

**WORK SESSION
MARCH 5, 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 7:30 PM.

PRESENT: Mayor Mirabelli, Councilwoman Andre, Councilman Dierkes, Councilman Matejek, Councilman Messler, Council President Pacifico, Councilman Rinaldo, Administrator Mortimer and Attorney Post. Also present were Public Works Director Matthew DeAnna, Police Chief Joseph Giannuzzi, Senior Coordinator Kim Moriak, Assistant CFO Justyna Zagorska and CFO Jill Goode.

Resident Azar Ali requested permission to commemorate Ramadan (holy month) with a ceremony and possibly light a symbolic crescent pillar. The Mayor asked for the proposed systemics and to coordinate with the public works director. A motion came from Councilman Messler, a second by Councilwoman Pacifico and unanimously approved by the Governing Body.

Discussion was held regarding a request from the Tax Collector to authorize a tax refund due to a duplicate payment. The proper resolution will be prepared for the March 19, 2024 meeting.

Discussion was held regarding the introduction of the 2024 municipal budget. The municipal budget increase is \$567,049.64 which equates to \$161.13 for an average assessed home. The Mayor summarized the proposed increases, decreases and anticipated revenues. The 2024 capital projects include road and sewer improvements. A bond ordinance will be introduced to fund such projects. The CFO will distribute the road and sewer projects being bonded and those funded within the budget. Budget introduction is scheduled for the meeting of March 19, 2024.

Discussion was held regarding a request from the Finance Officer for end of year budget transfers within 2023 reserve municipal budget. Transfers can be made within certain budget appropriations during the first three months of the fiscal year. It is requested that certain transfers be made within the 2023 municipal budget. The proper resolution will be prepared for the March 19, 2024 meeting.

Discussion was held regarding a request from the Finance Officer to make additional appropriations to the 2024 temporary budget. Until the final 2024 municipal budget is formally adopted, temporary appropriations are made and approved by Council in order for the Borough to operate and meet their obligations. The proper resolution will be prepared for the meeting of March 19, 2024.

Discussion was held regarding police promotions. Corporal Sforza will be promoted to Sergeant and Patrolman Hussey will be promoted to Corporal. The proper resolution will be prepared for the March 19, 2024 meeting.

Discussion was held regarding a department refund. A request was made from the Borough Engineer for a road opening permit. The proper resolution will be prepared for the March 19, 2024 meeting.

Discussion was held regarding department appointments. The Administrator recommends Jessica Einstein-Kaufman as PT Violations Clerk at \$23 an hour and Sandra Bruns as PT Tax Collector at an annual salary of \$25,000, of which \$5,000 will be to mentor the CFO. The proper resolutions will be prepared for the meeting of March 19, 2024.

Discussion was held regarding the definition of an employee's dependent. The Council agreed to limit the one-time orthodontist reimbursement of \$1,200 to dependents up to the age of 26. The proper resolution will be prepared for the March 19, 2024 meeting.

Discussion was held regarding compensation adjustments for the Governing Body. The Council recommended their compensation be increased from \$1,998.48 to \$3,000 and the Mayor from \$3,996.94 to \$5,000. The Mayor was not in favor of the increase. The proper resolution will be prepared for the meeting of March 19, 2024.

Discussion was held regarding entering into a professional services contract. The borough will enter a professional services contract with the Law Offices of John H. Norton for legal services. The proper resolution will be prepared for the March 19, 2024 meeting.

Discussion was held regarding a raffle application from Highlander Booster Club for an off premise 50/50 draw raffle. The application is in order and the proper fees have been paid. A motion to approve the application was made by Councilman Messler, seconded by Councilwoman Andre and unanimously approved by the Council.

Councilman Matejek discussed his attendance at recent meetings and some of the MAR members concerns.

BILLS & CLAIMS:

The following resolution was introduced by Councilman Dierkes and seconded by Councilwoman Pacifico:

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 5th day of March 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 \$211,276.06 (Copy of bill list attached).

Roll Call: Andre, Dierkes, Matejek, Messler, Pacifico, Rinaldo. Nays: 0

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: None

Upon motion by Councilman Dierkes and a second by Councilwoman Pacifico, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:10 PM.