

**WORK SESSION
JANUARY 14, 2025**

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 7:33 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Mirabelli, Councilman Dierkes, Councilman Matejek, Council President Pacifico, Councilman Rinaldo, Councilman Van Deusen, Councilwoman Wass, Administrator Mortimer and Attorney Post. Also present were Borough Engineer Mike Disko, Deputy Clerk Kiana Taveras, Senior Coordinator Kim Moriak, Police Chief Joseph Giannuzzi, Public Works Director Matthew DeAnna and Recreation Director Frank Masella.

Discussion was held regarding proposed Elizabethtown Gas upgrade work. Utility Representative Matthew Chludzinski or Greg Balint explained the affected roads and repair plan. The Borough Engineer recommends they perform full width milling and resurfacing of any impacted municipal street, paved since 2004.

Discussion was held regarding the appointment of representatives to the UC Transportation Advisory Board. Council agreed to reappoint Councilman Rene Dierkes and Mike Disko as alternate, for a one-year term. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding the appointment of Fund Commissioner to the Suburban Municipal Joint Insurance Fund. The Borough Administrator will be appointed for a one-year term. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding the annual July 4th fireworks display. Garden State Fireworks, Inc. provided a quote of \$24,000. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding a request from the Finance Officer for end of year budget transfers within 2024 reserve municipal budget. In accordance with State Statute, 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 2024 municipal budget. The proper budget transfer resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding the approval to appoint Anthony Labisi and Juan Hernandez-Garcia as new volunteer firefighters. The background check for Juan Hernandez-Garcia has cleared but no request for a background check for Anthony Labisi has been received. Administrator Mortimer will follow up with the Deputy Fire Chief to inquire on the status of the request. The Deputy Fire Chief recommends the appointments. A motion to approve the new firefighters will take place at the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding department refunds. The Recreation Director requested refunds for boys' basketball and from the Borough Clerk for a cat license. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding a department appointment. There is a need to appoint someone in the position of gym supervisor, as per the Recreation Director. Zachary Goldring will be appointed to the position at a rate of \$16.00 per hour. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding supporting the Puppy Mill Ban. Support for this ban was previously requested by Larry Cohen, who explained a national movement to protect animals from commercial breeding mills and prevent New Jersey from becoming a haven for unscrupulous breeders. The Council agreed to support the movement as individuals through the submission of a letter of support.

Discussion was held regarding amendments to the recently tabled NJDEP mandated tree removal and replacement ordinance. The council discussed proposed fees for tree removal and when those fees would be imposed. Revisions include a \$50 tree removal application fee, and adopting a tree replacement fee of \$100.00 per tree if the tree that is removed is not replaced. The proper ordinance will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding amendments to the Borough's stormwater management ordinance. The council discussed repealing Chapter 22, Article 14.1-14.12 in the existing ordinance, as per the request of the NJDEP. The proper ordinance will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding a proclamation for a Mountainside resident, Mike Liloia, who is heavily involved in community sports and is a big volunteer. He will be inducted into the Union County Baseball Hall of Fame on February 2nd, 2025. Mayor Mirabelli has requested that a proclamation is created to honor his achievements.

Discussion was held regarding the pool fees for the upcoming season. The council discussed the proposed recommendations by the Recreation Committee who proposed a recommendation of a 6% increase. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting

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 14th day of January 2025, 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 \$485,350.73 (Copy of bill list attached)

Roll call: Ayes: Dierkes, Matejek, Pacifico, Rinaldo, Van Deusen, Wass. Nays: 0.

Upon a motion by Councilman Rinaldo and a second by Councilwoman Wass, 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 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 8:26 P.M.

The meeting was recalled to public session at 9:02 P.M.

The council agreed to pass two resolutions at the meeting of January 21, 2025 pertaining to the acceptance of the DCA Affordable Housing Quota, the filing of the Declaratory Judgment action, and supporting the ILGA proposed amendment to the FHA.

Upon motion by Councilman Dierkes and a second by Councilwoman Wass, the meeting was unanimously adjourned.

Martha Lopez, RMC
Borough Clerk