Councilmember Dell Second:
Council President Montana

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicchocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Yes
Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes
Councilmember Dell – Yes Council President Montana – Yes

8. Proclamation – Heart Health Month

9. Reports of Committees and Officials:

A) Council President’s Report

Council President Montana pointed out individual and community actions that residents can take advantage of to foster wellness.

1) Alumni in Recovery

Council President Montana discussed the upcoming Alumni in Recovery meeting on March 2nd at 7:00 pm.

2) PBA Snow Bowl

Council President Montana thanked the PBA for sponsoring a fundraiser for the Snow Bowl Special Olympics event, and Café Anello for hosting. Over 100 people attended and donated to a great cause.

B) Mayor’s Report

1) Hip Commuter Bus

Mayor Arroyo discussed an app-based commuter bus line startup called Hip that will be adding Westwood to its route, along with Emerson, Hillsdale, and Oradell. He explained how the program works, the advantages, and the costs.

C) Engineer’s Report

1) Biweekly Report

Dr. Boswell reviewed the biweekly report, a copy of which is attached.

D) Council Liaison & Committee Reports

1) Finance, Administration and Capital Projects: BD

a) Budget Update

Councilmember Dell reviewed the proposed 2020 budget, which was distributed to the Governing Body:

- The 2020 proposed budget includes a municipal tax rate reduction of \$0.01 to \$0.777 as compared to 2019 municipal tax rate of \$0.788. Additionally, the municipal tax rate has decreased \$0.07 since 2016 while the average assessed home has increased to \$433,500 in 2020 from \$387,800 in 2016.
- As a result of our continued commitment to stabilize our municipal taxes, the 2020 proposed budget includes a tax increase of \$5 or \$0.42 per month on an average assessed home of \$433,500.
- We were able to achieve such a small increase through our continued strong fiscal policies. The highlights of the proposed budget are as follows:
 - 2020 Proposed Spending \$19,894,901 as compared to \$19,839,839 to 2019
 - This is an increase of \$47,005 or 0.24% Increase compared to 2019.
 - Overview of Capital and Debt
 - 2020 Capital Bonding Proposal: \$1,745,000
 - 2020 Grants to offset Capital \$528,532
 - 2020 debt due to be retired: \$2,135,718
 - 2020 estimated reduction of debt: \$1,000,000
 - Net decrease of \$1 million in debt.
 - Such decrease in debt includes our proposed Capital improvements of \$1,745,000. Proposed capital improvements include:
 - Our continued Road Paving/Improvement program of \$435,000
 - Phase I and II of Methane Investigation and Remediation at Westvale of \$350,000
 - A garbage truck and upgrades to the Pascack Road Pump Station for \$280,000
 - Anticipated grants to renovate the kitchen and bathrooms at the community center; an outdoor fitness gym at Westvale and renovations at the pistol range which in total amount to approximately \$461,000.
 - 2020 proposed use of Surplus is \$1,355M for tax relief. This is approximately 31% of our total surplus which is the smallest percentage use of surplus in 14 years. The remaining estimated surplus is approximately \$3 million.
 - Maintaining such a strong surplus continues to benefit the Borough with lower borrowing rates and our ability not to be forced to incur additional debt in the event of any unplanned major expenditures.

Council President Montana noted the tax rate per \$100 assessed value continues to decrease. The budget only went up \$55,000, which is a testament to Mr. Kezmarsky and the Department Heads that are doing more with less. Mayor Arroyo said there is a significant commercial ratable increase. Council President Montana said there is well over \$2 billion in assessed value, which is a \$200 million increase over 2019. Mr. Kezmarsky asked the Governing Body to review the budget and get questions to him. The introduction

will be based on when the State releases the forms and formatting.

b) Westwood Train Station Designation

Councilmember Dell advised that there will be a segment on News 12 about the train station historic designation. A blue historic plaque from the County is on order and will be unveiled at Westwood Pride Day. Both the Heritage Society and the Historic Preservation Commission are eager to tour 84 Washington Ave. The current display at the train station celebrates the 30th anniversary of the Heritage Society.

c) Pride in Place Awards

The deadline for the Historic Preservation Commission's Pride in Place awards is March 2nd. The awards will be announced at the May Council meeting.

d) Local Government Week

Councilmember Dell reviewed some plans for a Local Government Week open house at the Borough Hall.

2) Fire and Ambulance: JM

a) Fire Department

Councilmember Murphy reviewed the January fire statistics.

b) Shade Tree

Councilmember Murphy said the Shade Tree Committee is spreading the word about free trees. She asked if the County had contacted the Mayor about the tree from Van Saun Park. Mr. Kezmarsky thinks it has already been delivered and will check with Mr. Woods. Councilmember Murphy said it will be planted on Arbor Day.

c) Green Team

Councilmember Murphy reported that the Green Team's goals for 2020 include a green screen and green fair. They will support the Bistate Watershed Cleanup.

3) Health and Recreation: CH

a) Senior Advisory Committee

Councilmember Hodges advised that the Senior Advisory Committee may be changing their meeting time to the afternoon. At their February meeting they had an update from Westwood For All Ages, and from the Riley Center. Councilmember Hodges would like to see a review of competitive programs. The two major concerns for the seniors are transportation and housing.

b) Health Department

This is the Health Department's busiest time with pet licensing and the rabies clinic. Councilmember Hodges said the Health Department is tracking the Coronavirus news and urges residents to take precautions as recommended by the CDC. Links are on their website to keep residents informed.

c) Recreation

Councilmember Hodges reported that the winter Recreation programs are under way, with great attendance. She discussed the awards being presented at the annual state Recreation conference for

the Rec Report newsletter and the SNAP program. She reviewed the various programs and projects. She noted a resident wants to donate a harmony harp to be installed at Veterans Park. It was determined that Veterans Park is not the best location. Mayor Arroyo suggested Hegeman Park. Councilmember Hodges will report back.

4) Land Use: RB

a) Land Use Boards

Councilmember Biccocchi advised that the Planning Board intends to complete the Master Plan review on March 26th. The Zoning Board is preparing the 2019 annual report.

b) Library

Councilmember Biccocchi reviewed various library programs, including the Neighbor to Neighbor program happening at the library this evening.

5) Police and OEM; Shared Services: CM

a) Environmental Committee Nugent Park Project Update

Council President Montana advised that the Environmental Committee would like to present their plan for Nugent Park at the March work session. He gave an overview of their five year plan to create a rain garden that will help mitigate flooding. Mayor Arroyo asked about the Eagle Scout project being proposed for Nugent Park. Council President Montana said he hasn't heard back from the Scout but will invite him to present at the meeting as well.

b) Police Department

Council President Montana said the Police Department has been working diligently on reaccreditation. They were inspected last week and no issues were found, so they will be reaccredited. He congratulated the Police for a great job. Mayor Arroyo noted there is a credit on the insurance. Council President Montana said the cost balances out the credit but the accreditation helps with defense in the case of a lawsuit.

c) Middle School Traffic Plan

Council President Montana met with Chief Pontillo, Mr. Kezmarsky, Lt. Antonacci, Councilmember Collins, and Nancy Dargis of the County to review a proposed traffic flow plan for Third Avenue at the Middle School. There will be a meeting with the Board of Education, and then the changes will be codified in advance of the new school opening in September.

6) Public Properties: EC

a) DPW

Councilmember Collins toured the DPW on January 31st and is excited to learn the garage is heated by vegetable oil. She said the 2020 recycling calendar is a hit with residents. There will be a tour of the recycling processing center in Passaic on Thursday.

b) Local Assistance Board

Councilmember Collins has met with Social Services Director Kathy Elgert and there will be a Local Assistance Board meeting on February 26th at 7 pm.

c) Technology

Councilmember Collins said the Zoning Board would like to explore a paperless footprint.

E) Attorney's Report

No report.

F) Administrator's / Clerk's Report

1) Census Update

Mrs. Hughes discussed the County grant opportunity for publicizing the 2020 Census.

10. Agenda/Public Forum:

Motion to reopen Agenda/Public Forum: Councilmember Bicocchi Second: Councilmember Dell
Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the Affirmative.

Lisa Bontemps, 136 Lafayette Ave – noted that the Bergen Volunteer Center is offering \$5000 grants for publicizing the Census to hard-to-reach populations. Westwood For All Ages has applied for one and will partner with the Riley Center to get Seniors to participate. Ms. Bontemps offered the assistance of the Westwood For All Ages email list for the Borough use.

Motion to close Agenda/Public Forum: Councilmember Dell Second: Councilmember Murphy
Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.

11. Ordinances for Introduction/Adoption

Ordinance for Introduction

20-4 Bond Ordinance To Authorize The Installation Of Exercise Equipment And Yoga Platforms At Westvale Park In, By And For The Borough Of Westwood, In The County Of Bergen, State Of New Jersey, To Appropriate The Sum Of \$120,000 To Pay The Cost Thereof, To Make A Down Payment, To Authorize The Issuance Of Bonds To Finance Such Appropriation And To Provide For The Issuance Of Bond Anticipation Notes In Anticipation Of The Issuance Of Such Bonds

BE IT RESOLVED that Ordinance #20-4 entitled “Bond Ordinance To Authorize The Installation Of Exercise Equipment And Yoga Platforms At Westvale Park In, By And For The Borough Of Westwood, In The County Of Bergen, State Of New Jersey, To Appropriate The Sum Of \$120,000 To Pay The Cost Thereof, To Make A Down Payment, To Authorize The Issuance Of Bonds To Finance Such Appropriation And To Provide For The Issuance Of Bond Anticipation Notes In Anticipation Of The Issuance Of Such Bonds” is hereby introduced by title; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk is hereby directed to advertise said ordinance with a March 17, 2020 hearing date in the official newspaper according to law.

Motion to pass the ordinance on First Reading: Councilmember Hodges Second: Councilmember Bicocchi

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Yes
 Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes
 Councilmember Dell – Yes Council President Montana – Yes

20-5 Ordinance To Amend Section 195-162: Off-Street Parking

Motion to Withdraw Ordinance: Councilmember Bicocchi Second: Councilmember Collins

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Yes
 Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes
 Councilmember Dell – Yes Council President Montana – Yes

Ordinances for Adoption

20-1 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 243 Parks and Recreation Areas Schedule A Recreation Department Fees

BE IT RESOLVED that Ordinance #20-1 entitled “An Ordinance Amending Chapter 243 Parks and Recreation Areas Schedule A Recreation Department Fees” having hereby been read by title, shall have a hearing held on this date.

Motion to open the public hearing: Councilmember Hodges Second: Councilmember Bicocchi
Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.

Public Comments:

No comments.

Motion to close the public hearing: Councilmember Bicocchi Second: Councilmember Dell
Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.

BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance known as #20-1 be passed on final reading and that a Notice of Adoption of said Ordinance be published in the official newspaper according to law.

Motion for final adoption: Councilmember Hodges Second: Councilmember Bicocchi

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Yes
 Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes
 Councilmember Dell – Yes Council President Montana – Yes

20-2 An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 6 Article VII Senior Citizen Advisory Committee

BE IT RESOLVED that Ordinance #20-2 entitled “An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 6 Article VII Senior Citizen Advisory Committee” having hereby been read by title, shall have a hearing held on this date.

Motion to open the public hearing: Councilmember Hodges Second: Council President Montana
Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.

Public Comments:

No comments.

Motion to close the public hearing: Councilmember Hodges Second: Councilmember Dell
Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.

BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance known as #20-2 be passed on final reading and that a Notice of Adoption of said Ordinance be published in the official newspaper according to law.

Motion for final adoption: Councilmember Hodges Second: Councilmember Bicocchi

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Yes
 Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes
 Councilmember Dell – Yes Council President Montana – Yes

20-3 Bond Ordinance To Authorize The Resurfacing Of Fairview Avenue (From The Pascack Brook (Hillsdale Border) To Irvington Street) In, By And For The Borough Of

Westwood, In The County Of Bergen, State Of New Jersey, To Appropriate The Sum Of \$244,000 To Pay The Cost Thereof, To Authorize The Issuance Of Bonds To Finance Such Appropriation And To Provide For The Issuance Of Bond Anticipation Notes In Anticipation Of The Issuance Of Such Bonds.

BE IT RESOLVED that Ordinance #20-3 entitled “Bond Ordinance To Authorize The Resurfacing Of Fairview Avenue (From The Pascack Brook (Hillsdale Border) To Irvington Street) In, By And For The Borough Of Westwood, In The County Of Bergen, State Of New Jersey, To Appropriate The Sum Of \$244,000 To Pay The Cost Thereof, To Authorize The Issuance Of Bonds To Finance Such Appropriation And To Provide For The Issuance Of Bond Anticipation Notes In Anticipation Of The Issuance Of Such Bonds” having hereby been read by title, shall have a hearing held on this date.

Motion to open the public hearing: Councilmember Dell Second: Councilmember Bicocchi
Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.

Public Comments:

No comments.

Motion to close the public hearing: Councilmember Bicocchi Second: Councilmember Murphy
Voice Vote: A voice vote was taken with all present voting in the affirmative.

BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance known as #20-3 be passed on final reading and that a Notice of Adoption of said Ordinance be published in the official newspaper according to law.

Motion for final adoption: Councilmember Dell Second: Councilmember Murphy

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Yes
 Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes
 Councilmember Dell – Yes Council President Montana – Yes

12. Presentation of Bills, Financial Reports and Resolutions:

Councilmember Dell asked if there were any resolutions to add to the Consent Agenda. She stated that any Councilmembers who wished to remove any Resolution(s) to be voted upon separately could do so at this time, otherwise the Consent Agenda would be enacted in one motion.

Resolutions as Consent Agenda:

- a) **Resolution #20 - 59: Bill List & Statement of Cash**
- b) **Resolution #20 - 60: Authorizing Refund of Taxes Due To Tax Court Judgement B907 L16**
- c) **Resolution #20 - 61: Authorizing Bergen County Trust Fund Grant Project – Wellness/Exercise Playground and Meditation/Yoga Platforms**
- d) **Resolution #20 - 62: Westwood Volunteer Fire Department Matters of Personnel – Probationary Drivers**
- e) **Resolution #20 - 63: Authorizing The Auction Of Certain Surplus Property No Longer Needed For The Public Use By Westwood Borough Utilizing The Services Of Govdeals, Inc.**
- f) **Resolution #20 - 64: Authorizing Preparation of Plans and Specifications for 2020 NJDOT Fairview Avenue Improvement Project**
- g) **Resolution #20 - 65: Authorizing ROW Agreement with Cross River Fiber**

Motion to Approve Resolutions #20-59 through #20-65: Councilmember Dell Second: Councilmember Collins

Roll Call: Councilmember Bicocchi - Yes Councilmember Hodges – Yes
 Councilmember Collins – Yes Councilmember Murphy - Yes

Councilmember Dell – Yes

Council President Montana – Yes

13. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Councilmember Bicocchi Second: Councilmember Murphy

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

The time was 9:34 pm.

Attest:

(signed) Karen Hughes

Karen Hughes, RMC, Borough Clerk

Proofed by: Stefanie Stokes, Tax Collector