

LINWOOD COMMON COUNCIL
MINUTES OF REORGANIZATION MEETING
January 5, 2018

CALL TO ORDER

Councilman Ralph Paolone called the meeting to order at 6:09 P.M., noting the meeting had been advertised in compliance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

FLAG SALUTE

Councilwoman Stacy DeDomenicis led the flag salute.

INVOCATION

Pastor Will Wilson delivered the Invocation.

OATHS OF OFFICE

Judge James Savio administered the Oath of Office to Eric Ford as Council Member, Ward 1, of the City of Linwood.

Judge Donna Taylor administered the Oath of Office to Ralph Paolone as Council Member, Ward 2 of the City of Linwood.

Mayor Richard L. DePamphilis, III administered the Oath of Office to Darren Matik as Council Member At Large of the City of Linwood.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Rick DePamphilis; Councilman Elliot Beinfest; Councilwoman Stacy DeDomenicis; Councilman Eric Ford; Councilman Todd Gordon; Councilman Brian Heun; Councilman Darren Matik; and Councilman Ralph Paolone.

Absent: None

Also Present: Joseph L. Youngblood, City Solicitor; and Leigh Ann Napoli, Municipal Clerk.

ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT

The Clerk opened the floor for nominations for Council President. Councilwoman DeDomenicis motioned to nominate Ralph Paolone. The Clerk called for any other nominations. Hearing none, nominations were closed by motion from Councilman Gordon and a second from Councilman Heun. The Clerk called for a voice vote to close the floor for nominations. All members of Council were in favor to close the floor for nominations. The Clerk called for a voice vote for Ralph Paolone to Council President. All members of Council were in favor. The nomination of Ralph Paolone for the position of Council President was approved. Judge Donna Taylor administered the oath of office to Ralph Paolone as Council President.

ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

Council President Paolone opened the floor for nominations for Council President Pro Tempore. Councilman Ford motioned to nominate Councilman Matik. Council President Paolone called for any other nominations. Hearing none, nominations were closed by motion from Councilman Gordon and a second from Councilman Heun. Council President Paolone called for a voice vote to close the floor for nominations. All members of Council were in favor to close the floor for nominations. Council President Paolone called for a voice vote for Darren Matik to the position of Council President Pro Tempore. All members of Council were in favor. The nomination of Darren Matik for Council President Pro Tempore was approved. Mayor DePamphilis administered the oath of office to Darren Matik as Council President Pro Tempore.

MAYOR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Mayor DePamphilis welcomed everyone in attendance and thanked them for attending the meeting. He reminded everyone how honored he is to be the Mayor. The Mayor thanked his wife, Sally, for her continued support through 2017. He congratulated Council President Paolone, Councilman Matik and Councilman Ford on their re-election to Council. He is sure they will continue to do an excellent job for the residents of Linwood.

He also thanked City Clerk, Leigh Ann, and Mary, Lynn Roesch, Anthony Strazzeri, Ed Beck and all the staff at City Hall for another very successful year. He welcomed Silvia Washington, the new Tax Collector. She will team up with Danielle Kelly in the tax office. The City's tax collection rate for 2017 was 96.23%. Diane Hesley, the Tax Assessor, had another very busy year. 307 county level tax appeals were filed in Linwood in 2017 and the total value lost was \$14,867,200. The third straight year of considerable value lost to tax appeals.

It is a pleasure for the Mayor to remind everyone each year of the exceptional work that is done by the Public Works, Fire and Police Departments. Well, this year is no different. Chip Jones and his Public Works staff have done a terrific job in 2017. They assisted with the lights at the park and the new playground. They seem to be the go to department whenever anyone needs help.

Chief Marty Walley and the Volunteer Fire Department continue to provide Linwood with fire service with little cost to the tax payer. They are always there when you need them the most. Not only at fires but at all city functions and holiday events. Everyone, but especially the children, love to see the Easter Bunny at the Easter celebration and Santa Claus at the Tree Lighting.

Chief Doug Carman and Captain John Hamilton continue to provide quality police service. This year again they hosted the National Night Out which has turned into a great community event. This year they received state highway safety grants in the amount of \$21,500. Also this year, in an effort to improve security they introduced a Class III Police Officer who is assigned full time to Mainland Regional High School.

The Mayor commended Richard Sless and the entire Linwood Board of Education for a smooth transition from an appointed to an elected board. While at the same time searching for and hiring a new Superintendent. One of Linwood's own Brian Pruitt has been selected as the Superintendent. The Mayor been assured by Mayor Guenther of Brigantine that Linwood made a terrific choice. Linwood has a great school system with excellent teachers, a quality administration and an experienced school board and the Mayor is confident that they will continue to maintain the quality education that Linwood has become famous for. Sadly, Linwood is losing two long time board members who have been responsible for much of the success that has been experienced. Board President Richard Sless has served for 16 years and Past President Lynn Gibson served for 23 years. The Mayor thanked them for their time, their commitment and their devotion to the Linwood School System.

The Mayor thanked Vince Polistina, the City Engineer, for all his hard work and expertise. He is sure that all have noticed the improvements made during 2017. The City, as well as, South Jersey Gas completed full width paving on numerous streets throughout the City. A new multi-purpose playing field with a walking path and additional parking was completed at the Poplar Avenue facility. A new improved playground was installed in a new location at Memorial Field.

The Planning Board in conjunction with the Zoning Board is very close to completing its Master Plan review and sending it to Council for their approval.

The Mayor commended Maria Moss, Mary Todd and the Library Board who continue to provide a number of valued services to the residents. This year they expanded its adult programs along with the many children events that are offered. The newest book related program is the classic book and movie club offering classic and foreign films throughout the year. The all-purpose room is now equipped with a smart TV and is available for use for power point and movie presentations. The Friends of the Library are looking for volunteers to assist in fundraising and programming to support the library.

The Mayor thanked Tim Longnecker and the entire Board of Recreation for their great work with the sports programs at Memorial Field. And for providing all the super holiday celebrations for the residents and children of Linwood. The Park Director Laurie Montgomery continues to provide new and exciting holiday celebrations for the residents to enjoy. This year's Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony and the new holiday lighting at the park was just magnificent.

The Environmental Commission had a busy year. They received a \$10,000 grant from Sustainable Jersey and \$15,000 from A.C. Electric for the living shoreline project along Patcong Creek. The 10th annual Patcong Creek cleanup was expanded to include Egg Harbor Twp. and Somers Point and Linwood won a Bronze Certification from Sustainable Jersey. They also assisted the City in gaining Blue Acres funding for waterfront properties and also in obtaining residents increased flood insurance discounts.

The City authorized the issuance of its second liquor license last year and it sold for \$250,000 for use in Gerald Bird's newly completed Exchange Food Court on Route 9. The Exchange includes the District Bar and four restaurants outlets. They are a great addition to the Route 9 commercial corridor.

City Council remains intact and will continue to work to upgrade and improve City services and facilities. In their continued effort to save the taxpayers, they privatized the landscaping of City properties and entered a new Sewer Interlocal Agreement with Egg Harbor Township. Both moves provided considerable savings to the City.

2017 was another in a sequence of very challenging years. However, the Mayor believes that it was also the first of a new sequence. One in which the Atlantic County and Atlantic City economy begins to rebound. New jobs will provide the spark for increased Real Estate sales and new families will be moving into old neighborhoods. Linwood will be, once again, the most favorite destination.

The Mayor thanked everyone, wished everyone a Happy New Year, and God Bless America.

RESOLUTIONS

15-2018 A Resolution approving the Temporary Budget for 2018

The Clerk read Resolution No. 15 of 2018 by title only. Councilwoman DeDomenicis motioned, seconded by Councilman Gordon, to approve Resolution No. 15. A roll call vote was heard with seven in the affirmative. Motion approved.

RESOLUTIONS WITHIN CONSENT AGENDA

All matters listed under item, **Consent Agenda**, are considered to be routine by City Council, and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. Any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of Funds and any item requiring discussion will be removed from the Consent Agenda and discussed separately. All Consent Agenda items will be reflected in full in the minutes.

- 1-2018** A Resolution setting dates for Caucus and Regular Council Meetings
- 2-2018** A Resolution adopting a Cash Management Plan for 2018
- 3-2018** A Resolution naming check signers
- 4-2018** A Resolution authorizing the Finance Office to maintain a Petty Cash Fund in the amount of \$100.00
- 5-2018** A Resolution setting interest rates on delinquent taxes
- 6-2018** A Resolution setting a service charge for checks returned for insufficient funds
- 7-2018** A Resolution authorizing the allowance of a grace period before charging a penalty for late payment of taxes
- 8-2018** A Resolution authorizing the imposition of a penalty on tax delinquencies in excess of \$10,000
- 9-2018** A Resolution naming the official City Newspapers, for purposes of publication, specifically, The Mainland Journal, The Press of Atlantic City, The Ocean City Sentinel-Ledger, and The Current of Northfield, Linwood and Somers Point
- 10-2018** A Resolution appointing an authorized agent for the sale of City owned land and/or property
- 11-2018** A Resolution appointing the Tax Assessor as Agent in appeals to reduce assessments for the year 2018
- 12-2018** A Resolution designating the Public Agency Compliance Officer for the City of Linwood
- 13-2018** A Resolution adopting Robert's Rules of Order
- 14-2018** A Resolution authorizing the City of Linwood to enter into a Contract with the attached list of vendors for State Contract Purchases
- 16-2018** A Resolution authorizing the canceling of small balances of tax refunds or delinquencies
- 17-2018** A Resolution authorizing the Tax Collector to substitute two mailings in lieu of advertising of the Tax Sale to be held in 2018
- 18-2018** A Resolution confirming Mayoral appointments for the year 2018
- 19-2018** A Resolution reappointing Tim Longnecker as Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator for the City of Linwood
- 20-2018** A Resolution authorizing the reappointment of David G. Buzby as the Uniform Fire Safety Inspector for the City of Linwood
- 21-2018** A Resolution authorizing the reappointment of Charles E. Kisby, III as Fire Official for the City of Linwood
- 22-2018** A Resolution awarding a Contract to Joseph L. Youngblood, Jr. as Municipal Legal Counsel for the Year 2018 for the City of Linwood
- 23-2018** A Resolution authorizing the award of a Non-Fair and Open Contract to Joel M. Fleishman as Municipal Bond Counsel for the Year 2018 for the City of Linwood
- 24-2018** A Resolution authorizing the award of a Non-Fair and Open Contract to Ford Scott & Associates, LLC as Municipal Auditor for the Year 2018 for the City of Linwood
- 25-2018** A Resolution awarding a Non-Competitive Contract to Shirley M. Bishop, LLC for Professional Services for Consulting Services

RESOLUTIONS WITHIN CONSENT AGENDA (continued)

- 26-2018** A Resolution approving Council appointments for the year 2018
- 27-2018** A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Raffle License, #2018-02, to Mainland Girls Track Booster Club
- 28-2018** A Resolution authorizing the City of Linwood to advertise for Lawn Maintenance Services for the City of Linwood
- 29-2018** A Resolution authorizing the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute a refunding bond and release for the final distribution of William G. Villari Trust Funds to the City of Linwood as successor to the Clara Glenn Pet Cemetery
- 30-2018** A Resolution awarding the Contract to Evergreen Landscaping for the Furnishing of Snow Removal Services
- 31-2018** A Resolution supporting the State House Commission Final Application to the NJDEP Green Acres Program for the Major Disposal of Parkland owned by the City of Linwood

The Clerk read the Consent Agenda by title only. Councilman Beinfest motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve Resolutions 1-14, 16-31 of 2018. All members of Council were in favor. Motion approved.

ORDINANCES

1 OF 2018

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF VINCENT J. POLISTINA AS THE MUNICIPAL ENGINEER FOR THE CITY OF LINWOOD AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES HERETOFORE ADOPTED THE PROVISIONS OF WHICH ARE INCONSISTENT HEREWITH.

The Clerk read Ordinance No. 1 of 2018 by title only. Councilman Ford motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve Ordinance No. 1. A roll call vote was heard with seven in the affirmative. Motion approved.

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST: \$171,343.86

Councilman Gordon motioned, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenicis, to approve the bills for payment. A roll call vote was heard with seven in the affirmative. Motion approved. (The bill list is attached as Exhibit A)

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Council President Paolone opened the floor to the public for discussion on any topic. Seeing and hearing no members from the public wishing to be heard, Council President Paolone closed the floor.

FINAL REMARKS BY COUNCIL

Councilman Beinfest – Councilman Beinfest thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a Happy New Year. He congratulated Council President Paolone and Councilmen Ford and Matik. He is proud to serve with such an intelligent governing body. He thanked Leigh Ann, Mary and the team of employees at City Hall. He complimented Leigh Ann on being very resourceful and keeping Council informed and on task. He thanked all the City employees for their efforts. Councilman Beinfest thanked Tim Longnecker and the entire Recreation Board and Laurie Montgomery for all the City events. They get better and better each year. He thanked Carolyn Patterson, the City Historian, and Catherine Evinski, the President of the Historical Society for all the very important work they do in the City. Councilman Beinfest thanked the Police Department for reinventing the Drug Alliance Program and thanked the administration for their continued cooperation and service throughout the year. He also thanked the

FINAL REMARKS BY COUNCIL (continued)

volunteers who make Linwood great. Councilman Beinfest thanked his wife, Adrienne, for all her support and wished everyone a happy and healthy new year.

Councilwoman DeDomenicis – Councilwoman DeDomenicis wished everyone a Happy New Year. She thanked Pastor Wilson for the invocation and recognized several comments he made specifically with regard to wisdom, guidance, and leadership. The past few years have been very tough and Council has worked hard every day to do a great job maintaining services without rising costs. She believes there is wisdom, guidance, and leadership on City Council working very hard for new ideas. She also recognized the volunteers who also work hard to make Linwood great. She referred to the values on the City Seal; Education, Recreation, and Family. That is what Linwood is all about. Councilwoman DeDomenicis is Chair of the Public Works Department and she commended the job they did with the past snow storm. She appreciates Chips Jones and all the employees of the department.

Councilman Gordon – Councilman Gordon wished everyone a Happy New Year. He is honored to serve on Council and looking forward to another year. He thanked his wife and family for their continued support and patience. He thanked the staff at City Hall, City employees, and all Board members. He agrees that the volunteers help make the City what it is. This year's tree lighting was especially great and he thanked everyone for their efforts.

Councilman Ford – Councilman Ford thanked his family for attending and echoed what everyone said. He is the new guy on City Council and asks a lot of questions. He runs to Mrs. Napoli and Mrs. Cole for the answers and if they don't have them, they get them within minutes. They are very important to the City and how well it operates. He thanked all the volunteers and board members for their continued efforts and they do make Linwood a great City. Councilman Ford thanked the voters for electing him to another term.

Councilman Matik – Councilman Matik referred to the Mayor's speech regarding the budget and referenced that over the last five years, City Council has lowered the budget and plan to do it again. Most of the reason for any increase in taxes is due to the tax appeals from the loss of revenue. Over \$400,000 lost in 2017 and over \$600,000 lost in 2016. Council is trying to do the best they can without raising taxes. They are looking at new ideas and creative ways to keep costs down. Hopefully, the tax appeals will stop. He thanked Tim Longnecker and the Emergency Management team for their efforts with the recent storm. He thanked Mrs. Napoli who plays a big part in the everyday operations of the City. He also thanked the Police, Fire, and Public Works Departments. Public Works did a great job with the past storm. Councilman Matik thanked his wife, who is also very active in the community. He also recognized the City's Auditors and thanked them for keep the City on its toes. He wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Councilman Heun – Councilman Heun wished everyone a Happy New Year. He commended the efforts of the Public Works Department with the recent snow storm. He thanked the City Hall staff and Mrs. Napoli for doing a great job. They make Council's job easier. He also thanked the Fire Department. Councilman Heun welcomed Judge Taylor and Freeholder Marino, who both used to be on Council. Councilman Heun thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Council President Paolone – Council President Paolone thanked all the City employees. They do a tremendous job. He thanked all the board members of the boards in the City. They make Council's job easier and the City better. He thanked his fellow Council members. They do a lot of work and do a tremendous job. He appreciates all of them. He thanked Mrs. Napoli and Mr. Strazzeri. He can always count on them. The City would not run without Mrs. Napoli. Council President Paolone appreciates Councilmen Ford and Matik, who both pushed him off the fence to allow the residents to see where the money is with the installation of the new playground and newly paved streets. He understands that more improvements are coming to beautify the City. Although Council President Paolone coaches at Holy Spirit, he follows and is very proud of the athletes at Mainland. Both the boys and girls soccer teams had great seasons. He was happy to see them working with Linwood's Recreation Board and holding Friday

FINAL REMARKS BY COUNCIL (continued)

night games at Memorial Park. They were very well attended and it was exciting for Linwood. He also discussed the high school career of Alyssa Aldridge and how fun it was to follow her successes. He congratulated her on another great Cross Country season. Council President Paolone thanked the Linwood Board of Education and specifically thanked Richard Sless and Lynn Gibson for their many years of service. It is not an accident that Linwood's schools are ranked in the top 7%. The school system has good people and a good volunteer board. He echoed the comments by the Mayor regarding the comeback in Atlantic City and Atlantic County. He is excited to see the new ventures in Atlantic City. He is confident Senator Brown will help. Council President Paolone is humbled to be elected and re-elected to Council. He does not take anything for granted. He appreciates the voter's confidence. He thanked his wife, Debbie, for her continued support.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to be addressed by Council, Councilwoman DeDomenicis motioned, seconded by Councilman Ford, to adjourn at 6:52 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Napoli, RMC
Municipal Clerk