

**WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 6, 2024**

In compliance with Chapter 231, OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT of the State of New Jersey, adequate notice has been given to all members of the Governing Body, the "Local Source" and the "Westfield Leader" the two newspapers designated to receive such notice. The notice is posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board.

Mayor Paul N. Mirabelli called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM.

PRESENT: Mayor Mirabelli, Councilman Dierkes, Councilman Matejek, Councilman Messler, Council President Pacifico, Councilman Rinaldo, Administrator Mortimer and Attorney Post. Also present were CFO Jill Goode, Police Chief Joseph Giannuzzi, Recreation Director Frank Masella, Senior Coordinator Kim Moriak, Tax Assessor Jennifer Sherman and Public Works Director Matthew DeAnna. Councilwoman Andre was absent.

Discussion was held regarding a proposal for a community garden. The Mayor suggested the borough engineer identify potential property for a garden and to meet with Beautiful Mountainside.

Discussion was held regarding increasing the pool membership fees for 2024. The proposed changes include a 6% increase for resident, non-resident memberships and guest passes. Tennis permit fees were also increased. The Council agreed with the recommendation and a resolution will be prepared for the meeting of February 20, 2024.

Discussion was held regarding an extension of the pool concession contract. It was recommended that the borough extend the contract for a one-year term. Clark Concession Operations, LLC will pay the same amount of \$5,100 plus deposits for the 2024 season. The proper resolution will be prepared for the February 20, 2024 meeting.

Discussion was held regarding the appointment of the pool management staff for the 2024 season. It was recommended by Recreation Director Frank Masella that two veteran pool managers John Tosado and Scott Laudati be reappointed. The proper appointing resolution will be prepared for the meeting of February 20, 2024.

Discussion was held regarding an extension of the animal control services contract. It was recommended that the borough extend the contract for a one-year term. Animal Control Solutions, LLC will hold the same annual cost of \$15,480 effective March 1, 2024 through February 29, 2025. The proper resolution will be prepared for the February 20, 2024 meeting.

Discussion was held regarding non-union employee compensation. The A&E Committee recommended a 3.5% increase retroactive to January 1st. The proper resolution will be prepared for the meeting of February 20, 2024.

The following resolution was introduced by Councilman Messler and seconded by Councilwoman Pacifico.

RESOLUTION 33-2024

WHEREAS, there is a need for an Acting PT Construction Official; and

WHEREAS, Michael Juzefyk is experienced and licensed in performing the duties of an Acting Construction Official; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Administrator has recommended that the Borough take action to hire Michael Juzefyk as Acting Construction Official for the Borough of Mountainside.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Mountainside that Michael Juzefyk be appointed as Acting Construction Official at an hourly rate of \$60 per hour for up to ten hours per week. Any time over ten hours would need approval by the Administrator.

Roll call: Ayes: Dierkes, Matejek, Messler, Pacifico, Rinaldo. Nays: 0.

Discussion was held regarding implementing a Veterans tax exemption policy. The Tax Assessor recommends a policy that establishes when the property tax exemption becomes effective which would be when the completed application is received in the Tax Assessor's Office. The policy will be address tomorrow to determine how to proceed.

Discussion was held regarding special inspection rates. The borough collects \$300 for special inspections and the Administrator recommends the allocation be \$60 administrative fee and \$240 for the inspector. The Council agreed with the split.

Discussion was held regarding limited parking on Birch Hill Road. The four-hour limited parking extends from New Providence to intersection with Hickory Lane. A resident complained that a commuter was parking after Hickory Lane for two weeks. DPW Director Matthew Deanna recommended limited parking continue to Birch Lane. The Council would like it to be monitored before amending the ordinance.

Discussion was held regarding a proposed bus shelter. Councilman Messler asked NJ Transit for a bus shelter on Route 22 West. They would provide the chosen shelter and the borough would maintain it. The proposal was reviewed by Attorney Post and a resolution is required to proceed.

Discussion was held regarding improvements to the street pavers downtown. Councilman Messler suggested soliciting quotes to relevel and power wash the street pavers as part of the downtown revitalization.

The Council was updated on the holiday decorations which will be ordered soon.

BILLS & CLAIMS:

The following resolution was introduced by Councilman Dierkes and seconded by Councilman Messler.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Mountainside that the following bills of the persons named and for the amounts stated below, having been duly audited and found

to be correct this 6th day of February 2024, the same be paid after Council's review, if and when funds are available and that the Mayor, Council President, Administrator and Treasurer are hereby authorized and directed to sign and deliver warrants for same in the amount of \$102,315.77 (Copy of bill list attached)

Roll call: Ayes: Dierkes, Matejek, Messler, Pacifico, Rinaldo. Nays: 0.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Jim Hewitt, 1351 Wood Valley Road, presented questions regarding the Council's decision to lower the number of renters allowed in a house. Mayor Mirabelli responded by stating it was in the best interest of Mountainside to allow one renter instead of two or three.

Resident inquired about the Deerfield improvement survey and asked for access to those results.

Mayor Mirabelli announced the recent ribbon cutting ceremony for the new senior fitness center.

Hearing no one else wishing to speak, Mayor Mirabelli closed the meeting to the public.

Upon a motion by Councilman Dierkes and a second by Councilman Messler, the following resolution to adjourn to closed session was unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey permits the public to be excluded from certain matters to be discussed by the Governing Body; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council desire to discuss contracts, personnel and litigation which are matters where the exclusion of the public is permitted; and

WHEREAS, public disclosure of the results of this discussion will be made as soon as the matters discussed have been resolved by the Governing Body of the Borough of Mountainside;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Mountainside that the aforesaid matters shall be discussed in closed session upon adoption of this resolution.

Meeting adjourned to closed session at 8:12 P.M.

The meeting was recalled to public session.

Upon a motion by Councilman Matejek and a second by Councilman Messler, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:57 P.M.

Martha Lopez, RMC
Borough Clerk