

**MINUTES
REORGANIZATION MEETING
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL – BOROUGH OF RED BANK
JANUARY 1, 2014
3:00 P.M.**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Menna and Council Members Murphy, Burnham, Horgan, Lewis, Zipprich and DuPont.

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Administrator Sickels, Borough Clerk Borghi, Attorney O’Hern and Engineer Ballard.

ABSENT: Interim Chief Financial Officer Lapp

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 4, 2013.

SWEARING IN OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Superior Court Judge John D’Amico issued the Oath of Office to Councilwoman Horgan.

State Senator Jennifer Beck issued the Oath of Office to Councilwoman Burnham.

SWEARING IN OF FIRE OFFICIALS:

Mayor Menna introduced the incoming Fire Chiefs and said Red Bank had one of the best all volunteer Fire Departments in the entire State of New Jersey. He said all three gentlemen were transgenerational members of the Fire Department which, he explained, meant their fathers or grandfathers had been part of the Department for over 100 years.

Mayor Menna sworn in the Fire Officials for 2014

Chief: Thomas Welsh

First Deputy Chief: Joseph Lauterwasser

Second Deputy Chief: Chris Soden

Councilman Murphy said the Borough was fortunate to have such great leaders and said that was the very fabric that made up the town. He noted that all three were second and third generation members of the department. He said the Fire Committee was very proud of them.

Mayor Menna welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced dignitaries in attendance.

Mayor Menna offered the newly installed Council members a chance to comment.

Councilwoman Burnham thanked everyone for attending. She said she wanted to thank her friends and family and everyone who had supported her before, during and after the election. She said she was proud and humbled to be elected by the people of Red Bank to serve on the Council. She said they had faith in her and she was going to try to do the job that they had put her there to do. She said she was thrilled and hoped they could all work together to tackle some issues that were plaguing the people. She said the people were looking for a change and she was hoping to give that change.

Councilwoman Horgan noted that she was having issues with her voice but wanted to thank everyone for coming out. She thanked everyone for their support and friendship during the campaign. She noted that it had been a hard fought campaign but said it was over now and it was time to govern. She said she wanted to echo Councilwoman Burnham’s comments calling for everyone to work together and to cooperate and collaborate to move Red Bank forward. She welcomed Councilwoman Burnham to the Council and said she looked forward to working with her. She said there was a lot of work to do in 2014 and agreed there were issues to tackle. She said they should roll up their sleeves and get working.

Mayor Menna asked if the other members of Council had comments.

Councilman Murphy thanked the Mayor and wished everyone a happy new year. He congratulated Councilwomen Burnham and Horgan and said he knew they would do a good job. He thanked Police Chief McConnell and Captain McDonough for their efforts in the Police Department. He said they had done a stellar job and the Council was proud of both of them. He thanked the three incoming Fire Chiefs and noted the multiple generations of the department that were in the room. He commended the volunteers and their dedication. He thanked them for their service and thanked their families for their support. He also said the Council understood and appreciated all of their hard work.

Councilman DuPont said he personally wanted to thank the Fire Department and noted that he had recently had a call at his home. He reviewed the incident and thanked them for their efforts as a department and as individual volunteers. He said he agreed with Councilman Murphy that they were the fabric of the community. He noted that he had come from a military family and people had often thanked his father for this service. He said he felt the same should be done for the police and fire department members. He said he wanted to wish everyone a happy 2014 and said he was glad all of the Freeholder and Senate leaders had been able to attend. He noted that Red Bank had been the first in the State to have an NJ 350th pop up store which went to show how efficient Red Bank was. He commended the Board of Chosen Freeholders and its Grow Monmouth program. He said they may have different philosophies, but they were in it together and he spoke of the need for cooperation. He welcomed Councilwoman Burnham to the Council and said he looked forward to working with her. He congratulated Councilwoman Horgan on her reelection. He said if they keep in mind the best interest of Red Bank, they would all be fine. He noted that the Council would be appointing new CFO Eugenia Poulos at this meeting and said she was in attendance. He welcomed her and reviewed her experience.

Councilman Zipprich wished everyone a happy new year and wished New Jersey a happy 350th anniversary. He also noted that Red Bank was the first to host a pop up store as part of that celebration. He congratulated the new Fire Chiefs and noted they had also recently been in his neighborhood. He commended their response. He said the Borough was lucky to have them. He also offered his congratulations to the newly sworn in Councilwomen and said he looked forward to working together. He said he would also like to welcome all of the dignitaries and thanked them for coming out to Red Bank's celebration. He thanked Senator Jennifer Beck and former Freeholder John D'Amico for swearing in the Councilwomen. He said he was anxious to get back to work to keep Red Bank moving forward and said he agreed with Councilwoman Horgan that there was a lot of work to be done and that he looked forward to working in a bipartisan fashion. He offered his kudos to RiverCenter and its director James Scavone.

Councilwoman Lewis also wished everyone a happy new year and congratulated the Councilwomen. She said she looked forward to working with them on the challenges they faced for 2014. She thanked everyone for attending. She said the Parks and Recreation Department continued to grow and expand programs as well as relationships in the community. She said she was looking forward to more growth in the department. She said the Vision Committee had had an outstanding year and continues to engage the businesses and community by celebrating the arts. In closing, she said, "Let's go to work."

Mayor Menna noted other dignitaries that had joined the meeting. He also spoke extensively about former Councilwoman Sharon Lee whom he said had been a friend since grammar school. He reviewed their history and her contributions to the community. He said he expected her to continue her efforts as a member of several committees. He thanked her for her years of service and said he was grateful to have her as a friend.

RESOLUTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS FOR 2014

14-01 Mayor Menna read "A RESOLUTION ELECTING COUNCIL PRESIDENT FOR 2014."

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

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Murphy, Burnham, Horgan, Lewis, Zipprich, DuPont

NAYS: None

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

14-02 Mayor Menna read "A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A FAIR AND OPEN CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES."

Councilman DuPont offered a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilman Murphy.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Murphy, Burnham, Horgan, Lewis, Zipprich, DuPont

NAYS: None

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

14-03 Mayor Menna read “A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING APPOINTMENTS FOR 2014.”

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

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Murphy, Burnham, Horgan, Lewis, Zipprich, DuPont

NAYS: None

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

14-04 Mayor Menna read “A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING TIME AND PLACE OF BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR 2014.”

Councilman Murphy offered a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilwoman Horgan.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Murphy, Burnham, Horgan, Lewis, Zipprich, DuPont

NAYS: None

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

14-05 Mayor Menna read “A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING NEWSPAPERS TO RECEIVE NOTICE OF MEETINGS.”

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

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Murphy, Burnham, Horgan, Lewis, Zipprich, DuPont

NAYS: None

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

14-06 Mayor Menna read “A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 2013 TEMPORARY BUDGET.”

Councilman DuPont offered a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilman Murphy.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Murphy, Burnham, Horgan, Lewis, Zipprich, DuPont

NAYS: None

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

REMARKS OF MAYOR MENNA

Mayor Menna said he wanted to express his best wishes and a happy new year to all. He said he appreciated all who served on the Council for giving their time and effort. He noted how much time their service entailed.

He thanked Council President Murphy serving in his absence and also for his stewardship of both the Police and Fire departments and for his personal friendship.

He noted that he and Councilwoman Burnham went way back and noted her extraordinary dedication to a number of issues. He said he looked forward to working with her to carve out constructive solutions and ideas.

He said Councilwoman Horgan had quietly, effectively and with much grace been the voice of conscience for the residents through her service on the Rent Leveling Board. He thanked her for all she had done and would continue to do.

He said Councilman DuPont, as the Chair of the Finance Committee, had had to balance the expectations of people with the reasonable ability of government to meet those expectations. He said it took an individual with keep insight to balance those things. He thanked him for his intelligence and friendship throughout the years.

He said Councilman Zipprich had been extraordinarily dedicated to the Public Works Department as Chair of that committee. He said he was faced with the challenge of dealing with an aging infrastructure and the large costs associated with that. He said he had a great sense of the need of the residents which balancing budget constraints. He noted that Councilman Zipprich also served on the Shade Tree Committee and Historic Preservation Committee.

He said Councilwoman Lewis was a fairly new member of the Council. He said since she began her stewardship over Parks and Recreation, she had been able to give that department's issues the passion and driving force that it had needed for a long time. He said she had been able to work with the Borough's partners at both the County level as well as the State to renovate Count Basie Field. He said it now served as a model for recreational sports programs in the entire County. He added that it could not have been done without her personal attention.

He thanked the Borough employees saying that they were an elemental part of the municipality. He said he offered a great deal of thanks through the Administrator because it would be difficult to mention every employee. He noted that he had been a member of Council for 26 years and said the Borough was actually working with less workforce members than they had 26 years ago due to substantial cut backs. He said, although everyone likes to pick on public employees, they were working more for less.

He spoke of the Borough efforts to encourage shared service agreements with adjacent municipalities. He said it was very difficult for local governments to provide the required and expected services of a very diverse municipality especially with the two percent cap. He said the same held true for the Borough's Police Department. He said they had fewer officers than 26 years ago but were faced with a more diverse community with diverse cultures and issues. He said there were multi-lingual officers on staff that tried to address the needs of the residents. He said they weren't asking for more money but were just asking for support. He said the Borough had gone through a rough time the previous year when they had lost an extraordinarily talented and wonderful man that had been a friend. He noted that the Borough had come up with a replacement that was in the mold of Chief McCarthy. He thanked Chief McConnell for his service and thanked him for his partnership.

He also commended the Fire Department and the First Aid Squad and noted that they had been faced with challenges. He told the Freeholders present that every other municipality in Monmouth County would be facing the same issues as Red Bank in trying to provide First Aid services. He said everyone expects the service but they were faced with a population that wouldn't or couldn't volunteer because of State requirements. He said Red Bank had been unwilling to let the system fall apart so they had entered into an agreement with MONOC to provide services to the residents. He said the program was in the final report stage and he thought it would serve as a model to other municipalities that were proud of their volunteers but realized they couldn't provide for 700 first aid calls per year. He also said he thought the program was here to stay.

He said he had noted earlier that Councilman DuPont had been very effective at dealing with the two percent cap. He noted that they were faced with aging infrastructure which did not include inexpensive items. He said resident should know that, even with those issues, they had held the line on capital projects and, going into 2014, the Borough's interest on capital debt was going to be less than it had been in 2013 which, in turn, was less than 2011. He said the Council would continue to reduce debt while still incorporating road projects.

He thanked Freeholder Director Arnone and the County Engineer's Office for their partnership with the Borough on the bridge project which he said would be a model project for the rest of the area. He noted that the project would provide open space and access to the river.

He thanked Senator Beck for her assistance with the Department of Transportation and the Route 35 project. He thanked the State for traffic calming enhancements that he said he expected soon. He spoke of the importance of traffic calming and said the Borough welcomed the traffic but noted that the protection of pedestrians was very important. He said the traffic accident rate had not been extraordinarily bad but said they had to work hard to get motorists to slow down in congested areas.

He said the County had been extremely helpful on the Front Street corridor which helped reduce traffic incidents in the area of the hospital. He noted that, by the County's account, it was one of the highest numbers in terms of pedestrian traffic crossings in the County and said it had been reduced by 85 percent in just one year because of those enhancements. He said it just showed that they can work together cost effectively to make things work.

He said he wanted to thank the Borough's commercial partners and said Red Bank was the hub of Monmouth County. He said he and Freehold DiMaso had been happy to be part of the Pop Up Store opening the previous day. He noted that people talk of development and commerce as if it was a bad thing, but he said development and commerce were good. He said it created job opportunities and kept the economy going. He said the Borough should be business friendly and had an obligation to streamline the process. He noted that the average county commercial vacancy rate was 15 percent but Red Bank's was only five percent. He said he thought they were on the right road and he would like to see the rate at zero.

He thanked RiverCenter, Director Scavone and his staff and volunteers for helping to keep Red Bank competitive. He said despite comments in local blogs that too much commerce was coming into Red Bank, he said he disagreed with that. He said he felt the market should control it. He said he welcomed investment in the town and said it would help put people to work.

He said they would continue to push legislator to assist with one of the biggest problems facing the Borough which was the increasing number of not for profits that were taking up more and more space. He said the time had come for PILOTS to be undertaken. He said the responsible not for profits were already doing it. He said Red Bank could not continue to be the magnet for not for profits. He said Red Bank's rate of tax exempt properties hovered at about 15 percent while the County average was less than four percent.

Looking toward 2014, he continued, he said there would be a cooperative effort with the Count Basie Theater regarding the launch of a Mayor's Arts Commission to enhance public art and cultural tourism in Red Bank. He said he would also be starting a non-political Mayor's Ball. He said it would be a fund raiser for three programs which were Parks and Recreation, the Fire Department and the Library. He said he felt they could help three worthwhile groups in Red Bank to enhance their outreach to our local people.

He called for everyone to have a warm working relationship and, whether they agreed to disagree or agreed to agree, he called for them to do it in the spirit of civility and camaraderie.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Zipprich offered a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Murphy.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Murphy, Burnham, Horgan, Lewis, Zipprich, DuPont

NAYS: None

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

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Borghi