

REGULAR MEETING

DATE: February 20, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Milford Borough Common Council was held on February 20, 2024. The meeting was called to order by Henry Schepens, Mayor at 7:00PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Mayor Schepens.

SUNSHINE PROCLAMATION was read by Mayor Schepens.

As required by the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975, adequate notice of this meeting was provided on January 11, 2024 in the Hunterdon County Democrat and Express Times newspapers.

Notices were also posted on the bulletin boards both inside and outside the Municipal Building and at the Milford Public Library.

ROLL CALL

Present: James Gallos, Noralie LaFevre,
Helen Livingston, Douglas Sloyer, Elisa Yager
Henry Schepens, Mayor

Absent: Ronald Rehl

The record reflects the presence of: Todd Bolig, Attorney

NEW BUSINESS

Government Use Zone (Borough Farm) – Trees being cut down

Mayor Schepens reported to Council that someone cut down trees at the Government Use Zone (Borough Farm). Attorney Bolig stated no one should maintain, cut trees, mow grass, etc. on the property. The next time someone cuts down trees, mow grass, etc. the New Jersey State Police will be called.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Further Discussion regarding consideration of Cannabis in the Borough

Mayor Schepens stated Councilman Rehl is unable to attend tonight's meeting and sent an email to be read at tonight's meeting. Mayor Schepens read the following from Councilman Rehl: I wish I could attend tonight's meeting but my immune system has other plans for me. During the committee's presentation I made note that the dispensaries in Flemington and Lambertville are not causing problems with traffic etc. However, the dispensaries in Flemington and Lambertville are not in the main business district and both towns are larger than Milford. Milford is a small town and having a dispensary on Bridge Street would make it a centerpiece of the town – not just the business district. Therefore, Councilmen Gallos and I feel this is not a good fit for Milford. Mayor Schepens stated the Borough currently has an ordinance opting out of cannabis in the Borough. Mayor Schepens polled Council members if they wanted to keep the current ordinance.

ROLL CALL: AYES: J. Gallos, N. LaFevre, H. Livingston, D. Sloyer, E. Yager

ABSENT: R. Rehl

Mayor Schepens stated the current ordinance prohibiting any class of cannabis within the Borough limits will remain in effect.

LEGAL AFFAIRS – ATTORNEY TODD BOLIG

- Attorney Bolig stated he completed the Borough’s job descriptions and they are currently under review.
- Attorney Bolig reported that he is working with Rob Martucci on the underground fiber optics ordinance.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS – COUNCILMAN SLOYER

- Councilman Sloyer reported that the Milford Fire Company responded to 27 calls for service during the month of January 2024. The Fire Company held two drills consisting of apparatus checks and annual refreshers/SCBA fit testing.
- Councilman Sloyer also reported all the fire company’s radios and chargers related to the FEMA AFG grant have been programmed and placed into service on apparatuses.

LIAISON – COUNCILWOMAN YAGER

- Councilwoman Yager reported that the Holland Township school reached out to Milford Public School regarding a feasibility study for regionalization. The Milford Public School entered into a shared service with Kingwood Township School in 2020 and it is working very well so when Milford Public School was asked to support a feasibility study the BOE President politely responded “No thank you.” Two districts are needed to do a feasibility study and recently, Holland approached Frenchtown and Frenchtown School agreed to work with Holland Township. Councilwoman Yager stated what Superintendent Falkenstein didn’t know is that these two districts can incorporate other Del Val sending districts into the feasibility study without those districts’ consent. Milford Public School and Kingwood Township School are listed in the study where a proposal was discussed of having a K-6 and a Middle School.

The grant is a \$100,000 grant with a two-pronged approach; a feasibility study and an operational plan. The feasibility study would outline how feasible it is to combine the students and the operational plan is an outline of how they would do it; where the Milford students would go and through what grades, where the middle school students would go, etc. The study is completed by a third party contracted service.

Councilwoman Yager reported if this regionalization is forced upon us (which the state could do) it could be financially devastating for Milford. Currently, we have no transportation costs; we are a walking district. Depending upon where our children are attending school, this could be a financial hit. Additionally, we potentially could have an empty building in Milford. The Milford Public School is paying down the school’s debt and if regionalization were to occur, we would take on the debt of Alexandria and Holland schools.

Councilwoman Yager stated Superintendent Falkenstein will be attending the next Council meeting and will update Council.

- Councilwoman Yager stated Milford Alive committee held their first meeting. If anyone is interested in joining the committee – all are welcomed.

ZONING/JOINT LAND USE BOARD – COUNCILWOMAN LIVINGSTON

Councilwoman Livingston stated the Planning Board meeting for January 17th was cancelled.

ORDINANCE – SECOND READING/PUBLIC HEARING

ORDINANCE NUMBER 974-2024

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF \$50,000.00 CURRENTLY LOCATED WITHIN THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND OF THE BOROUGH OF MILFORD FOR EMERGENCY TEMPORARY REPAIRS

Noralie LaFevre made a motion to open the public hearing on Ordinance No. 974-2024.

Seconded by Elisa Yager

ROLL CALL: AYES: N. LaFevre, R. Sloyer, H. Livingston, J. Gallos, E. Yager

NAYS: None ABSTAIN: None ABSENT: R. Rehl

There were no comments from the public in attendance.

Motion to close the public hearing was made by Noralie LaFevre.

Seconded by Elisa Yager.

ROLL CALL: AYES: N. LaFevre, D. Sloyer, H. Livingston, J. Gallos, E. Yager

NAYS: None ABSTAIN: None ABSENT: R. Rehl

SECOND READING - ROLL CALL VOTE

Council Member	Motion	Adopt	Second	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Noralie LaFevre		x		x			
James Gallos			x	x			
Helen Livingston				x			
Elisa Yager	x			x			
Ronald Rehl							x
Douglas Sloyer				x			

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Noralie LaFevre made a motion to open the public portion of the meeting.

Seconded by James Gallos.

ROLL CALL: AYES: J. Gallos, N. LaFevre, H. Livingston, D. Sloyer, E. Yager

NAYS: None ABSTAIN: None ABSENT: R. Rehl

- Rob and Linda Castanga thanked Council for not moving forward on the Cannabis in the Borough.
- Several residents also commented on the Council keeping the current ordinance prohibiting cannabis in the Borough.
- Chet Zeiger thanked Council for exploring the possibility of cannabis in the Borough..
- A few residents had questions on the use of the Government Use Zone (Borough Farm) for brush.

Motion to close the public hearing was made by Noralie LaFevre

Seconded by James Gallos.

ROLL CALL: AYES: J. Gallos, N. LaFevre, H. Livingston, D. Sloyer, E. Yager

NAYS: None ABSTAIN: None ABSENT: R. Rehl

Motion carried

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL – February 5, 2024

Comments: none

Motion to accept: Elisa Yager

Seconded: Helen Livingston

All in Favor - AYES: All NAYS : None ABSTAIN: None ABSENT: R. Rehl

Regular Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2024 are approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Schepens advised there being no further business to discuss, the minutes of this meeting will be available as soon as possible.

Motion to adjourn was made by: Elisa Yager

Seconded by: Helen Livingston

All in Favor - AYES: All NAYS: None ABSTAIN: None ABSENT: R. Rehl

Meeting adjourned at 8:00PM

WATER CAPITAL FUND DISBURSEMENTS

02/16/24	Check #1204	Reivax	EPA Water Improvement	\$186,778.40
02/16/24	Check #1205	Reivax	EPA Water Improvement	\$234,824.64

CURRENT CAPITAL FUND DISBURSEMENTS

02/15/24	Check #1602	Martucci Eng.	Tax Maps	\$ 2,990.76
02/15/24	Check #1603	Eclectic Arch.	Library Proj.	\$ 3,680.00
02/16/24	Check # 1604	Reivax	Phyllis & William	\$ 21,758.70

DOG FUND DISBURSEMENTS

02/15/24	Check 1246	Kyle Baehr	Rabies Clinic	\$ 97.34
02/15/24	Check 1247	NJ Health Dep.	Dog Report	\$ 4.20
02/15/24	Check 1248	NJ Health Dep.	Dog Report	\$ 34.20
02/15/24	Check 1249	Spring Mills Vet.	Rabies Clinic	\$ 183.00

MILFORD BOROUGH SEWER UTILITY ACCOUNT DISBURSEMENTS

MILFORD BOROUGH WATER DEPARTMENT ACCOUNT DISBURSEMENTS

MILFORD BOROUGH CURRENT ACCOUNT DISBURSEMENTS

MILFORD BOROUGH CURRENT ACCOUNT DISBURSEMENTS – CONT.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Dysart, RMC
Municipal Clerk