

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL – BOROUGH OF RED BANK
April 28, 2021
6:30 P.M.**

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Mayor Menna requested the minutes reflect that, in compliance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231 (Open Public Meetings Act), notice of this meeting has been provided by notifying the Asbury Park Press, the Two River Times and the Star Ledger and by placing a notice on the bulletin board and filing same with the Borough Clerk on December 16, 2020.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Menna and Council Members, Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

ALSO PRESENT: Administrator Shehady, Borough Clerk Borghi and Attorney Cannon.

*Meeting held via video/telephone conference due to Governor's Executive Order.

PROCLAMATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Menna asked that the follow resolution be moved up on the agenda:

21-114: Mayor Menna read, Resolution Honoring Anthony Neibert as the Recipient of the William M. Connolly Award."

He commended and congratulated Mr. Neibert on receiving the award and asked if he would like to speak.

Mr. Neibert thanked the Council for the recognition.

Members of the Council offered their congratulations and thanked him for his efforts with the Borough.

Councilman Ballard offered a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilman Zipprich.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Proclamations

Council President Yassin read a proclamation proclaiming April 2021 as Arab American Heritage Month in the Borough of Red Bank

Mayor Menna read a proclamation proclaiming May 2021 as Older Americans Month in the Borough of Red Bank

RiverCenter Budget presentation

Resolution 21-110: Resolution Approving the 2021 Budget of the Special Improvement District of the Borough of Red Bank.

Mayor Menna noted that the budget had been received and reviewed by the Council. He noted this was the introduction and said there would be a public hearing to be held later.

Councilman Yassin offered a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilman Yngstrom.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Mayor Menna announced the Public Hearing would be held on 5/26/2021 at 6:30pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

Cindy Burnham—71 Wallace Street—said she was speaking on Resolution 21-117 and asked about the source of funding and details of the project. She asked if it was regarding the relocation of the playground at Count Basie Park.

Administrator Shehady said it was not for the project and reviewed the details of the Monmouth County Open Space Grant. He said it would be used for improvements to the baseball diamond at Eastside Park and the addition of shade structures at Mohawk Pond. He said if anyone would like information on the playground project, they should submit an OPRA request for the concept drawings.

Ben Forest—16 Locust Avenue—asked about Resolution 21-220 regarding the Senior Center. He asked for confirmation that it was on the agenda.

Councilman Zipprich confirmed that it had been added late that afternoon.

Mr. Forest asked if there would be a chance for the public to give input on the project and said he looked forward to seeing the proposals. He said he was excited to see the project moving forward. He said he thought the Redevelopment Agency had chosen the most reasonable option.

Councilman Zipprich asked Clerk Borghi if the resolution had been posted to the website before the meeting.

Clerk Borghi said she had received it late in the day and had forwarded it to the Council but had not had time to post it to the website. She said it would be posted after the meeting. She clarified that two resolutions had been received late in the day but she had not had time to post them.

Councilman Zipprich said someone must have shared them with Mr. Forest before the meeting.

Stephen Hecht—135 Branch Avenue—said he had not seen the resolution on the agenda and said he felt it was a matter of crucial importance. He thanked Councilmembers Ballard and Zipprich for maintaining their questioning and keeping the matter in front of the public. He said he felt it was time to move ahead and said he appreciated the fact that the Redevelopment Agency had apparently recommended that they move ahead.

Alan Hill—64 McLaren Street—said he understood that agenda items came up late but questioned why Mr. Forest had had a copy of the updated agenda that had been provided to the Council but denied to the rest of the citizens. He expressed concern that he had been given special consideration.

Clerk Borghi said she had received it and distributed it to the Council, Administrator and Attorney.

Attorney Cannon said the Redevelopment Agency has just made their decision the prior day which was why the resolution had been done today. He reviewed the content of the resolution. He said it was a public document and anyone could OPRA it.

Clerk Borghi said it would be published to the website immediately following the meeting. She said she hadn't had time to post before the meeting.

Councilman Zipprich asked Attorney Cannon if he was saying that the resolution could have been OPRA'ed earlier in the day.

Attorney Cannon said that was not his point. He was stating that it was a public document and it wasn't as if a member of the public had been given something that was confidential.

Councilman Ballard he thought people had been blindsided by the resolution that came out at 5:00 and that they were not prepared to ask questions about it.

Mayor Menna said he thought it was a positive step and said they would read it into the record when they got to it.

Stephen Hecht—135 Branch Ave—said the issue was how the Council operated with respect to transparency. He said if the information had been made available to one resident then it should have been available to 100 percent of the residents. He said it should have been publicized.

Councilman Yngstrom said the recommendation from the Redevelopment Agency had come out yesterday. He said they had worked on the resolution today and gotten it to the Clerk to add to the agenda. He said it wasn't a transparency issue but was a timing issue.

Mayor Menna said he did not think the issue was about moving forward on the issue. He said he felt the question was how Mr. Forest had gotten a copy. He said the more important issue was to move forward on the resolution.

Alan Hill—64 McLaren Street—said the agenda was very important. He said there had been a meeting of the Redevelopment Agency the previous night but said the matter hadn't even been on their agenda. He said there was an endemic problem with transparency.

Clerk Borghi clarified that the matter had appeared on the Redevelopment Agency and had been listed as "Municipal Facilities Sub Committee Report."

Attorney Cannon reviewed the Open Public Meetings Act including the fact that it required agendas to be published "to the extent known" which accommodated situations like this. He said what was happening at this meeting was compliant with that act.

Cindy Burnham—71 Wallace Street—said she wanted to echo the previous comments and asked why Mr. Forest had had the information. She asked the person who had provided the information to come forward.

No one else appearing, Councilman Yngstrom offered a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Councilman Ballard.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None

MINUTES & REPORTS

Regular Meeting minutes of 2/10/2021

Councilman Zipprich offered a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Councilwoman Horgan.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

ORDINANCES - Public Hearing/Adoption:

None.

ORDINANCES – First Reading:

None.

RESOLUTIONS

Consent Agenda

Mayor Menna called for a motion for the following resolutions to be moved by Consent Agenda:

- Resolution 21-111: Resolution for Payment of Bills Amounting to \$1,824,608.66.
- Resolution 21-112: Resolution Authorizing Refund of Taxes Totaling \$857.29
- Resolution 21-113: Resolution Authorizing Tax Credits/Refunds Totaling \$4,500.00 due to Over Payment by Property Owner
- Resolution 21-115: Resolution of Support from Local Governing Body Authorizing the Submission of a 2021 Sustainable Jersey Grant Program Funded by PSEG Grant Application
- Resolution 21-117: Resolution Awarding a Contract to Vulcan Construction Group, Inc. of Cookstown, New Jersey for Improvements to East Side Park, Mohawk Pond and Count Basie Park
- Resolution 21-118: Resolution Appointing an Interim Business Administrator for the Borough of Red Bank
- Resolution 21-119: Resolution Awarding a Professional Services Contract to The Canning Group, LLC for Executive Search Services to Find and Recruit a New Borough Business Administrator

Councilman Yassin made the motion to approve the resolutions en masse, Councilwoman Triggiano seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

By Voice Vote:

21-116: Mayor Menna read, "Resolution Awarding a Fair and Open Contract to Commercial Utility Consultants, Inc. to Develop and Administer the Sustainable Monmouth Alliance Energy Aggregation Program."

Councilwoman Triggiano made the motion to approve the resolution, Councilman Yngstrom seconded.

Councilman Ballard read a letter received by the Council regarding a company that was questioning the Request for Proposal process. He expressed concern about moving forward.

Councilman Zipprich said he had similar concerns and suggested they "pause on the resolution."

Mayor Menna asked for the Attorney to give an opinion.

Attorney Cannon said it was a professional service and was not a bid. He said there was complete discretion on the part of the governing body so it was not a legal issue.

Councilman Yngstrom said there had been an RFP process and the company had not follow the process.

Councilman Zipprich noted the letter stated that they had expected to be contact and could provide a cost savings.

Administrator Shehady questioned why Councilmembers Ballard and Zipprich had not reached out to him and were relying on the letter from the company that did not submit. He asked if they had reached out to the other municipalities in the cooperative.

They said they had not.

A discussion followed on the Administrator's response and the hostility between the Administrator and the two Council members.

Administrator Shehady said they were basing their assertions on a disgruntled bidder that had not followed the instructions. He said numerous consultants had met on behalf of Sustainable Jersey's request with a large contingent of municipalities, not just Red Bank. He said, after Red Bank had been identified as the lead agency, they had been invited to speak to all of the municipalities regarding what they could offer. He said they had all been advised that an RFQ would be issued and to be on the lookout on the Borough website and in the newspaper. He said they had drafted the RFQ and all of the municipalities in the cooperative had a chance to review. He said they had unanimously agreed to issue the RFQ and the Mayor and Council had authorized the issuance. He reviewed where it had been published including the Borough website. He said over a dozen companies from around the country solicited the RFQ. He said this one company had not. He said only one company had responded and their proposal had been presented to the coalition of municipalities. He said they had reviewed the proposal and discussed it at length. He said they had all been fine with the choice. He said, once the results had been made public, the one company sent a letter undercutting the proposal that had been published. He said he had reached out to the other municipalities to see that that changed their mind and

said they had all said they wanted to proceed. He said they felt the legal process had been followed and did not think it would be fair to give someone else a chance after the numbers had been made public.

Councilman Ballard continued to complain about Administrator Shehady's responsiveness.

Councilman Yngstrom asked if he was speaking in regard to the resolution.

Councilman Ballard said he was responding to comments made by the Administrator and continued to state that he felt the proposal should be discussed due to the savings.

Administrator Shehady clarified that the Borough would not be paying the consulting fee. He said, if they went to an energy auction and if an energy supplier was selected, the energy supplier would be paying the commission.

Councilman Zipprich said he had flagged the resolution because, in reading his Borough correspondence, it had shouted at him. He said he was concerned that they get the best bang for the buck. He said the letter had been received by all Council members and said only he and Councilman Ballard had been concerned. He said he felt it was an important discussion to have.

Administrator Shehady said there had been other concerned Councilmembers who had called him to enquire. He said he welcomed questions and a discussion but said did not appreciate that, when a recommendation had been made, people would rely on only one set of facts rather than attempting to get all of the information.

Councilwoman Triggiano said she wanted to note that this was a really positive step and the whole conversation had negative energy. She said she wanted to focus on how great it was to pass a resolution to get to clean, renewable energy by 2030 and the fact that the Borough was spearheading this for seven other municipalities. She asked that they vote on the matter.

Councilman Zipprich agreed that it was positive but said, since they were taking the lead, he wanted to make sure they had an open discussion and full transparency.

Councilwoman Triggiano said she had spearheaded the issue and had done due diligence. She suggested if he had concerns, he could call her.

Councilman Ballard asked if Administrator Shehady had stated that only one company had responded.

Mayor Menna said that was correct.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Yngstrom and Horgan.

ABSTAIN: Ballard and Zipprich

There being four ayes and two abstentions, the motion was declared approved.

21-120: Mayor Menna read, "Resolution Directing the Borough Business Administrator to Engage the Appropriate Professional Services and Prepare a Proposal for the Necessary Financing and Otherwise Marshal the Municipal Resources to Implement the Recommendation of the Red Bank Redevelopment Agency that the Red Bank Senior Center should be Repaired and Further Improved at its Current Location at 80 Shrewsbury Avenue."

Mayor Menna said, since many people had not seen the resolution, he would read it in full.

Borough Clerk Borghi confirmed that, while he was reading the resolution, she had posted it to the Borough's website along with Resolution 21-121.

Councilwoman Horgan made the motion to approve the resolution, Councilman Yassin seconded.

Councilman Ballard said they were in a transition period with the current Administrator slated to leave the following week. He asked if the intention was to have the existing Administrator follow through or if it would be handled by the Interim Administrator.

Mayor Menna said it would take effect upon adoption and that, if there was a change in Administrator, it would be up to that person to continue the work.

Councilman Ballard asked if it would be done behind the scenes and not transparent.

Mayor Menna said it would be put together and then introduced to the Council. He said it was regarding financing and would not be done in a week.

Councilman Ballard said that was his concern that the Borough was in a transition period and he didn't think it was fair to put it on the Interim Administrator who was also serving as Police Chief.

Councilman Yngstrom asked Councilman Ballard if he would rather wait 60 days to move forward.

Councilman Yassin said he was confused. He said Councilman Ballard had previously stated that he wanted to fix the facility as fast as possible but now did not want to move forward.

He said he was not trying to stall but was asking serious questions. He said he felt the public should be more engaged in the process.

Councilman Yngstrom pointed out that the bonding would have to be done by ordinance which would include a public hearing.

Administrator Shehady said there seemed to be a lot of hysteria about the resolution. He said the purpose of the resolution was to express the Council's desire to move forward on the recommendation and to direct the Administrator and staff at Borough Hall to start putting together an action plan so that the public portion of the process could proceed. He reviewed the steps in the process.

Councilman Zipprich asked for a timeline.

Administrator Shehady reviewed a detailed timeline beginning the next day assuming the resolution passed. He estimated an award could be made in the fall.

Attorney Cannon agreed and said it was his interpretation of the resolution that it would allow them to start the process rather than waiting until the end of May for a formal resolution from the Redevelopment Agency.

Councilman Zipprich asked Attorney Cannon to identify which Councilmember had proffered the resolution.

Attorney Cannon said it was Councilwoman Triggiano and Councilman Yassin.

Councilwoman Triggiano said they had been waiting for the Redevelopment Agency to complete their process and, once the recommendation of the subcommittee had been presented and the decision had been made, she wanted to move forward as fast as possible.

Councilman Zipprich asked for confirmation that the members of the subcommittee were Wilson Beebe, Jan Wouters and Alpha Reynolds-Lewis.

Councilwoman Triggiano confirmed that was correct.

Councilman Zipprich asked what the timeline was from the Redevelopment Agency's perspective.

Councilwoman Horgan said Administrator Shehady had just answered the timeline question.

Councilman Zipprich said he wanted the timeline from the Redevelopment Agency's perspective.

Councilman Yassin said their role was done.

Councilwoman Horgan concurred that the Agency had made their recommendation.

Councilman Zipprich asked if their professionals had a projected timeline.

Attorney Cannon said he had worked with the Agency's Attorney to develop the resolution that was before the Council and said the Agency would be considering a resolution to memorialize their recommendation on May 25. He said that would be the next action of the agency which would be to forward a resolution after May 25

Councilman Zipprich reviewed the timeline that had been provided by the Administrator. He asked how many months that process would take.

Attorney Cannon said that was the impetus for Councilwoman Triggiano reaching out to him to let him know the Agency had made a decision. He said he had noted that they would not formally adopt the resolution for a month and asked what the Council could do in the meantime to move the process forward. He said he had reached out to the Agency Attorney and the current resolution was the result.

Councilman Zipprich again asked how long the process and ultimate reconstruction of the building would take.

Administrator Shehady said the architects had estimate that the proposed plan would take approximately five months of construction. He noted things like weather and availability of supplies could affect the timeline.

A discussion on the timeline continued.

Councilman Zipprich accused other Councilmembers of originally not being in favor of making repairs to the Senior Center. The remaining Councilmembers strongly denied that accusation and took issue with his statement.

Councilman Yngstrom said they had been in favor of waiting for the Redevelopment Agency's recommendation before making a decision. He said they had never said that they did not want to restore the Senior Center.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Councilman Yngstrom said he wanted to thank the public for all of their comments and input. He said they had taken their comments to heart, let the process play out and had made a decision.

Councilman Zipprich said it had been a spirited discussion with accusations slung by members of the Governing Body. He said the most important thing they could do was have as much discussion as possible and represent their constituents and advocate for them as strongly as possible.

21-121: Mayor Menna read, “Resolution Expressing the Borough of Red Bank’s Concerns about the Extensive Fish Kill of Menhaden in the Navesink River and Requesting Information and Funding and Action from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.”

Mayor Menna noted that he and Councilmembers had all received phone calls on this issue. He said the Borough was somewhat constrained as recommendations and enforcement had to come from the Department of Environmental Protection. He said the resolution would urge the DEP to look at the issue and give it prioritized attention.

Councilwoman Triggiano made the motion to approve the resolution, Councilwoman Horgan seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Triggiano reported that the Environmental Commission would be holding a Green Fair on the following Saturday in Marine. She said she also wanted to thank the public for their input. She said they all wanted the Seniors to get back to their facility and said she was happy that they had gone through the proper process. She thanked the Redevelopment Agency for their efforts. She said, regarding the fish kill resolution, she had helped with getting in the agenda and hoped that other municipalities would take it as sample resolution and adopt it for their towns.

Councilman Zipprich said he wanted to thank the subcommittee of the Redevelopment Agency for their efforts. He said the Historic Preservation Committee had brought to his attention that the historic pillars and planters around town were decaying and not being maintained. He said they cautioned that the Borough was losing more of its historic fabric by allowing the deterioration. He urged the Borough to do the proper maintenance on the historic markers. He said, in regard to the Education/Technology Committee, as the Borough transitioned in the coming weeks without an IT Director which would put our systems at risk, he was recommending that consultants have temporary control over all credentialing until they had a new employee on board. He said he felt the consultants should have all administrative capabilities. He said he was strong recommending that a disaster recovery plan be implemented or constructed with the consultants prior to the Business Administrator’s departure. He said it was important for the Council to know that the Administrator had full transitioned all information to the consultants prior to his separation from the Borough.

Councilman Yngstrom said the Red Bank Water Utility would be going back to Red Bank water in the coming weeks and said anyone who experience any taste or discoloration issues should let the water run until clear or let the Department of Public Works know about the issue. He also reported that crosswalks were being painted throughout town and the rainbow crosswalk would be painted the following week. He said they would start setting up some of the streeteries the following day and would be closing down Broad Street for the Broadwalk on Friday.

Councilman Ballard said he was happy that they had gotten to the point where they could agree to fix the Senior Center where is was but said he was disappointed with the circuitous route that had been taken to get there. He criticized spending money on a concept plan for a combined community center/senior center on property that the Borough did not own.

Councilwoman Horgan reported that the Parks & Recreation Committee had met the previous night and said there were a lot of activities that they were planning including a Pride event and a Juneteenth event. She discussed the meaning behind Juneteenth. She also reported that the library had opened to the public on the previous Monday by appointment. She said it was also one of 300 libraries selected to participate in Libraries Transforming Communities that focuses on small or rural libraries. She said the \$3,000 grant would help the library work with the community to develop senior services. She reported on other upcoming Library programs. She also commended the efforts of the Redevelopment Agency Commissioners. She pointed out that they were volunteers who were doing it on their time, were serious about their task and had a level of professionalism that the Borough was lucky to have.

Councilman Yassin said he was glad to see that they were moving forward with the Senior Center. He said he had previously stated that, in a perfect world, he would have wanted the Senior Center to stay in the existing location and be repaired and improved. He said, thankfully, the resolution they adopted did all of that. He said it was an easy vote for him and he was glad they were moving forward. He said he was glad they did not rush and that they let the resident board of the Redevelopment Agency come up with options adding that the one they recommended had been the one that he had favored from the beginning. He said he hoped they could move forward as quickly as possible because they all agreed that they wanted to get the senior back in the building as soon as possible. He also reported that the

Broadwalk would be opening the following weekend. He said they would continue to look for ways to improve. He said Red Bank had pioneered the concept the previous year and said it had been very successful. He said he wanted to make his final comment as Council President. He said he realized the title did not carry much weight but said he wanted to speak in that capacity regarding the conduct of the entire Mayor and Council. He acknowledged that there were certain members of Council who were divided on the upcoming election. He said certain members of the public were also divided on the matter. He said, at the end of the day, what was most important was that they did what was best for the town. He said they should not let the vitriol and disagreement come to a Council meeting. He said it was unprofessional and said all members of the Council had had one of these moments. He would be the first to apologize. He said the public had repeatedly express that they do not like to see these arguments and personal attacks. He said the behavior was unprofessional an inappropriate. He said they were on Council to legislate and should make sure that they have the best interest of the town at heart. He said they should work together to move the town forward.

Councilman Zipprich said he appreciated Councilman Yassin's comments and agreed with the majority of it. He criticized what he called personal attacks that had been made in writing to the press naming himself and Councilman Ballard.

Councilman Yassin pointed out that he had stated that all seven members of the Governing Body had at one point or another acted unprofessionally. He specifically acknowledged that he had made inappropriate comments and said he would like to see the whole Council move forward and work together.

DISCUSSION & ACTION

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Governmental Issues, 5 Minute Limit)

Phil Blackwood—34 Chestnut Street—said he wanted to encourage Councilmembers Zipprich and Ballard to do their homework and work within the processes that were adopted. He said, if there were too busy to do the job well, they should find something else to do. He said it was deeply embarrassing to watch their antics in the meetings. He thanked Mr. Shehady for setting the record straight and showing a mastery of the mechanics of administration. He thanked Mr. Shehady for all that he had done and said he was sorry that he was leaving. He said he appreciated his “no nonsense” approach. He thanked Councilwoman Triggiano for expediting the resolution on the Senior Center and saving a whole month in the process. He also thanked the Council for passing the resolution on energy aggregation and said the importance of addressing climate change could not be under estimated.

Brian Donohue—118 Bank Street—applauded the Council for taking action on the Senior Center. He said he also wanted to comment on the fish kill situation. He said the odor was horrible. He said the situation was not new and said the river was going downhill. He criticized the Council for passing a resolution asking the State to do something and also the Mayor's comment that the Borough was constrained from taking action. He said they were not and said it had to be tackled on a local level. He said there were broken sewer lines, over development and run off issues. He also criticized over payment. He again stressed things can be done at the local level.

Councilman Yngstrom said the resolution was specifically regarding the bunker kill was asking the State to investigate because as climate change gets worse, the kills would get worse. He said the town had been taking action regarding impervious surfaces and building rain gardens. He said he served on the Navesink River Municipalities Commission and said those volunteers worked very hard including working with the DEP to find the sources of pollution in the river. He said the town had passed a lot of ordinances on the issue including requiring developers to include more green space. He said a lot of the actions did not get the level of publicizing that they should.

Mr. Donohue said that was great to hear and said he felt it was a chance for people to wake up to the issues.

Councilman Yngstrom gave information on the meeting dates for the Navesink River Municipalities Commission and said the meetings were open to the public.

Councilwoman Triggiano said the DEP had issue an FAQ the previous day addressing the issue. She said she had been speaking residents on the matter and had also spoken with a representative of Clean Ocean Action (COA). She felt that this needed urgent action. She said, in her conversation with COA, she was told that they needed to differentiate between the clean-up effort for the river which included finding sewage and pollution sources and what was happening now. She said COA told her that this was a naturally occurring bacteria and that it was a separate issue from river pollution. She said they did need the DEP to be more clear and specific and to investigate to give clear answers so everyone wasn't

speculating on the cause. She said the Borough would need funding if the fish kills continued and if they became larger.

Stephen Hecht—135 Branch Avenue—said several Council members have put emphasis on the importance of the process. He reviewed what he understood the process to have been which was the Redevelopment Agency had appointed a subcommittee to review the Senior Center issue. He said that subcommittee then recommended option #2. He said he understood that the subcommittee was responsible for formulating the resolution that had been voted on at this meeting and that the Redevelopment Agency as a whole had not yet voted on the matter. He said, if his understanding was correct, the subcommittee had taken on the responsibility of the entire Agency.

Mayor Menna clarified that it was usual for Boards to have subcommittees to review various options and report back to the full board. He said, in this case, the subcommittee of the Redevelopment Agency reviewed, discussed all of the options and then brought it back to the Agency. He said the Redevelopment Agency as a body of the whole, reviewed the recommendation, discussed it at the previous night's meeting and agreed to endorse the recommendation as their own. He summarized that it was the recommendation of the group after they had reviewed all of the options.

Mr. Hecht thanked the Mayor for the clarification and said he was glad that it had unfolded that way. He also expressed concern that there had been two resolutions considered at this meeting that had not appeared on the public agenda. He asked that, going forward, the Council find a way to make sure that resolutions to be voted on appear on the public agenda. He also commended Council President Yassin for his integrity and maturity for owning some things that he may have said or done in the past.

Clerk Borghi said they did not usually get resolutions that late and said she believed this was a matter of extenuating circumstances. She said she would make a better effort to ensure any last minute resolutions were posted to the website.

Cindy Burnham—71 Wallace Street—said she wanted to speak on the Senior Center and said it was great to have a decision. She said the decision was to go with renovation and redesign which was option #2. She said the "fix it now" crew wanted option #1 which was to fix it as it was which was the least expensive. She said she had been the Senior Citizen liaison at one time and said the facility had worked perfectly for the seniors. She disagreed with a previous speaker that had said the staff wanted the changes. She continued to criticize the design in option #2 including moving parking toward the river. She criticized the process and she criticized the Redevelopment Agency. She continued to criticize the design.

Councilwoman Triggiano responded to Ms. Burnham's comments and noted that option #2 did not call for moving the parking toward the river as she had stated.

Councilwoman Horgan agreed that that was an important clarification and added that the staff had made suggestions for better utilization of the space.

Councilman Yassin said he understood that Ms. Burnham stated she had been speaking for the "fix it now" group but said some members of that group had been open to the idea of improvements. He said he thought they had come up with the best option.

Ben Forest—16 Locust Avenue—thanked the Council for voting in favor of the resolution regarding the Senior Center. He reviewed the process that had been articulated earlier by the Administrator that would offer opportunities for input. He said he understood that the parking would remain the same and that the changes would be internal. He said he also understood that the changes had included recommendations from the Senior Center staff. He again said he was grateful for the Council members voting in favor of the resolution. He called for depoliticizing the issue because the Senior Citizen program was vital. He also asked for an update on the non-partisan process.

Mayor Menna said Attorney Cannon would be providing a memo to the Council on the matter and, once received, the topic would be placed on an agenda.

Attorney Cannon said he would have that to the Council in advance of their next workshop meeting.

Boris Kofman—28 Riverside Avenue—said he was happy they were moving forward with the energy aggregation program and said he hoped Red Bank would reap the benefits. He also said he appreciated the resolution regarding the fish kill and said he was happy they were urging the DEP to provide more information. He thanked Councilmembers Triggiano and Yngstrom for the background information.

William Poku—90 Bank Street—said he felt a proclamation should be done for Suzanne Viscomi for the work she had done to keep the public apprised. He also said there were many issues in the town and said a leader was needed to bring it together. He reviewed issues that had come up before various boards. He said he had discussed the idea of looking into a public forum outside of municipal meetings with a local minister. He also said he would like Attorney Cannon to ensure that there was a backup with the IT infrastructure and to make sure there were no deletions.

Mayor Menna confirmed that he had received a phone call from the local minister.

Councilman Ballard said he would like to respond to Mr. Blackwood. He said he agreed with him that it was a waste of time and money to consider a community center on property that the Borough did not own and where a building could not be built because of the Green Acres status.

Phil Blackwood—34 Chestnut Street—said he did not agree with that and did not appreciate the comment.

No one else appearing, Councilman Yassin made a motion to close the Public Comment period, Councilwoman Triggiano seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None.

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Councilman Yassin said he wanted to bring up a couple of items that had been carried. First, he asked about the investigation being done by Special Counsel Cooke.

Mayor Menna said he would follow up and press him for a report.

Councilman Yassin also asked about a suggestion that had been made to install a plaque to honor Freddie Boynton. He said he understood that the suggestion had been forwarded to the Parks & Recreation Committee but said nothing had been done. He suggested the Council move forward on the matter.

Mayor Menna confirmed that it had been referred to the Parks & Recreation Committee as a courtesy because the requested location was on Parks & Recreation property. He said, in the past, recommendations for memorials had come from Parks & Recreation. He said, this came from a private source, so they thought the proper thing to do was to seek their input. He said, if there was no input from Parks & Recreation Committee, the Council should confirm with the Parks & Recreation Director and the DPW Director and then consider if the request should be granted. He also said, since it was a private request, they would have to undertake a capital subscription from those who were interested.

Councilman Yassin asked if everyone could agree now to move forward with it.

Councilwoman Horgan said the Parks & Recreation Committee had spoken about it but had not come to a final decision. She said there was interest in moving it forward. She said she would follow up with the new Director.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

21-122 The Borough Attorney read a resolution to adjourn to executive session to discuss Pending Litigation and Contract Negotiation. No action to be taken.

Councilwoman Triggiano offered a motion to adjourn to Executive Session, seconded by Councilman Yassin.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

RESUME REGULAR BUSINESS

Councilwoman Triggiano made a motion to resume Regular Business, seconded by Councilman Yassin.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the resolution was declared approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Triggiano a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Yassin.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Yassin, Triggiano, Ballard, Yngstrom, Zipprich and Horgan.

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Borghi