

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES

February 20, 2024

7:00 p.m.

Mayor Jakubowski called the meeting to order.

MAYOR JAKUBOWSKI READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: "Notice of this meeting has been provided in a legal notice published in the Courier Post and the Retrospect; and posted in accordance with Title 10 of the New Jersey Statutes Annotated, specifying a 7:00 p.m. meeting time; and that formal action may or may not be taken at all Caucus and Commissioners meetings".

Those in attendance: Mayor Jakubowski, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Whitman, Borough Administrator David Taraschi, Solicitor Salvatore Siciliano, Municipal Clerk Danielle Ingves, Police Chief Tom Tassi, RJ Callaway, Assistant Superintendent of Public Works.

Mayor Jakubowski led the audience in the Flag Salute.

PROCLAMATION: The Mayor and Commissioners presented the special proclamations to Sergeant Shawn Smith, Officer Nicholas Sherman, Officer Jamie Knecht and Officer Tirik Clouden of the Audubon Police Department for their exceptional job performance during a complex and rapidly evolving call for service on November 16, 2023.

Commissioner Lee made a motion to approve meeting minutes from February 6, 2024, seconded by Commissioner Whitman. All in favor-motioned carried.

ORDINANCES FOR ACTION: N/A

RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION:

2024-44 Authorizing the Payment of Bills for the Month of February 2024. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Whitman and seconded by Commissioner Lee. Unanimous roll call vote.

2024-45 Authorizing the Appointments of the Audubon Board of Health for the term of four years: January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2027. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Mayor Jakubowski and seconded by Commissioner Whitman. All in favor-motion carried.

2024-46 Authorizing the Appointments of the 2024 Sustainable Audubon Members for the term of one year; January 1 through December 31, 2024. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Whitman. All in favor-motion carried.

2024-47 Authorizing the Appointments of the Public Arts Committee for the term of one year; January 1 through December 31, 2024. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Whitman and seconded by Commissioner Lee. All in favor-motion carried.

2024-48 Authorizing the Municipal Clerk to Receive RFQ Submissions for Borough Solicitor, Borough Engineer, Special Projects Engineer, Special Labor Council and Bond Council for the Borough of Audubon. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee and seconded by Commissioner Whitman. All in favor-motion carried.

2024-49 Authorizing the Borough Engineer to make Application and the Mayor to Execute a Camden County Community Development Block Grant Agreement for Program Year 2024. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Whitman and seconded by Commissioner Lee. All in favor-motion carried. (Mayor Jakubowski Abstained.)

COMMISSIONER LEE: It is always a pleasure to honor our police officers. The Mayor just said, “we could get used to doing that every night.” Not just the police department, but every department in the Borough is exemplary. Other than saying thank you, it is really hard to show the appreciation they deserve. If you are a resident and you see these guys around, please say thank you for your service.

Mayor Jakubowski added on to describe how he saw something yesterday and immediately sent a picture to the Assistant Superintendent of PW to ask for this to be checked out when they are back at work. However, the same day a dedicated employee decided to walk his dog to the building to check it out on his day off which was also a holiday. This is the type of dedicated employee that we have.

Commissioner Lee provided another example of a time when one of our street signs was in the lake and within a couple of hours our employees had retrieved that sign. Thank you to all the dedicated employees.

COMMISSIONER WHITMAN: Just to add on to the congratulations, these officers do a great job all the time. This incident was all over the local news as it started in Haddonfield where this individual drove up on the sidewalk. Police Chief commented that it really was a frightening episode. Thank you for a job well done.

MAYOR JAKUBOWSKI: We are happy to recognize these police officers for their hard work. Lots of times the bad cops overshadow the good cops, and the good, lifelong police officers don't get the recognition they deserve. I am glad we took the time tonight to recognize and thank them properly.

Audubon Day is Saturday, April 27th. Please put it on your calendars as it is approaching quickly. Now the bad news. The vendor for our July 4th fireworks called and stated they did not have enough staff for our event. Therefore, fireworks will now be on Saturday, July 6. Everything else will still be on the 4th, such as the parade, the athletic games at the high school and the open house at the fire department. Per Commissioner Whitman, “we tried to find another vendor for the fireworks, but there is nothing else out there. Last year's vendor was booked until about a week or so ago. “

If we wanted to up the budget from \$18,000 to \$50,000, we might have a better chance of getting them, but that is off the table. The Mayor and Commissioner Lee have been approached and did some research on drone shows, but the cheapest price was \$85,000 for a decent show. For Audubon's self-proclaimed “Most Patriotic Small Town in America”, we have now turned it into a three-day event.

OPEN SESSION:

Commissioner Lee made a motion to open the meeting to the public, seconded by Commissioner Whitman. All in favor-motion carried.

Lisa McComb, 24 Beloit Avenue, has concerns with a woman who has been a problem in the neighborhood trying to get into houses and cars. She is constantly on the street checking doors on cars and houses. Ms. McComb continually calls the police and reports are filled, but this is a continual problem and this person recently walked into a neighbor's house and she has stolen a car. This has been going on for two years. She understands this person may not be well and that they all need to be locking cars and house doors, but she is looking for guidance. Is there anything else that she and the neighbors can do or is there anything more the police can do as this has been going on for two years now?

Police Chief, Tassi, stated that mentally challenged people are difficult for the community, but they have rights also. The police do everything they can. Unfortunately, the facilities don't keep them. The Chief urged Ms. McComb to call the police each and every time. By the nature of the way things are now, it is difficult to get this person help. We hope that you are not discouraged to keep calling the police. The Chief stated that he cannot change their frustration, but they need to continue to contact the police with every incident. Let the police handle the situation. There are times when this individual takes her medication, and she is completely "normal" and other days she is not so well. Please share our conversation with your neighbors. We would rather that when you see it that you call the police immediately. Do not hesitate to contact the police.

There were no other comments/questions from the public.

Commissioner Whitman made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Commissioner Lee. All in favor-motion carried.

Closed Session: N/A

Commissioner Whitman a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Lee. All in favor-motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 P.M.

MAYOR JAKUBOWSKI

COMMISSIONER WHITMAN

COMMISSIONER LEE

ATTEST:

DANIELLE INGVES, MUNICIPAL CLERK

DATE APPROVED:
