

Borough of Norwood
Work Session Meeting
April 11, 2007

CALL TO ORDER AT 8:05 PM

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:

Mayor	James Barsa
Councilman	Tom Brizzolara
Council President	Barry Scott
Councilman	Anthony Guercio
Councilman	Edward Condoleo

ABSENT:

Councilman	Michael Knigin
Councilwoman	Dolores Senatore

ALSO PRESENT:

Borough Attorney	Andrew Fede
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Mayor Barsa convened the meeting at 8:05 PM and asked for a motion to open the meeting to the public.

A motion to open the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Scott and seconded by Mr. Guercio with all Council Members present voting aye.

Murray Bass, 331 Piermont Road, apologized for not following Robert's Rules of Order and speaking out-of-turn at the April 3, 2007 Public Meeting.

Greg Salerno, 401 D'Ercole Court, referred to an article in the Suburbanite regarding proposed senior housing in the Fox Hill area for 50 to 90 units and questioned the reference made to ballfields. He voiced his opinion that there are many issues to take into account with further development of the Fox Hill area to include access roads. Mayor Barsa advised that the development of the Fox Hill area for additional senior housing or ballfields is still under investigation. Mr. Guercio advised that although he is in favor of additional senior housing, he also has concerns about the Fox Hill area and would like to propose the formation of a senior housing committee.

Phyllis Key, 401 D'Ercole Court, voiced her disapproval of locating ballfields with lights near a senior complex. She also reported that the temporary "no parking" signs along McClellan Street have been removed and questioned when permanent signs would be installed. Mayor Barsa asked Mr. Guercio to address this with the DPW Superintendent.

Ms. Key referred to the stream that crosses McClellan which eventually ends at the reservoir. She noted that there is thick, yellow, dirty water in it causing a potential mosquito problem. Mayor Barsa advised that the DPW would contact the Bergen County Mosquito Commission to see when it will be dredged.

Ms. Key reported reading an article concerning the adoption of an ordinance by New City, New York regarding idling vehicles. She complained that there is a truck parked in the Norwood Gardens lot that idles every morning from 7 to 7:30 AM and questioned whether the Borough could adopt a similar ordinance. Mayor Barsa advised that he would ask the Police Department to investigate this matter and that there may be a state statute prohibiting the idling of trucks.

At this time, Mr. Brizzolara voiced his opinion that to date the Fox Hill area has not been proven to be the best and only location that is suitable for additional senior housing. He recommended that the Environmental Commission and Borough Engineer be invited to a May Work Session (May 16, 2007) to discuss whether there are other options so that this matter can be laid to rest.

Rick Sposa, Ambulance Corps member, voiced his opinion that a representative from the Corps should be included in discussions regarding future development. He also suggested that there be a pass-through to the nursing home.

An unidentified woman, questioned where a construction crew would park should Fox Hill be chosen for development. Messrs. Scott and Guercio explained that an area would be cleared on site.

No other member of the public wishing to be heard, a motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Brizzolara, seconded by Mr. Scott and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

Items for Discussion:

Request from Mr. and Mrs. Van Dyke, 78 Sherwood Drive for vacation of drainage easement - Mrs. Van Dyke explained that there is a drainage easement on her property that runs right up to the deck of her home. The request for the vacation and relocation of this easement is being made since the family would like to construct a swimming pool in the backyard. She further explained that the Borough Engineer had been contacted and that neither DEP approval nor a stream encroachment permit is required. Approvals are also not needed from the Planning Board or Construction Office. Mrs. Van Dyke voiced her understanding that Mayor and Council approval is needed since this would require a deed change.

Mr. Scott advised that although he does not know the reason for the easement, he would like input from the Environmental Commission. The Borough Attorney, Mr. Fede recommended that any change be done by ordinance. Therefore, a motion authorizing the Borough Attorney to obtain the necessary documents to prepare the ordinance was made by Mr. Guercio, seconded by Mr. Condoleo and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present. Mr. Fede advised he would prepare the draft ordinance for review at the April 25, 2007 Work Session to be introduced at the May 1, 2007 Public Meeting.

Neglia Proposal for Summit Street Traffic Calming Evaluation – Mrs. McMackin explained that there are insufficient funds to pay for this study and it can not be taken from the capital budget since it does not have a five-year plan. Mr. Brizzolara suggested the funds be taken from the Police Department Budget. He confirmed with Mayor Barsa that Ms. Senatore was to have met with Chief Krapels to discuss why he over-expended the 2006 budget and a possible \$50,000 reduction in the 2007 Budget. Mr. Brizzolara asked that the Finance Committee review this matter.

Review Proposed Amendment to Chapter 231-13 Change of Use Approval – The Borough Attorney reported that he prepared the draft ordinance that creates a change of use continued occupancy provision. It was explained that the items the Construction Official would review prior to resale would be the visibility of a house number; whether there are any open permits; and to identify any work requiring a permit that was done without one.

After a brief discussion regarding fees, Mr. Scott recommended that the initial inspection fee be \$100.00 and a re-inspection fee be set at \$25.00. No objections were voiced.

Motion approving introduction of this ordinance at the May 1, 2007 Public Meeting was made by Mr. Scott, seconded by Mr. Brizzolara and approved upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

2007 Municipal Budget – Salaries and Capital – Mayor Barsa reminded that there are questions needing a response from Ms. Senatore and that the proposed budget is at cap and no additional monies can be added to it.

Salaries – In response to Mr. Guercio's question as to whether or not there was a formal vote regarding salaries, Mr. Scott advised that a vote was taken to approve a 3% increase for all full-time employees and a 1.5% increase for all part-time employees. Mr. Guercio made a motion to re-open discussions regarding salary increases since he apparently voted in favor of the motion. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brizzolara and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present with the exception of Mr. Scott.

Mr. Guercio advised that upon further review, it became apparent that there was minimal savings by giving 1.5% to the few part-time staff members as opposed to the 3% and that he could not in good conscience remain with his vote. He added that it also did not send a favorable message to the part-timers. He also researched salaries for the Fire Prevention Bureau and learned that the annual salaries for the Borough of Northvale Fire Prevention Bureau are \$10,000 more than the Borough's. He proposed that the Fire Prevention Inspectors be raised to \$7,800 and the Fire Prevention Official to \$8,800 and the part-time be given a 3% increase. Mayor Barsa questioned the status of the Fire Prevention Bureau Secretary, and the Administrator/Clerk advised she would be entitled to the 3% full-time increase and that the Fire Prevention Official recommended her for a merit increase. Mr. Guercio advised that he would like the elimination of merit increases and Mr. Condoleo agreed as there is no appraisal system in place for the consideration of merit raises.

Mr. Brizzolara voiced his belief that all full-time employees should receive a 4% increase as he can not justify them receiving less than the Department of Public Works or the Police Department.

Mr. Scott explained his objections to the proposed changes noting that the Fire Prevention Bureau Inspectors received a 30% increase last year and that the proposed increase would represent a 20% increase. It was his recommendation that the 3% and 1.5% increases remain. He also did not understand why a comparison with other towns was necessary and that there is overhead to the Borough to run the Bureau.

Mr. Brizzolara voiced his understanding that a 4% increase across the board for full-time and part-time employees would be \$10,000 to \$20,000 out of a \$7M Budget. He explained that the Council had no problem raising the Police Department budget \$260,000 in one year and does not comprehend why there is opposition to giving other employees a fair increase.

Mr. Scott once again reminded that a vote was taken adding that there are insufficient funds in the budget for additional increases. Mayor Barsa advised that there are funds in the budget to cover these increases.

At this time, Mr. Guercio proposed a 4% increase across-the-board for full and part-time staff. Mr. Brizzolara questioned whether the Board of Health Secretary was being compensated as recommended by the Board of Health and both Messrs Guercio and Condoleo advised the increase was for 9% to which they could not agree.

After further discussion, the motion was made by Mr. Guercio that full-time employees receive a 4% increase, part-time employees a 3% increase, Fire Prevention Inspectors be increased from \$6,500 to \$7,800 and the Fire Prevention Official be increased from \$7,500 to \$8,800 with the stipulation that there be no merit increases.

Before the motion was seconded, Messrs. Condoleo and Scott advised there were insufficient funds in the budget to grant the proposed Fire Prevention Bureau increases. The Administrator/Clerk informed that the increases for the Fire Prevention Bureau were included in the budget. Mr. Scott questioned how the numbers could be put in the budget without authorization from the Council and how the budget numbers proposed by the Finance Committee do not match the present numbers. Mrs. McMackin advised she could not answer that question but that in reviewing the numbers, the increases for the Fire Prevention Bureau as well as the \$1,000.00 merit increase for the secretary were in the approved budget.

At this time, the Borough Administrator commented that although the Fire Prevention Bureau's increase requests were put into the budget, those of other departments were not to include the Deputy Borough Clerk, Board of Health Secretary/Registrar and Deputy Registrar. Mayor Barsa reminded that the budget is at cap and Mr. Brizzolara noted that Ms. Senatore was to have investigated whether the Police Department budget could sustain \$50,000.00 in cuts. Mrs. McMackin advised of her concern that the budget is short \$40,000 in solid waste which is a contractual commitment. Mr. Guercio advised he would speak with Ms. Senatore regarding the Police Department budget. Mrs. McMackin voiced her opinion that once the budget is adopted, every department head should be made aware that they should hold the line on spending and any large ticketed item should not be considered without the consent of the Council liaison.

After further consideration, Mr. Guercio amended his motion to state that full-time employees receive a 4% increase and part-time employees a 3% increase. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brizzolara with all Council Members present voting in favor of the motion with the exception of Mr. Scott.

Capital Items

There was discussion regarding inclusion of the First Responder Vehicle at a cost of \$70,000.00 that was previously deleted from the 2007 Capital Budget. Mr. Guercio noted that the vehicle is ten years old and that there is equipment from the old vehicle that will not fit in the new vehicle. Additionally, the old vehicle has no back seat. Mr. Brizzolara voiced his opinion that since the Ambulance Corps considers this vehicle to be necessary, its purchase should be considered as it would cost more to purchase it next year. Mr. Scott reminded that the vehicle has 56,000 miles on it and that it can be repaired for approximately \$2,000.00. After further discussion, the motion was made by Mr. Brizzolara to include the \$70,000 First Responder vehicle in the capital budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Guercio and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present with the exception of Mr. Scott.

At this time, the Borough Administrator/Clerk advised that the court security system, the municipal building security system and the cost of hiring an architect for the library roof could be deleted from the 2007 capital budget as the funds can be taken from a 2006 ordinance. She explained that the \$125,000 for the Kennedy Park War Memorial would have to be added to the capital budget and that the capital budget would have to be amended. She advised she would contact bond Counsel to prepare a general improvement bond ordinance to include the road improvement program.

Review Resolution awarding contract to John Fellgraff, AIA to provide architectural and engineering services for the roof at Norwood Public Library – A motion awarding this contract for an amount not to exceed \$7,000.00 was made by Mr. Scott, seconded by Mr. Brizzolara and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present (Resolution 07:83).

Review and Approval of Central Woods Trail Sign – H6 Innovations submitted a quote for the sign and installation in the amount of approximately \$4,300.00. Mr. Scott informed that he would like to negotiate the cost and no objections were voiced.

Borough application to become a Tree City USA member – There was a brief discussion regarding the \$13,000 or equivalent amount in services required to apply. Mr. Brizzolara recommended that the Council review the application for discussion at the next Work Session.

At 9:55 PM, Mayor Barsa declared a five-minute recess. Mayor Barsa reconvened the meeting at 10:00 PM.

Borough Attorney Report

Mr. Fede advised that all items were previously discussed.

Borough Administrator Report

Application for Special Permit for Social Affair – Mrs. McMackin informed that Norwood Fire Co. No. 1 has submitted an application for June 17, 2007 from 2 PM to 7 PM for the wet down for the new truck; and Holy Family submitted one for the Casino Night to be held on May 19, 2007 from 7 PM to 11 PM. She asked for Council approval. Motion approving the applications was made by Mr. Scott, seconded by Mr. Brizzolara and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

School Board Election – Mrs. McMackin informed that the School Board election would be held from 2 PM to 9 PM on Tuesday, April 17, 2007.

Block 5 – Lot 167 – 1 Essig Street - Mrs. McMackin explained that the owners of this lot located in the Fox Hill area, Robert and Rita Goodwin, want the Borough to purchase it. She referred to a letter from their attorney, Joseph H. Cerame, dated March 28, 2007 asking the governing body if they planned to purchase the land for recreational use. Mrs. McMackin stressed that the Goodwins have no desire to donate it to the Borough. The Borough Attorney was asked to respond to Mr. Cerami that the property is not intended nor zoned for municipal recreation and that it is a residential zone for one-family homes.

General Public Comment:

A motion to open the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Brizzolara, seconded by Mr. Scott and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

Chubby Bocchino, 455 Livingston Street, reminded that any money remaining in the Fire Prevention Bureau can not be transferred into the general municipal budget.

Jim Elling, 263 Summit Street, voiced his understanding that the Board of Health recommended a salary increase for the Secretary/Registrar and added his opinion that she is a valuable employee and that the governing body should consider giving her what the Board recommended. Mayor Barsa explained that the BOH Secretary/Registrar was made full-time seven years ago and was then given health benefits. The Finance Committee conducted a survey of neighboring towns and they were of the opinion that her salary was a fair one.

Mr. Elling also referred to the Historic Preservation Committee's recommendation to fence the entire Haring Cemetery area. He voiced his opinion that this was "over-kill" and that it is overcompensating for something that has happened that will probably never happen again. Mr. Brizzolara suggested that the governing body have another meeting with the Historic Preservation Committee.

No other member of the public wishing to be heard, a motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Scott and seconded by Mr. Brizzolara with all Council Members present voting aye.

In the absence of the Labor Attorney, Mayor Barsa advised that the Council would not proceed in Closed Session to discuss the March 29, 2007 letter from the Norwood DPW Association regarding the Grievance filed 12/18/06 and subsequent Mayor and Council Resolution.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn at 10:22 PM was made by Mr. Guercio and seconded by Mr. Condoleo with all Council Members present voting aye.

Respectfully submitted,



Lorraine L. McMackin, RMC, CMC
Administrator/Borough Clerk