

# CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES

April 2, 2024

5:00 P.M.

\*\*\*MEETING WAS HELD VIA "ZOOM" APPLICATION WITH MEETING ID 349 802 0449

Mayor Jakubowski called the meeting to order.

**MAYOR'S 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 5:00 p.m. meeting time; and that formal action may or may not be taken at all Caucus and Commissioners meetings. Please be advised that this meeting is not being videotaped tonight."

**Roll Call:** Mayor Jakubowski and Commissioner Lee were in attendance. Absent: Commissioner Whitman.

Those additionally in attendance were Administrator David Taraschi, RJ Callaway, Assistant Superintendent PW, Solicitors Sal Siciliano and Jennifer McPeak, Borough Engineers Steve Bach and Craig Reilly, Danielle Ingves, Municipal Clerk, Library Board President, Tom Tassi, Police Chief, Kurt Bicking, OEM Director, John Dymond, Tax Assessor

Approval of Minutes from March 19, 2024 were tabled until next meeting.

## **ORDINANCES FOR ACTION:**

**2024-01 Ordinance of the Borough of Audubon, County of Camden, and State of New Jersey Amending Chapter 62, Traffic and Vehicles in the Code of Borough of Audubon-First Reading-March 5, 2024, Second Reading April 2, 2024. (25 Oswego)**

The motion to open to the public was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee; seconded by Mayor Jakubowski Lee. All in favor; motion carried.

No one from public had any questions or comments. The motion to close the meeting to the public was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee; seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor motion carried.

Motion to approve Ordinance 2024-01 was made by Commissioner Lee; seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. Unanimous Roll Call Vote.

**2024-03 Ordinance of the Board of Commissioners of the Borough of Audubon, County of Camden; and State of New Jersey; Calendar Year 2024 Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a CAP Bank**

**First Ready - April 2, 2024, Second Reading/Public Hearing - May 21, 2024.** Motion to approve first reading made by Commissioner Lee and seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. Unanimous roll call vote.

## **RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION:**

**2024-57 Resolution Increasing Deferred Local School Tax** The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee; seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. Unanimous Roll Call Vote

**2024-58 Authorizing Self-Examination for 2024 Municipal Budget** The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee; seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. Unanimous Roll Call Vote

**2024-59 Resolution Introducing the 2024 Municipal Budget-Public Hearing, May 21, 2024.** The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee; seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. Unanimous Roll Call Vote

**2024-60 Resolution Certifying the Audubon Board of Commissioners Compliance with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's "Enforcement Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964".** The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee and seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. Unanimous Roll Call Vote

**2024-61 Resolution Authorizing the Borough Engineer to make Application for a Congressionally Directed Spending Application Grant Agreement for FY2025 for Merchant Street Sanitary Sewer Project.** The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Mayor Jakubowski; seconded by Commissioner Lee. Unanimous Roll Call Vote

## **Department Reports:**

**Borough Administrator** – Commissioner Whitman, Jack Bruno and I have spent a lot of time on the budget this year. This year was more time than in years past and there were a lot of tough decisions. It can be very challenging to control spending and deliver high quality service and not overburden the taxpayers.

**Assistant Superintendent of Public Works** – Report attached. Highlights include the following: Little League Opening Day Preparations for HHYA and Green Wave Park. Installed Lafayette Sign (Battle of Gloucester) by the Rec Center/Lake Area. Audubon Day preparations are ongoing as well as preparations for Haddon Heights Events. Normal day to day business continues as usual.

**Chief Finance Officer** – No Report.

**Borough Clerk** – Financial Disclosure Statements need to be completed by April 30, 2024. An email will be going out this week and weekly reminder emails will be sent. Reminder that the Primary Election is Tuesday, June 4, and the deadline to register to vote is May 14. The Board of Elections is looking for additional poll workers and will be encouraging early voting. I will continue to remind everyone. That is 21 days prior to election. All animal licensing renewals will now be charged late fees.

**Tax Collector** – Excused. Report attached.

**Tax Assessor** – Nothing to report.

**Police Chief** – Report attached. Question regarding with the weather getting nice and the streets that were completed due to the PSEG project, are those streets going to be done? Also, questioning utility companies coming out now that the streets have been repaved and digging up again. Is there a list and a process on reporting this as we see them. Per Mayor Jakubowski, what is our moratorium on this? D. Taraschi said there is no moratorium on this but can share three circumstances from recently. The most recent is public service doing some test pits for a distribution line they are going to run through their \$58 million substation. Payson Avenue was opened and that will be concrete to grade like we did when the gas company was done and then Ward will be milled and paved 50 feet in all directions of that opening. I know on Hampshire Ave that was an emergency water break. If someone comes in for the lead update that the BPU has authorized, 99% of the time they don't have to go in the street, but when they do because there is still lead in the street and behind the curb, how do we deny that person the opportunity to get rid of lead in their home? So, there is a process that I discussed, and RJ will continue moving forward, directing with the utilities as far as what restoration we are expecting. I will tell you that when PSEG came in for the distribution line, I told them that they have to put it in writing that they will commit to whatever mill and repave we require. On Ward, they did pave 50' out from the opening. Com. Lee questioned the punch list for PSEG. D. Taraschi stated that one was sent to PSEG, and he will locate the email and will forward to the Commissioners. Mayor Jakubowski asked if the water company should be finishing their restorations on their streets in

April? Per D. Taraschi, his contact stated that they were shooting for April especially Wyoming and the additional streets. This could not be completed during spring break week due to the weather. Chief Tassi asked about amending the ordinance to protect our streets and not burden the taxpayers down the road. Are we protected? S. Bach, Engineer, has sample ordinance that he can share.

**Fire Chief** – Report attached. The fire department was successful in securing another grant of \$74,000 to supply the guys with upgraded turnout gear that will protect them. Thank you to the Commissioners and everyone at the Borough who helped support us in obtaining this money. Alarms answered in March: 36 Alarms answered to date: 133.

**OEM** – Report attached. NJOEM contracted with an outside company to reformat and rewrite all EOP's in the State. This will take place over the next four months. Asked all department heads to select a point of contact for questions that may arise. The first LEPC meeting will be April 26 at 10 am at Borough Hall. Invitations will be sent out soon. Will be meeting with the Celebration Committee after Audubon Day about the July 6<sup>th</sup> fireworks to discuss plans.

**EMS** – Absent and no report provided.

**Municipal Court Administrator** – Report attached. Interviews are ongoing looking for the deputy court administrator. Hopefully, we can make a decision soon.

**Construction Code/Zoning Report** - Report attached.

**Engineer** – Report attached. The FY2023 CBDG project for the Senior Center improvements project on the kitchen, we did award that to Kavi Construction, \$28,000. We are working to get that contract signed now and getting them in there to complete the additional work. The 2023 Municipal Aid project, this is the completion of East Pine Street and the beginning of Hampshire coming off Kings Highway, that project is at the DOT now for review. As soon as we receive and address the comments back, we can get it out to bid. Finally, the 2023 Open Space, the rockers, I spoke with Greg Powell today and the rockers are in transit. As soon as they get that shipment, they will be able to schedule the installation. Spoke with RJ yesterday and the space was cleaned out. Will get over there and get some pictures and send them to Greg Powell so that he has a layout of the land.

**Solicitor** – Nothing to report. No items for closed.

**Library** – Program numbers have increased once again. Earth Day events have been scheduled. The Library will have a presence at Audubon day. Check out their social media and website for all updates.

**The Recreation Center** – Reminder the YMCA is not only providing summer camp this year, but job opportunities are available for camp counselors as well. The links for the YMCA are on our website and the YMCA's website.

March: five private parties and two non-profit fundraisers, one 5K walk/run – outside only, One organized recreation event (Friday Nights @ the Rec – Outside Only) - April scheduled: five private parties, one non-profit event and Audubon Day.

**Sustainable Audubon** – Meetings are the first Wednesday of every month. Per Mayor Jakubowski, he highly encourages all to check out their Facebook page and website as they have a lot going on. They are working on their Earth Day events and their gardens as well as their flower sale. There will be one clean up in April prior to Audubon Day. They are planning an event in May with Haddonfield and Barrington on energy efficiency in your household.

## **Board of Commissioners Reports:**

**Commissioner Lee** – From a public safety standpoint, there is a Solar Eclipse on Monday, April 8. There are some health concerns regarding people staring at that. I will issue some caution. Please use caution driving around. As of right now, there has been no word on adjustments times for our schools.

**Commissioner Whitman** – Absent

**Mayor Jakubowski**. – April is National Volunteer Month. Shout out to all our volunteers in Audubon as they are the ones that truly make our quality of life what it is. This includes our Fire Department, Library, PTAs, Celebration Committee, Sustainable Audubon, Civic REACH, Fathers' Assoc., Soccer, Softball etc. Thank you to them all. Audubon Day is Saturday, April 27, Family Fun from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm for the day program with a little break and then live band from 6:00 – 10:00 for the evening program. You could nap between events or head over to our neighbors in Mt. Ephraim for their event from 2:00-7:00 pm. Once again the county has promised us their senior vans for the event. Parking will be limited at the rec center. Therefore, the van will be going between Borough Hall and the rec center to help our senior citizens travel back and forth during the day. If anyone has any questions, we encourage them to call the Mayor's office and we will direct them accordingly.

The federal budget has been passed and included in that was an earmark for congressionally directed spending grant sponsored by Senator Corey Booker that is going to allow us to purchase some trees and put up some butterfly equipment and some other equipment to help us maintain all of that. I believe the amount was about \$46,000. This will allow us to purchase 150 trees throughout town and three butterfly gardens. The hope is to get a water tank transport as that will be useful to help water all of these things. Sustainable Audubon is very excited about this, but it does take some time to get things done through the federal government so it may be many months before we see movement on this.

**Open Session:** Commissioner Lee made a motion to open the meeting to the public; seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor; motion carried.

John from Retrospect asked if there have been any new meetings with Haddon Heights regarding the Shared Service Agreement. Mayor Jakubowski stated no but added that the agreement expires at the end of January 2025, and we have a lot of time. We will take our time, no need to rush it and will be very deliberate as well as continue to speak with Haddon Heights before we speak with the Retrospect. Questioned the project on Kings Highway that is going to begin. Per Mayor Jakubowski, there was a very detailed meeting a week or so ago and John's boss at the Retrospect was there. He has been asked to speak with his boss regarding the details from that meeting. Also, it is a county project and is more than just paving. Heights and Audubon have to get the sewer lines upgraded and then repaving. It is an 18-month project. The county will be bidding it out soon. So, more information will be coming this summer. It is all one project that is wrapped together.

No one from the public had any questions. Commissioner Lee made a motion to close the meeting to the public; seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor; motion carried.

Commissioner Lee made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor; motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:32 P.M.

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Mayor Jakubowski

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Commissioner Whitman

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Commissioner Lee

ATTEST:

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Danielle Ingves, Municipal Clerk

DATE APPROVED :