



City of Lambertville
WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2019, 7:00 PM
PHILLIP L. PITTORE JUSTICE CENTER
MINUTES

COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Mayor Fahl called the meeting to order at 7 pm and asked the City Clerk to read the compliance statement into the record. The City Clerk read the following statement: *"Adequate notice of this Meeting of the Governing Body of the City of Lambertville held on April 2, 2019 has been provided through the posting of the annual meeting schedule, by emailing notice to the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Trenton Times and to various individuals on the list serve in accordance with Section 13 of the Open Public Meetings Act."*

ROLL CALL

The City Clerk called the roll as follows:

Present: Councilman Sanders, Councilwoman Taylor, Councilwoman Warner, Council President Asaro, Mayor Fahl

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Fahl led the members of the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

The City Clerk led the members of the public in a moment of silence in honor of those serving in the United States Armed Forces in country and abroad.

OLD BUSINESS

PUBLIC WORKS

Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public present that the city received two bids for the purchase of a 16-ton garbage truck. They are in attorney review.

CONVENIENCE CENTER

Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public present that the city has made the changes discussed at the previous work session. It has been two weeks since implementing the changes. Residents and businesses can visit the convenience center on the following days:

Weekday: Third Wednesdays 3 – 5 pm

Weekend: First Saturday, 9 to 12 Noon

They can also obtain Bulk Permits (Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment only) at the clerk's office. This will help the city to track usage; prevent contamination; and make sure only Lambertville residents use our site.

Councilman Sanders commented that the city scaled back to one Saturday and one weekday per month and asked if the permit was fee based? Mayor Fahl commented that they apply for a permit, pay a small fee and schedule a time to drop off. So, this is similar to our fees schedule for bulk trash. Mayor Fahl said she was currently working

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with our legal team to reassess all of our fees and looking to roll that out to give another option so that we can offer more. The focus is to offer this to current residents, maintain our property, and be mindful of the budget.

Mayor Fahl opened the floor to the public.

Linda Thomas, 109 Highland Avenue asked if the schedule was on the website. The City Clerk said it was on the website. Ms. Thomas said that only one gate is open and when you visit the site it's like a circus. Mayor Fahl said she planned to be present one Saturday so that she can see how it works.

A member of the public asked if we would have Sparkle Week. Mayor Fahl said we would.

Joe Donnelly, 50 Delaware Avenue said he likes to garden, takes care of his house, takes pride in it and for the past 26 years he has brought buckets of weeds, grass clippings and would be able to continue to do that. He took issue with the reference "dump" and asked what other changes would be made.

Mayor Fahl commented that she appreciated his comments and understands this is an amenity we are all losing. She is working with council, hearing out people's concerns, and has the site open limited hours free of service to the public. The city is between a rock and a hard place to maintain this site as is. Often when you are making a compromise no one is happy. She is working on getting to a place where we can say yes. The February meeting, we had the County Board of Health to address their concerns. The City is doing as much as we can, unfortunately the way we previously ran the site lead to increased illegal dumping, people who were not residents of Lambertville used it, lead to contamination of various piles of recycling including leaves and brush, and a series of community complaints. Mr. Donnelly asked if all five members of the governing body voted to support this. Mayor Fahl responded that it was her decision.

Bonnie Gendaszek, 42 Delaware Avenue, asked what they should do with the weeds, other plants, annuals? Mayor Fahl commented that it was a good question. Councilwoman Taylor suggested that she put them in the food waste/third can container. Councilwoman Taylor said the composting, household plants, weeds, are all allowed. Brush and leaves are not allowed in the composting program. The Environmental Commission has been working on a document that will make it clearer to the members of the public.

Mayor Fahl commented that even if the convenience center was kept open, we could not accept your grass clippings and organic materials. Joe Donnelly asked why not? Councilman Sanders commented that it is one of the challenges with the different groupings. We need to educate the public and he is happy the Environmental Commission is taking this on. He thinks we need to use various methods to communicate these changes to the members of the public. The distinction is important because it won't be intuitive. I hope we can think about the need and calibrate this

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appropriately. Only two days a week now, long lines of traffic, we need to evaluate it to make it convenient, address the challenges with the board of health. This is an issue he continues to hear about and he hopes we will be open on a rolling basis to serve the needs of the community.

Mayor Fahl commented that we all agreed this was a six-month trial period. We are only two weeks of seeing it all play out. If we can grin and bare it to see what the need is, we can get a sense of what works.

Councilman Sanders commented that the data collected along with input from the folks that are manning the site would be helpful.

Mayor Fahl responded that this is an indicator of why these working sessions are so valuable. Its an opportunity to hear from the community and noodle out big decisions. She is committed to manning the convenience center herself on one Saturday.

Karen Taylor Ogren, 20 Jefferson Street asked if there is any place where all of these fine definitions are noted. Leaves go here, posted on website, anything in writing now? Councilwoman Taylor responded that it is all in process now. The Environmental Commission is working on this issue along with the "Ditching Disposables" initiative. Mrs. Ogren commented that when she visited public works there were no signs posted directing the public of where to place things, no hours posted, if we put a sign and impose a huge fine, would it be possible to increase hours? And possible place a plain clothes police officer at the site. Mayor Fahl commented that she appreciated the suggestion but a plain clothes officer is much more expensive than a public works officer. The city has discussed this with the Board of Health and the best option is to man the convenience center. The city has been working with our communications consultant to create signs and they have been ordered.

Judy Gleason, 86 North Union Street asked if there is an identification card that goes on our car? Otherwise people aren't going to know. What kind of fee are you looking at and what sort of fee to get a permit to take plants from garden? Mayor Fahl responded that she is working with the department of public works to assess the cost. In the meantime, we are scheduling drop offs via a permit at no cost to residents or businesses. Ms. Gleason commented that this is a major time for gardening and the longer it takes us the more stuff won't have a place to go. I asked for all of the information from the Board of Health, I received what I asked for and 90% was not stuff like this, it was air conditioners, big metal things, a solution looking for a problem. She echoes the comments from tonight and asked that we look at gardening waste with the garden tour coming soon, people who cannot do what you need to do if we don't people do their stuff. She asked that the governing body think about that.

Councilwoman Taylor responded that Ms. Gleason is right about what the county said. The relationship is having the convenience center open and staffed is what is required so that we don't get the air conditioners, expensive proposal, the way it was functioning did not meet county standards. One thinks we should consider is having extended hours in

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April, May, September and October so that we are addressing overwhelming need a little more.

Mayor Fahl responded that it wasn't unreasonable, we have had 30 minutes of discussion with a full agenda. We will continue to look at this with scheduled times available, bulk pick up and two days a month. I would like to, before we extend the hours, try and muscle through it to see if it works first.

NEW BUSINESS

PROPOSED CHANGE IN THE FORMAT OF THE MEETING AGENDA

Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public present that the city is working on a template to amend the city's administrative code as it relates to the meeting agenda to reflect ongoing projects rather than an old/new business, doesn't allow for nuance. We need to pass this by ordinance and it will be on the April 18th meeting agenda for first reading.

OTHER

Driveway Application, 18 Jefferson Street: the city has not received the application as of this date. It may be on a future meeting agenda.

Metered Parking:

Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public present that she and Council President Asaro have been looking at metering Mt. Hope Street by Cavallo Park and the Ely Field Parking Lot by the playground. She asked Council President Asaro to give an overview.

Council President Asaro commented that she has received many complaints about the condition of the parking lot at Ely Field. She has worked with the City Engineer on this project and the city would need to use a permeable surface because the parking lot was installed after the 1990s. It's not inexpensive to accomplish. We have discussed pavers with grass in between them, as we were thinking about that we considered how to fund it and we thought it might make sense to install parking meters. She spoke with Megan Ruf, the chair of the Recreation Commission and she agreed that if we are going to do it, we should move ahead quickly before the start of the new school year. We need to work on the amount of time for the teachers, etc., and we are in the early stages.

Mayor Fahl commented that the city has had direct complaints about the state of the parking lot. Again, it is in the early stages of an idea. She asked for Council comments.

Councilman Sanders clarified that the city wasn't looking about the teacher's parking lot, but instead at the lot in front of the play area between Buttonwood and Perry Streets. He commented that we give parking passes to the Library staff, would we consider giving parking passes to the teachers?

Council President Asaro responded that the next phase is to go and talk to the school. Mayor Fahl responded that we are open to providing passes.

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Councilwoman Taylor said she would like to hear from the parents, there isn't a lot for kids to do. Council President Asaro said it is an equitable way to maintain the lot.

Mayor Fahl opened it for public comment.

Nancy Anderson, South Franklin Street, as far as pervious surface, why can't you use gravel, river rock, my concern is to do something cars can park and then round up is sprayed because no one wants to weed it. Councilwoman Taylor responded that it is gravel now. Ms. Anderson encouraged the governing body to get the students involved in maintaining the parking lot and to use no chemical choices.

Councilwoman Warner asked about the rational for changing the surface, why go permeable? Council President Asaro explained that because this parking area was constructed after the 90's, the city is bound by the rules of the State to keep it impervious. Council President Asaro commented that stone will continue to be eaten away, freeze, and won't gain us anything.

Tim Korzun, North Union Street, commented that Baldpate Mountain has porous pavers.

Chris Plummer, 115 Clinton Street recommended the governing body consider providing identification for residents as we add metered parking so that they can park and not have to pay in addition of living here.

Mayor Fahl responded that she appreciates the comments and she wanted to be frank. The position we are in with the current budget, we need the meter revenue. The governing body can continue to discuss this, but we will find that this would generate thousands of dollars of loss.

Gary Giordano, 56 Church Street commented that when he was here, the meters ended at 5 pm, by adding more meters its like raising the fees in a restaurant, we need to get the downtown area healthy and alive again, if there were more people coming into town, more paying into the meter, more volume rather than hitting the citizens. During the week the street is empty, a lot of ways to do that.

Mayor Fahl responded that no one is against economic development, but we are in a position where dollars and cents matter. Increasing the meter rate city wide, there is ongoing discussion and it will be continued to our next work session. The May work session is devoted solely to the budget. The first reading is April 18, 2019 and the public hearing is May 16, 2019. Pitfalls in the budget include an extra \$200,000 debt service payment that was unaccounted for in the previous budget.

Mayor Fahl opened it up for Council comments.

Councilwoman Warner asked when the city last raised meter fees. Mayor Fahl commented that it was last raised in 2011 from \$.20 for 15 minutes to \$25 for 15 minutes.

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Councilwoman Taylor asked how that will impact the Parkmobile application? She asked if we could look at Parkmobile and see if we can lower the minimum fee which is currently \$3.00. Mayor Fahl said she was amenable to looking at it. A Significant portion of the funds to solve our debt issue is from the projected increase in parking meter fees.

Mayor Fahl opened it up for public questions.

Nancy Anderson, South Franklin Street, asked what the revenue was from 2018 for parking meters and fines. Mayor Fahl responded that it goes into the general fund, and the year to date for meters is \$68,000, parking tickets is \$12,000.

Judy Gleason, 86 North Union Street commented that parking meter revenue comes in on Friday, Saturday and Sundays, weekend driven, for our merchants to try to do things, maybe we could look at weekends, maybe should look at when we are getting the big money so that we don't make it more difficult. A week day rate could be different.

Councilman Sanders commented that it was an interesting idea but he wasn't sure the mechanics of our current meters would be able to handle that.

Council President Asaro said that Princeton does that.

Judy Gleason said there are days when you aren't making a lot of money so maybe you could offer a free day.

Mayor Fahl reminded everyone that the City wants to keep all work sessions to one hour and Michael Heffler has come at her request to discuss community aggregation and it is his birthday and we want to let him go to celebrate.

COMMUNITY AGGREGATION

Michael Heffler was present to discuss a joint venture with a cooperative for Community Aggregation.

Mr. Heffler talked about greening the pipeline and said the County has a program so that all municipal buildings can do under the plan, kick the PennEast Pipeline in the wallet and it is getting traction. This would mean aggregation for the whole town. Instead of a lower rate, however, it would increase renewables and reduce the cost. We can do a bid, reduce the amount of natural gas, increase renewable, decrease out cost. He has held two meetings with surrounding municipalities and is holding the third one tomorrow evening.

Mr. Heffler commented that the City has been working with Bob Chilton of Gabel Associates. Bob has made it clear that he is interested but not clearly interested, because he has left the meetings with surrounding municipalities to Michael Heffler to handle. Hopewell introduced us to Concord and they come to every meeting. The fees are the same and Clinton is also interested in joining. He asked for thoughts from the governing body.

Mayor Fahl recused herself.

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Councilwoman Warner commented that she would be willing to take the lead. She said she agreed with Mike and if he is getting support from Concord and if they are able to connect us with other cooperatives seamlessly, then it seems like the best move going forward for the city.

Council President Asaro asked if there was a downside. Mr. Heffler commented that he didn't believe there was. Concord has a lot more business than Gabel; and he feels the city may be able to get a better rate.

Councilman Sanders asked the City Clerk about the status of SHREC. The City Clerk said she would send all documents to the City Attorney for review and direction.

Councilman Sanders thanked Mr. Heffler for his work and said he is personally intrigued and open to looking at it but needed to better understand our position.

Councilwoman Taylor asked for a timeline. Mr. Heffler said a bid is scheduled for July which means we need to get it passed this month.

Councilwoman Warner asked for feedback from the meetings with other municipalities. Mr. Heffler said many were leaning towards Concord however Alexander felt more comfortable with their existing cooperative.

HUNTERDON COUNTY

Mr. Heffler commented that the second topic is joining the county for community's aggregation. This would mean a larger group of residents and businesses and it is really a no brainer.

The City Clerk will pull existing contracts and send them to the City Attorney.

ORDINANCES

SECOND READING

Mayor Fahl read the ordinance into the record by title and asked for comments from the public.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 05-2019: An Ordinance Amending and Supplementing the City of Lambertville Land Use Ordinances 2015, And Specifically, Subsections 300 Zoning Districts, 301 Regarding the Zoning Map, 402 Entitled "Residential Low Density (R-L) District" to Establish One New Inclusionary Overlay Zone, and 406 Entitled "Central Business District" To Establish One New Inclusionary Overlay Zone.

Nancy Anderson asked Mayor Fahl to define what she was talking about. Mayor Fahl responded that it was an ordinance to change zoning for the affordable housing settlement agreement with the State of New Jersey. This has been an ongoing issue since November of 2018. This ordinance will solidify the zoning change. Karen Ogren asked if the outlining parcels with the overlay are in lieu of the Closson property. Mayor Fahl responded that it does not include the Closson property. Mrs. Ogren asked if there are alternatives. Mayor Fahl said the City has not found alternatives and will continue to

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work with the city planner. Mrs. Ogren asked if there are permanent plans in place. Mayor Fahl responded no, the properties are privately owned and it only affects the property if they are sold and choose to use the overlay zone with the increase density.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 06-2019: An Ordinance to Amend the City of Lambertville Land Use Ordinances 2015, Article VI Standards for Review of Applications.

Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public present that this will create a review committee so that you don't need to come to a planning board meeting to have your application deemed complete. The professionals of the applicant won't need to sit through a meeting waiting for their application to be heard and they should save money.

Paul Kuhl, the Chairperson, commented that there is no concern but it will save applicants money, the meter runs during the meeting.

Nancy Anderson asked if this will expedite the process. Mayor Fahl said it was more efficient, doesn't expedite it but does stop a second meeting for completeness. Ms. Anderson asked if 5G would need to go through the same process. Mayor Fahl said it was a tough question and she would have to discuss whether we are going to send them through planning/zoning.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 07-2019: An Ordinance to Amend the Salary Range for the Officials and Employees of the City of Lambertville, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey.

Mayor Fahl said the Salary and Wage Ordinance established ranges for salary for position. This includes the new position for the Business Administrator. She informed the members of the public present that the second reading and public hearing is on April 9th.

FIRST READING

Mayor Fahl read the following ordinances into the record.

Verizon Right of Way – was moved to the June meeting.

Handicapped Parking Space: 127 North Franklin Street will be on the April 18th agenda for first reading and this creates a handicapped parking space in front of 127 North Franklin Street.

Increase in Parking Meter Fees

Increase in hourly rate from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per hour

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Request for Proposals for Professional Services are due on Friday, April 5th.

Route 29 Traffic Diet Update: The Mayor is meeting with DOT on April 10th to walk the site.

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Councilman Sanders asked what the next step was. Mayor Fahl responded that the goal is to come up with a timeline and identify the next steps. The DOT will go to the site, walk through it and look at the plan. They then have 45 days to look at the plan and hopefully the city will receive a work issue. Councilman Sanders asked if this will create additional parking. Mayor Fahl said it would create 88 additional parking spaces.

Suspension of Street Sweeper: resuming on April 15, 2019

Parklettes: beginning in May.

Sparkle Week will be on June 4 and 5 and on June 13 and 14 in accordance with their zone.

100th Day in Office Celebration: Mayor Fahl announced that April 10th was her 100th day in office and she was hosting a get together at the Lambertville House.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chris Plummer, Clinton Street asked about Verizon and if the city only had 60 days to respond or telecom automatically receives relief legally. Mayor Fahl said she received Mr. Plummer's email; Verizon has been pushed to the June work session.

Nancy Anderson, South Franklin Street, asked if the city was looking for experts to assist with Verizon. Mayor Fahl said she was working with the City Planner, who has identified someone who is not affiliated with any wireless company and has spoken on this issue in New Jersey and New York.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m. with a motion made by Councilman Sanders and seconded by Councilwoman Warner. An affirmative voice vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia L. Ege
CMR, RMC, City Clerk

The April 2, 2019 work session minutes were approved at the regularly scheduled voting session held on Thursday, April 18, 2019.

