WORK SESSION
MAY 6, 2014

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 8:05 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Paul Mirabelli, Councilwoman Andre, Councilman Dierkes, Councilman Lane, Councilman Messler, Councilman Mortimer, Council President Turner, Attorney John Post and Administrator Debbie. Also present were CFO Jill Goode, Recreation Director Frank Masella, and Public Works Manager Ronald Romak.

Discussion was held regarding the Memorial Day Parade. Our local organizations are involved to help raise funds and organize the parade. The Council agreed to increase the donation to $500 to help defray the cost of the picnic. The proper resolution will be prepared for the meeting of May 20, 2014.

Discussion was held regarding the appointment of the 2014 summer playground staff. Stephanie Scofield will be appointed playground supervisor overseeing four playground assistants. The proper resolution authorizing the hiring of seasonal playground staff will be prepared for the May 20, 2014 meeting.

Discussion was held regarding authorization to join the State Dental Plan. The Police and Borough employees would like the option to join the dental plan by paying in full from their health insurance allowance or paying half from their allowance and the balance from payroll. Employees who opt to join will have to choose a dental plan and agree to the payment plan. There will be no cost to the Borough. Councilman Turner explained the benefits of using their allowance to cover dental costs as opposed to joining a dental plan. A large family is best suited to join the state dental plan. The proper resolution will be prepared for the meeting of May 20, 2014.

Discussion was held regarding recreation refunds. Recreation Director Frank Masella recommends refunding those who registered for the tennis squirt program which was cancelled due to low enrollment. The proper resolution will be prepared for the May 20, 2014 meeting.

Discussion was held regarding authorization to issue estimated tax bills. The Borough is awaiting the County’s tax rate which is delayed due to the state. If the rate is determined early enough we will not need to issue estimated tax bills. The Tax Collector recommends early issuance in order to meet our financial obligations.

The Council agreed and the proper resolution will be prepared for the meeting of May 20, 2014.

Discussion was held regarding the review of the 2013 annual audit. It is the fifth consecutive year in which the financial statements had been approved by the auditors without any recommendations. The proper resolutions regarding the 2013 annual audit will be prepared for the meeting of May 20, 2014.

Discussion was held regarding the fire department clothing allowance and volunteer tuition credit program. The Fire Department is proposing a new allocation formula to calculate member's clothing allowance. The department is allotted $31,000 for uniform allowance. Currently, volunteers receive a base rate based on the number of calls they respond to with additional payments for attending drills. The new method still provides a base rate that includes paid drills and the balance of the allotment is divided into credits. Fire calls would be changed to a credit system. Councilman Lane mentioned that the proposal was not clear enough and required more information before a decision could be made. The Borough agreed to participate in the volunteer tuition credit program. The program will provide a $600 a year tuition credit to any volunteer firefighter who is enrolled in a post-secondary educational program in county colleges, vocational schools or technical institutions, at no cost to the Borough. The proper resolution to join will be prepared for the May 20, 2014 meeting.

The Council agreed to appoint two new members to the fire department. Dino D'Angelo and Matthew Green received a clear background check and will be officially approved at the meeting of May 20, 2014.

BILLS & CLAIMS:

The following resolution was introduced by Councilman Mortimer 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 May 2014, 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 $146,895.38 (Copy of bill list attached.)

Roll Call: Andre, Dierkes, Lane, Messler, Mortimer, Turner. Nays: 0

Discussion was held regarding amendments to Ordinance 1217-2014 – Construction Site Safety and Fencing. Zoning Officer Ronald Romak and Building Inspector Jerry Eger recommends amending the sections that read "any" type of construction to "new/major" type of construction requires fencing. The Council suggested the addition of language requiring portable toilets at construction sites. The amendments will be prepared for the public hearing on May 20, 2014.

Discussion was held regarding an ordinance to appropriate the sum of $169,530.75 for various road improvements. The Auditor suggested moving money from the reserve account in order to fund future capital road improvement projects. Councilman Lane questioned using these funds to complete Pembrook Drive. The CFO Jill Goode believes Pembrook Drive is already fully funded. Council inquired about the status of the milling and paving of Pembrook Drive. The original contractor filed for bankruptcy therefore, the bonding company assigned a new contractor and the work should commence soon.

Discussion was held regarding proposed ordinances to amend the master plan. The Planning Board reviewed the master plan and introduced the concept for the fair housing plan, and expansion of uses in the LI zone. Council will introduce these ordinances to implement the amendments to the master plan and forward them to the Planning Board for approval. Attorney Post confirmed that the affected property owners were noticed and future notice requirements will follow. The ordinances will be included in their Friday packets for review. Two ordinances will address the Mount Laurel compliance process by including a developer's fee of 1% and the other to implement the zoning changes to address the affordable housing plan. Another ordinance will include recreational, medical and educational uses to the LI zone. Council debated whether to raise the lot size which it uses to calculate the floor area ratio (FAR). Currently the plan limits construction of residential single-family homes on a quarter-acre lot to a floor area ratio (FAR) of 3,375 square feet. Councilman Turner and Councilwoman Andre propose a slight increase to the FAR to accommodate a 3,600 square foot home. A majority of the members are against an increase to the FAR. Mayor Mirabelli suggested further discussion with the Borough Planner for his recommendations. Mayor Mirabelli stated that Mountainside has the 2nd highest increase in property values in the county.

Upon motion by Councilman Mortimer 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 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 9:03 P.M.

The meeting was recalled to public session at 9:23 P.M.

Upon motion by Councilman Mortimer and a second by Councilman Turner, the meeting was unanimously adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Martha Lopez, Borough Clerk