



City of Lambertville
WORK SESSION
THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2019, 7:00 PM
CITY HALL, 18 YORK STREET
MINUTES

COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Mayor Fahl called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked the City Clerk to read the following statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act into the record.

"Adequate notice of this Meeting of the Governing Body of the City of Lambertville held on June 6, 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: Councilwoman Taylor, Councilwoman Warner, Council President Asaro, Mayor Fahl.

Absent: Councilman Sanders.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Fahl led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

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

NEW BUSINESS/CONSTITUENT CONCERNS

INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR – Alex Torpey

Mayor Fahl thanked everyone for coming out this evening, she thanked the members of the Governing Body who worked diligently on hiring of the new Business Administrator, Alex Torpey. She welcomed Alex to Lambertville and thanked everyone who took part in helping with this task.

Mr. Torpey addressed the members of the public present and he thanked the Mayor and the Governing Body for the opportunity. Mr. Torpey said he was so excited to be in Lambertville. During the interview process, everyone he spoke to had a good reaction when he mentioned he was going to Lambertville. Alex informed the members of the public that he is from Essex County, has worked in Leona for the past year, previously served as Mayor of South Orange, served on the Library Board, is an EMT, and fell in love with doing things for the community. After college, he came home and ran for Mayor. He appreciated all of his time in local government and has now come back to work on the staff side to implement projects we all want to do. Since his first day on the job, he has met with people, committees, boards, commissions, and he hopes that everyone comes to see him as a resource to organize, help manage projects. He said

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there is a lot of really difficult and valuable work to be done with the budget and future planning and he is happy to be in Lambertville.

Tara Shepherd, Go Hunterdon

Mayor Fahl welcomed Tara Shepherd to the meeting. Ms. Shepherd introduced Ryan Fisher, a resident and co-worker with Go Hunterdon. She explained that Go Hunterdon is a nonprofit agency that focuses on transportation management, sustainable transportation, walkability and bike-ability with safety as the key focus. They are funded through the New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority who currently has eight (8) campaigns throughout Hunterdon County and a number of other counties. The funding is based on need, issues and interest. Ms. Shepherd presented the city with the Evaluation of the Lambertville Street Smart Campaign completed in 2017. The report is based on six weeks of study, 1 week of pre-campaign evaluation, and 4 weeks of educational outreach. This is based on five messages, pedestrians, crosswalk laws, waiting for the walk and heads up phones down; Motorist, obey limits and again heads up phones down. Ryan Fisher will be coordinating the six-week campaign.

Mayor Fahl thanked Ms. Shepherd and Mr. Fisher for coming and said the city is working with NJDOT to make Lambertville a more walkable City. She opened the meeting up for questions and/or comments.

A member of the public asked if this included bicycling. Ms. Shepherd responded that it is mostly for pedestrian safety but they work closely with Bike Lambertville on a separate effort on bicycling. A member of the public commented that there is a flagrant abuse bicyclist that needs to be addressed. Ms. Shepherd commented that bicyclist fall under the same laws as motorist. She said she is happy to be working with the city on this project.

A member of the public asked about electric bicycles, said they are fast, quiet and ignore traffic rules. Mayor Fahl responded that we will partner with Ryan Fisher to work on it and will have the new Business Administrator assist in educating the community.

A member of the public commented that the area around OwoCow is not marked well. The last campaign was well addressed and they would like this area to be the focus. Ms. Shepherd commented that they will structure the campaign based on what the council wants to focus on.

NEW METERED SPACES

Mayor Fahl addressed the members of the public present. She commented that the Governing Body tries to keep work sessions to a minimum of 1 hour to discuss topics that will be on the voting session agenda. We will not be voting tonight, this is an open meeting to discuss new ideas, constituent concerns and reflect on what will be on the June 20th agenda. All we are doing is trying to get ideas and concerns, talk openly about the reason we are moving forward and talk about how we can continue to move

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Lambertville forward. We will have two separate conversations: 1: Parking Lot at Ely Field by the playground and elementary school; 2: Mt. Hope Street and Coryell Street.

Mayor Fahl informed the members of the public present that in January and February, we received several complaints about the state of the parking lot at Ely Park. We took our concerns to the city engineer and because of NJDEP rules and regulations, we need to utilize permeable parking surface on that area. This will cost the City \$113,000 on just that parking area. We discussed this with the recreation commission, the governing body, the city engineer and Council President Asaro thought the only way to afford the maintenance of this lot is to build some revenue. We worked with the Business Administrator to do a cost benefit study on the various types of meters, revenue generated, and how long it would take to pay it.

Council President Asaro commented that the city needs a financial way to maintain the parking lot so the meters seemed like a solution. We would rather not raise taxes for everyone when it is usage-based system. No one wants meters or to pay, but we don't want everyone to pay when they don't use it.

Mayor Fahl commented that either way the city pays for owning and maintaining the lots. There is no zero cost, the cost will be born by the taxpayers or users. We have non-Lambertville residents using the lot and it is a way to reduce the fees to Lambertville. The City looked at individual meters verses a kiosk and the Business Administrator found that municipalities are using digital technology. We are proposing a pilot program using Parkmobile (digital technology) to track usage and it will help to determine if this was just impacting residents, how much pushed out into the street, Perry Street, Elm Street area, could revoke those meters ultimately if we found it wasn't being used. So that is what is up for debate.

Barney Stone, 39 Perry Street said it was a terrible idea and will seriously impact the quality of life for everyone in this room. You do not need a study to find out the impact. People are going to park on the street rather than pay money. Parking is already tight, everyone on the street ends up parking on Main Street. When there is a game, there is already an issue. If they can't use the parking lot they will be parking on our streets. Two more cars screw up everything on this street. You are saying that people who are paying for Ely Field are those who are using it and that means the school, etc.

Nancy Anderson asked how many parking spaces? Council President Asaro responded 21 spaces plus 1 handicapped parking space.

Ann Lyons, George Street commented that not just the people that park there, it affects all residents living there. In some ways it is a responsibility of all of us so when we want to just make those people pay, we should take a little bit of responsibility. The mission of our town, who uses the lot, kids, moms, ball games, no monetary but an emotional cost. So maybe if we live here there could be a compromise. In Palmer Square, I saw what

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their metering did. They have empty spaces now people don't come in. It's an emotional think, \$5.99 is cheaper than \$6. Happy we are thinking about these things.

Ray Akalonis, 50 Perry Street said he agrees with Barney. I don't have children but to inconvenience parents on a regular basis, hard enough to give breakfast and then worry about a parking meter. This impacts the neighborhood. Teachers already park on our street. He disagrees with the thought that users should pay. We are all responsible for that. As a governing body you need to come up with other ideas on how to get the money. If the lot is a mess and you don't have \$113,000, get stones. The overflow will go into the neighborhood. Government is the city's responsibility; taxes are going up as it is. His property was reassessed at \$10,000 more and he doesn't know what he did. Got to be a better way.

Mayor Fahl responded that Councilman Sanders and she met with the school board on an option and agreed to a permit to teachers so they wouldn't be impacted. It is for a 9 am to 7 pm use outside of teachers. I agree outside of the morals of this community.

Regina, Elm Street, commented that we are already getting the excess when there is a function at the school. She asked if the city considered increasing the current meter charge. Mayor Fahl responded that it was just raised from \$1.00 per hour to \$1.25 per hour and the initial request was \$1.50 but during another rousing session, we came to a concession t \$1.25.

Reba Stout, Buttonwood Street, commented that there isn't enough parking in the lot currently. Where are the parents that have a parade of cars waiting for their kids going to park? What happens to that side where they all line up waiting for their kids? I can't go out and come back into Lambertville because I have no place to park. Some people have two cars.

Mayor Fahl responded that the City has the option to not do anything, but that option still cost money. In 2012 we paid \$2,500 to get it to a place where it looked like a street in Yemen. We are addressing concerns; we will weigh them and make a decision. This is not over; part of the process is coming to a conclusion for everyone. I want to make certain that if we do this right, everyone will walk out unhappy. Consensus is difficult.

Theresa, 61 Buttonwood Street, lives directly across the street from Reba. She counted the number of cars, 29 parked in there, even on the grass. I have a garage, there was a car parked in front of the drive, no one cares that I can't get in and out of my house. What else do we do to avoid those things from happening?

Mayor Fahl commented that Councilwoman Taylor and the Business Administrator and the Mayor will do a parking study between now and June 20th. We are working with the police so that we have more data before we make a decision. You are right, you will lose spaces when we line it. Cars park along the ribbon and that is dangerous. Theresa commented that the length of time for the study is not enough, games don't stop until

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after 9:30 pm. Beyond the meter time those cars are there for an extra-long period of time.

Mayor Fahl reminded the members of the public that two or three council members reside on the streets that will be impacted by this change. She asked that if their concern was already discussed that they give members of the public with a different view or idea an opportunity to speak.

Judy Detrano, Coryell Street asked if there was any possibility, land, space that could be taken for new parking, for additional parking. Of all the grass area, any area in that grass area that could be created. Mayor Fahl responded that it was an excellent question, they did explore a small municipal lot where the Christmas Trees are placed at the end of North Franklin Street. This was discussed with Jim Troutman to ease parking for parents. We are not going to meter that lot but we will be working with the Recreation Commission on the use of the lot.

Caitlin Cullin, 48 Buttonwood Street, said she has resided in Lambertville for over 29 years, this would severely impact our families to have meters there. Aunts, Uncles who come over, five grown children, everyone comes to their house. Lots of teenagers' park in this lot. When she first got her license, she parked at the playground to be respectful to the residents who live there. Asking teenagers, grandparents, those who visit their family to pay is a little absurd.

Megan Warner, 34 Elm Street, I worked for the Recreation Commission during summer camp and it is an absolute hazard, unsafe, it isn't an option. To say a municipal lot with meters will unravel a ball game, it's a reality of life and she is grateful to council for looking for alternatives.

Vivian Hackney, Perry Street, 58 years, been through everything, she would like to talk about those situations. Mayor Fahl said she had office hours on June 11th and invited Ms. Hackney to come talk with her.

Christine, I think we have to do something about the parking lot. She is in favor of trying out meters. She lives right near the school, parks in the lot and has a 4-year-old, we need to try something to address the issues with parking. Perhaps a resident permit can be considered? Guest permits?

Mark Donlon, 1 Washington Street, asked if there were less expensive options. We spent \$350,000 on a fence; this council is spending money we don't have. There is a solution, gravel, those two items are excessive.

Alex Grushon, Buttonwood Street, if you do this how long is it going to take to recoup the fees? How many years? Council President Asaro commented that on the low side, \$20,000 a year over the course of 6 to 7 years we would bake the revenue on the capital project and balance maintenance of the lot and the field. All of this is geared towards new revenue to maintain the city.

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Karen Taylor, Jefferson Street, \$110,000 is a lot of money. Council President Asaro commented that the city engineer said asphalt was half that price but we have to do porous options. All other options are two or three times more, concrete pavers, grass pavers, we need to address storm water management that allows for underground storm water drainage instead of building a separate structure.

Gina Fischetti, Clinton Street, asked how the city knew non residents parked in the lot, how many? And how do you use that as a gage for parking meters? And then, reiterate, that the lot is really used as overflow parking. There isn't enough parking on the street. Mayor Fahl commented that the non-Lambertville residents is based on who signed up for Jim Troutman's programs, living on the street, nothing scientific about it. Ms. Fischetti asked if the council would consider looking at how the lot is used? She is curious as to any other lots that are not metered? DeAnna's?

Joe Donnell asked if the lot at Ely Field was owned by the City? Mayor Fahl responded that it is owned by the City.

Council President Asaro commented that many have off street parking and they don't use their driveways. If more people actually used them, 17 cars could come off the street.

Mayor Fahl encouraged anyone who wanted to continue this discussion to come to her office hours on June 11th. She said the calculus on why we are metering Ely Field lot is a question of maintenance. Mt. Hope and Coryell is more towards our budget. During the budget discussions, we talked about a serious concern, increase in debt service and an increase in revenue. In order to find it elsewhere we discussed, voted and passed a budget that assumed metering the lots at Coryell Street and Mt. Hope Street. We are willing to hear concerns but this is lightly farther along because of the revenue expected and baked into the budget that the City passed on April 18th. We anticipate Cavallo Park to have 18 paying parking spaces, 7 adjuncts, for a total of 25 spaces. At Coryell Street, we will have 11 paying spaces and 1 handicapped space. The time will be from 9 am to 7 pm, so not to over burden constituents, and it will be a digital lot only. It would be just a mobile application or telephone based to pay for the meter.

Tina Gold, 87 Coryell Street, has only lived on Coryell Street for 9 months. She is from Philadelphia and asked for an exemption, like given to the teachers, a sticker to put on the car since there are no businesses on the block. The other thing, someone like myself, leaves at 8 am and comes home at 7 pm, tourist come and park on our street and leave the car all day. We have nowhere to park. We look for parking at Coryell Street and will not be left without an option.

Kathy Williams, 84 Coryell Street, 20 years, lot is always access to use, anyone who parks there, residents. The meter will only be for those who visit the restaurant. They have no tourist down here, people who park on the street work at the restaurant, servers. The lot will remain empty.

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Mayor Fahl commented that the city is trying to address those who park and leave their vehicle for many days. This will help to rotate cars. Kathy responded that she thought when the city agreed to the \$1.25 increase in meter fees, it included the tax hike. Mayor Fahl said the conversation was from the business community who felt like they were taking the hit, and she said at that time it was raising the meter rates and increasing meters.

A member of the public said they don't park down there. She asked if the city could guarantee someone would use the lot. Mayor Fahl responded that by using a mobile application we can tell you how many used the lot and the revenue from each space. If we use this as a pilot program to study how meter less lots work, we will zone them differently so we can gather data. This cost nothing other than the time we invest. We can look at this down the road.

Barney Stone commented that there is an unused resource for parking and revenue. What about the Catholic Church parking lot? Take it by eminent domain.

Victoria Marley asked if the other lots are used, like the one next to the Justice Center? Mayor Fahl said it was difficult to answer because of the type of meters the city is currently using. We can track through Parkmobile but not the meters. 20% is digital and 80% is coin.

Dr. Ollio said he lived here for 80 years, served on the Zoning Board of Adjustment, and I don't like to see what's going on. There are a lot of ways of raising coins. How much are you looking at annually? Mayor Fahl responded \$40,000. Initially it was \$60,000 and it was decreased because of the change in the raise in meter rates. Mr. Ollio asked if she thought about a business tax? Are those things being studied? Mayor Fahl said that we are raising taxes on properties in the city by \$98 for the average priced home of \$377,000, we also increased meter revenue, we wanted to make sure this hurt by all, not just homeowners, business owners, that everyone felt a little salt to address the deficit issue and still provide services. Dr. Ollio asked if the citizens would object? Mayor Fahl said it was equivalent to 1 tax point. Dr. Ollio asked about the business community. Mayor Fahl explained that the governing body met with the business community at the May work session and they spent 3.5 hours talking about revenue. This was a consensus job and everyone felt a little hurt. While this meter is the salt of the day, last month it was the meter rates. Different people feel it. Dr. Ollio asked if there was ever a decrease in revenue. He projected that the meters would be placed throughout the community. Mayor Fahl asked, in the interest of time, if there were any other comments? She offered to meet with any member of the public during her office hours.

Re-examination Report of the Master Plan

Emily Goldman, the City Planner addressed the members of the public. She said every 10 years a municipality has to re-examine the master plan. The prior report was completed in 07-01-2009. The Planning Board met last night and adopted a new plan

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that covers the major problems or objectives identified in the prior report to see if there were things that needed to be resolved. This provides the road map for the next 10 years.

Mayor Fahl commented that she would like to do a robust Master Plan with visioning sessions, parking, use of outdoor space, but we just didn't have enough time.

Shirley Kessler asked if the preliminary plan was available. The City Planner said it will be on the city's website shortly.

PUBLIC REQUESTS

Mayor Fahl read the public requests into the record and asked for any public comment.

NJDOT requesting a Resolution of Support for the Route 29 Project beginning at Alexauken Creek Road and Ending at Washington Street.

Bucks County Playhouse Baptist Church requesting support for an event at the Baptist Church.

Handicapped Parking Space: Ronald DiSalvi, Arnett Avenue (east side) by Main Street.

Judy Gleason asked if there was an update to the recycling change? Mayor Fahl said not at this time.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Judy Detrano asked if there was any resolution to the tree cutting along the canal. Mayor Fahl responded that she met with representatives of the New Jersey Water Authority, NJDEP and the city does not have jurisdiction of that strip of space. Initially the city looked at adopting an ordinance to force publication and require replanting plan before they clear cut trees to let residence know. We are still in discussion. They gave us a replanting plan that we were not happy with, native plant occurs in the area, we agreed to biodiversity, we argued over biodiversity, and we are looking to see if we can demand a public hearing. Basically, we are nowhere.

Nancy Anderson asked who owned the land? She asked about the pesticide spraying by the railroad. Councilwoman Taylor responded that it wasn't a government issue.

Shirley Kessler asked about the railroad. Mayor Fahl asked her to attend one of her office hours.

Gina Fischetti asked about the holistic vision for parking, perhaps two things: Ely Field lot because funds generated only for maintenance and Residential Parking Permits for Coryell Street residents. Councilwoman Taylor responded that the city bonded for work and it isn't one for one. Part of a capital improvement bond that we are hoping to institutional. Debt, revenue will pay off that particular amount of debt and then become general fund revenue. Helen Petitt asked if the city did a revenue bond or a GOB? Mayor Fahl commented that it depends on the total lifetime of the bond and what other capital improvement you are doing.

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Barney Stone asked about a business tax. Mayor Fahl said businesses are taxed for licenses, outdoor tables, hotels and BnBs pay taxes and it is quite expensive to run a business in town.

Tori Marley asked if she could share with the teachers that they would be able to obtain parking permits to park in the lot or if they should come to the June 20th session. Mayor Fahl said the City is working with the school on that issue to make sure the teachers are taken care of.

Nancy Anderson asked if the city would consider an outdoor concert that everyone can enjoy. Mayor Fahl commented that we have 40% of the students at the elementary school that are food insecure and she asked for people to donate to Fisherman's Mark to help feed them over the summer.

Judy Detrano said everyone should drop off food to the food pantry.

CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS PENDING LITIGATION

Mayor Fahl asked for a motion to go into closed session to discuss pending litigation.

RESOLUTION

“Authorizing a Closed Session at the June 6, 2019 Work Session of the Lambertville City Council Meeting to Discuss Pending Litigation”

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Lambertville is subject to certain requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12, provides that a closed session, not open to the public, may be held for certain specified purposes when authorized by N.J.S.A 10:4-12(b).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Lambertville that a closed session shall be held on June 6, 2019, in the Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center, located at 25 South Union Street, Lambertville, to discuss Pending Litigation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the deliberations conducted in closed session may be disclosed to the public upon the determination of the Lambertville Mayor and City Council.

ADOPTED: June 6, 2019

Mayor Fahl and City Council convened in closed session at 8:30 p.m. with a motion made by Councilwoman Warner and seconded by Councilwoman Taylor. An affirmative

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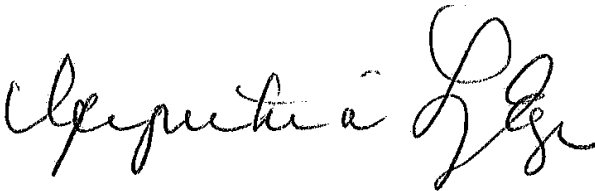
voice/roll call vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Fahl and City Council re-convened in regular session at 9:07 p.m. with a motion made by Council President Asaro and seconded by Councilwoman Taylor. An affirmative voice/roll call vote was taken in favor of the motion by all members present. MOTION CARRIED.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m. with a motion made by Council President Asaro and seconded by Councilwoman Taylor. 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 June 6 session minutes were approved at the voting session held on June 20, 2019 at the Phillip L. Pittore Justice Center.