

**MINUTES
REORGANIZATION MEETING
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL – BOROUGH OF RED BANK
JANUARY 1, 2012
3:00 P.M.**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

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

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Administrator Sickels, Borough Clerk Borghi, Chief Financial Officer Lapp, Attorney O'Hern and Engineer Ballard.

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 7, 2011.

INVOCATION – Fire Department Chaplin Menna

SWEARING IN OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Congressman Frank Pallone issued the Oath of Office to Councilwoman Lewis.

Congressman Frank Pallone issued the Oath of Office to Councilman Zipprich.

SWEARING IN OF FIRE OFFICIALS:

Mayor Menna sworn in the Fire Officials for 2012

Chief: Joshua Sanders

First Deputy Chief: Thomas Doremus

Second Deputy Chief: Thomas Welsh

Mayor Menna welcomed everyone to the meeting. He said he wanted to particularly welcome back, possibly for the last time at a formal Council meeting while he was the Borough's Congressman, Frank Pallone. He noted Red Bank had been taken out of Congressman Pallone's district, which was the bad news, but, he added, the good news was he was still around and would remain the Borough's Congressman until the next election. He said he knew the Congressman's heart would remain in Red Bank and said told him he would always be welcome and always be Red Bank's Congressman. He said he also wanted to welcome back a neighbor and friend who's very existence has always been close to Red Bank which was Freeholder Amy Mallet. He said she was beautiful and had always been solicitous to Red Bank whenever they needed something. He thanked her for her service and said she was always welcomed back to Red Bank. He also noted former Red Bank Councilman Ivan Polonsky was in attendance and said they were always happy to see him.

He invited the returning Council members Zipprich and Lewis to offer their remarks.

Councilwoman Lewis thanked the voters of Red Bank for believing that she and Councilman Zipprich were worthy of reelection. She said she was humbled and honored for their trust and belief. She also thanked her colleagues for their support and the Borough staff and professionals that help make it work. Last but not least, she continued, she wanted to thank her friends and family for their tremendous support. She reviewed highlights of 2011 that she was proud of including Recreation programs and accomplishments made by some of the Department's teams. She noted her committee would continue to seek funding to improve the Borough's parks at no cost to the taxpayers. She noted her committee worked with Councilman Zipprich and the Public Works Committee to maintain the parks and said they looked great and were something to be proud of.

She noted the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee was diverse and inclusive. She said the volunteers worked tirelessly for the recreation of Red Bank children and that they were working on policies and procedures to standardize practices and guarantee volunteer coaches have a meaningful experience that would impact the children and keep them coming back year after year.

She noted that the Finance Committee had balanced the budget despite cuts in State Aid and said the Borough was doing more with less while still maintaining services. She said they would continue to strive to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

She said she hoped the draft to the Five Year Plan would be enhanced and endorsed. She said she hoped it would be used as a baseline to develop a strategic plan and objectives to move the Borough forward. She said the Vision Committee had identified projects and was marching full steam ahead. She sent the end result of the collaborative effort between the business community, residents and Borough Hall would bring the community together and showcase the town.

She said she was very grateful to be elected by the citizens of Red Bank and said she was committed to serve to the best of her ability and said, at times, it required making hard decisions that weren't always popular but would benefit the greater community. She said she was proud to be a part of the diverse and historic Council and said they had made real progress for Red Bank. She said she truly believed in the strength of the entire community and looked forward to continuing her commitment to the community, its prosperity, the future and the citizens of the Borough.

Councilman Zipprich said he was once again humbled, honored and happy to be a representative of the people of Red Bank. He said he and Councilwoman Lewis continued their commitment to the entire Red Bank community and its prosperity. He said he wanted to thank everyone for validating their accomplishments from their first term. He said they were both grateful to be reelected by the people of Red Bank. He said he had a good feeling at the beginning of this new term and felt full of promise. He said he would like to highlight a few elements of their five year plan for Red Bank's future including a focus on green initiatives and sustainability, using technology to make doing business with Red Bank easier and to create new revenue sources to stabilize the tax rate. He said they would like to use visioning to make the community even more inclusive and called for a reevaluation of the Borough's Master Plan to take Red Bank into the 21st Century.

He said he was grateful and honored to be sitting among dedicated public servants and thanked them all for their dedication and service. He thanked his partner for his support. He reviewed some personal highlight of 2011 and thanked Councilwoman Lewis as his campaign partner. He spoke of the guidance and support offered by his parents. He thanked the representatives of Democracy for America and said they inspired him to run. He thanked the campaign workers who helped get the message out and the members of the Red Bank Democratic Club and the County Committee for their tireless efforts and dedication. He said he looked forward to working with everyone in the new year as they focused on their vision for Red Bank's future.

Councilman Murphy said he wanted to congratulate Councilman Zipprich and Councilwoman Lewis and commended their efforts over the previous year adding that they worked non stop. He said he looked forward to working with them over the next three years. He wished everyone a Happy New Year and thanked all of the volunteers.

Councilwoman Lee congratulated the returning Council members and welcomed them back.

Councilwoman Horgan said she wanted to wish everyone a Happy New Year and said she was delighted the Council was a "whole family again." She said they were looking forward to moving forward with their vision in the coming year and were all thrilled to be serving the residents of Red Bank.

Councilman DuPont said it was with great pleasure that he was able to say congratulations to his fellow Councilmembers that he served on the Finance Committee with. He said as a Committee, they had brought transparency and fiscal responsibility to the budget. He said they work together as a team and noted that, while they may not always agree, it was a healthy discussion.

He said it was amazing to see the firemen serving at the third, fourth and fifth generation and it reminded him of the adage, "tradition never graduates." He again said it was a pleasure to have his friends and colleagues Councilman Zipprich and Councilwoman Lewis back on the dais. He spoke of their commitment and offered his congratulations.

Mayor Menna said he agreed with Councilwoman Horgan's comment that it was good to have the family back together again. He said when they spend so much time together, they do become an extended family and, like all extended families, they have their joys, sorrows and moments of tribulation but they all come back together. He said that was the message of the day, to come back together and share in the wonderful adventure called public service. He said it was a reaffirmation of the residents of Red Bank that had restored them to their offices. He said it showed the voters had confidence in them and recognize their Herculean spirit.

RESOLUTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS FOR 2012

12-01 Mayor Menna read “A RESOLUTION ELECTING COUNCIL PRESIDENT FOR 2012.”

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

ROLL CALL:

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

NAYS: None

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

12-02 Mayor Menna read “A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A NON-FAIR AND OPEN CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES.”

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

ROLL CALL:

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

NAYS: None

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

12-03 Mayor Menna read “A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING APPOINTMENTS FOR 2012.”

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

ROLL CALL:

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

NAYS: None

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

12-04 Mayor Menna read “A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING TIME AND PLACE OF BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR 2012.”

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

ROLL CALL:

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

NAYS: None

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

12-05 Mayor Menna read “A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING NEWSPAPERS TO RECEIVE NOTICE OF MEETINGS.”

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

ROLL CALL:

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

NAYS: None

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

12-06 Mayor Menna read “A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 2012 TEMPORARY BUDGET.”

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

ROLL CALL:

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

NAYS: None

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

REMARKS OF MAYOR MENNA

Mayor Menna welcomed everyone and wished them a Happy New Year. He thanked the elected officials for taking time out of their busy schedule to attend. He said he felt any Mayor's remarks had to start off with a special word of appreciation to the Borough employees. He said, while the employees that people always read about were important, all of the employees whose names may not be known were important as were the volunteers. He said he wanted it known that the Council appreciates all that they do and the Council hoped to be there when they needed assistance. He said, unlike some people in the state who like to pick on public employees, he knew they were there to serve the public for very, very little when you compare with other wages. He said Red Bank appreciated uniformed and non-uniformed and union and non-union employees.

He noted what a difference a year had made and referenced the Fire Fighters that had attended the meeting including Second Deputy Fire Chief Tom Welsh who also served as Director of the Office of Emergency Management. He pointed out the number of names that were read in connection with that Committee and said that, in larger municipalities, those individuals would be paid employees but in Red Bank they were all volunteers headed by Mr. Welsh. He noted it was those people who shepherded the Borough through three major incidents in the past year including a Century snow storm, a hurricane and an earthquake. He said the men and women in Emergency Management came through with flying colors, worked well together and stood by 24 hours a day to keep the lines of communication open.

He reviewed some of the highlights of the past year including the fact that Red Bank was the subject of international news when Jon and Doretha Bon Jovi graced the Borough with their opening of Soul Kitchen on Monmouth Street. He said it was an extreme act of commitment by the Bon Jovi's that placed the word “Red Bank” in cyberspace for about two weeks and resulted in multiple requests from new media across the world. He said there were many positive things about the past year but the Council had wanted to end the year by focusing on individuals who made Red Bank special. He said they decided to honor two people at the last Council meeting of the year. He said the men had been minding their own business when they saw a house on fire and, without care to their own personal safety, entered the building to rescue a neighbor who was severely injured. He said the point was that Red Bank was comprised of extraordinary people of all ages and all milieus. He said that Red Bank was diverse and that diversity was the real face of Red Bank. He said their actions sent the message that we care for our neighbors and he said he knew that message would continue for the coming year because the people on the Council were sincerely dedicated to that.

He offered a special word of thanks to the Administrator, the Clerk, the CFO, the Borough Engineer, the Borough Attorney, the Planning Board Attorney, the Director of Public Works, the Chief of Police, the Fire Chiefs, the retired employees that still help out and so many others who had made Red Bank so very special. He said the employees, the Department Heads and the administrative staff all work to make the Council members' lives a lot easier because if they weren't taking care of certain things, the Council would be getting the calls. He thanked all of the employees on behalf of the Council.

He thanked Council President Murphy for attending so many things, more often than not at the last minute when he had been stuck somewhere else and said he was very grateful.

He noted he had known Councilwoman Lee for many years and said her presence in Code Enforcement this year had made a difference. He said the numbers of violations were down but he said it was not because the inspectors weren't issuing summonses but because the housing stock had been brought into compliance by very aggressive follow up by members of the department. He also thanked her for her stewardship of the library board and everything else she had done.

He commended Councilwoman Horgan for her work on the Education/Technology Committee as well as her service as liaison to the public schools. He said her efforts were appreciated and he knew she would be working on revamping the Borough's technology outreach.

He told Councilwoman Lewis that the accomplishments made by her and Director Crystian in Recreation were a monumental feat. He said Red Bank was where the people were so the parks were well used and it was because they were welcoming, safe and home to programs that cater to the Borough's residents. He noted that that didn't happen overnight and took a lot of hard work. He thanked her for all she had done.

He said Councilman Zipprich probably had the most difficult department in Public Works. He said the men and women of the department were sometimes the least heralded individuals because people didn't always know when they were working at 2 in the morning to fix a sewer line. He commended Councilman Zipprich for his diligence and said the residents appreciated it.

In regard to Councilman DuPont, he said he was grateful for his constant communication and that was important because we were living in difficult financial times and if it wasn't for Councilman DuPont, CFO Lapp, Auditor Kaplan and everyone in the Finance Office working on the budget and making sure we didn't spend beyond our means, we would be in trouble. He said Councilman DuPont kept a close eye over the Finance Department and he was grateful for his stewardship and the time he put into it.

He noted that Councilwoman Lewis had reported on a Vision Committee and he said he hoped they would be announcing soon a very innovative program that would, in the coming year, put on the Borough streets an interaction of community events between our merchants and our artistic community to celebrate a very special event in connection with Red Bank. He said, also in 2012, the Borough would be naming a suitable public space for Ambassador Katherine Elkus White, the first female Mayor of Red Bank, the first female member of the highway authority and President Johnson's ambassador to Denmark.

He said the Borough would continue discussions regarding a regional court merger. He said he and Councilman DuPont had been engaged with some of the legislators in an important and serious issue that dealt with the interaction of municipalities with not-for-profit properties. Unfortunately, he said, Red Bank had the highest number of non-for-profits in Monmouth County with close to 25 percent of the taxable base being tax exempt. He said they had begged the legislative representatives to look at the issue. He said it was not a problem that was isolated to Red Bank but noted that some other municipalities that have high numbers of not-for-profits, like Asbury Park and Tinton Falls, also had special designations that entitled them to additional funding. He said the Borough could not continue to have one quarter of the tax base be tax exempt with that burden carried by the residents. He said the percentage of tax exempt properties in most of the surrounding towns was approximately five percent. He offered a suggested solution that would allow a regional center with fifteen to twenty percent of its property being tax exempt to pass legislation that would call for tax exempt entities who wish to acquire additional property to enter into a Payment in Lieu of Tax (PILOT) agreement based on the assessment for that particular property. He listed several not-for-profit organizations that participate in such agreements on an annual basis. He said the time had come for the legislators to bite the bullet and give relief to municipalities such as Red Bank who did not get a penny in State assistance even though they were a regional center leaving the residents to pay for the deficiency.

He said the Borough would be engaging in a comprehensive review of municipal facilities, especially with respect to the parking facilities. He said it was no secret that the Borough's parking facilities were antiquated and anachronistic dating back to the 1950s. He said they looked forward to putting out proposals for a, hopefully, joint public/private partnership that may be interested in developing the Borough's facilities in a comprehensive way that will gain better access for parking availability to residents and visitor while, at the same time, maximizing the financial use of the facilities for all of the residents. He said it was one of the Borough's greatest assets and it was not utilized to its fullest potential. He said, in his personal opinion, any such facility should not include residential or office use but should entertainment, recreational and retail uses.

He said he wanted to thank representatives and union workers for working with the Borough to stay within the two percent levy cap that was mandated by the State. He said they have been able to provide the same services they have in the past and, because of the cooperation of all of the employees, they have been able to do so without discharging employees and without imposing furloughs in the past year. He said it came about through tremendous cooperation and said the Borough had the best employees in the world.

He again stressed the Borough's comprehensive recreation program and said it was only possible with funding from the County as well as a cooperative agreement with Red Bank Catholic and through the State Green Acres program. He said they continue to look for riverfront access and were developing a waterfront pocket park on the west side of the Borough with funding from the County and thanked the Freeholders for that. He said he also wanted to thank the County for improvements to Front Street corridor that were scheduled to start in the spring and ongoing improvements to the Shrewsbury Avenue corridor which he said represented \$600,000 to \$700,000 worth of work that would greatly enhance traffic flow as well as the streetscape for merchants in that area. He said it took a lot of hard work from all of the Borough's staff.

He offered a special thank you to George Bowden, whom he called an institution in Red Bank. He said Mr. Bowden was the father of the Historic Preservation Commission noting he had been there since the beginning and, due to time commitments, had had to step down. He said Mr. Bowden would still be a member and said he had devoted an incredible amount of time to historic preservation. He said, with Mr. Bowden's efforts, along with Councilman Zipprich, the Borough had finally been able to create a historic district with appropriate signage and architectural standards that would probably save a number of houses. He said it was great news for all of the residents and something they would continue to work on. He said he thought they could have historic preservation and development at the same time. He said they did not want to stifle development and said he thought historic preservation could be a part of it.

He cited the Borough's Cedar Crossing project noting that the Council believed in Affordable Housing and people's ability to own their units instead of renting. He said Phase One was done and people were living there in beautiful townhouses on property that had been completely abandoned. He said the project was possible with the cooperation of the Federal, County and State governments along with the Red Bank Housing Authority. He said they were able to turn an essentially inutile property into a neighborhood. He said the transformation on the west side for something for the Council to be unabashedly proud of. He said he didn't think anyone twenty years ago would have said there would be approximately twelve brand new single family homes being built on Bridge Avenue. He said they were also looking forward to developing the train station area. He reviewed several other projects in the works such as the Westside Lofts and Bank Street projects. He summarized by saying there was a lot of new housing and new development in Red Bank and it was a difficult financial situation however, the good news was, even in financially difficult times, Red Bank had been graced by the vision of a number of different individuals. He thanked the representatives of RiverCenter for helping people to think about locating in Red Bank. He thanked Morgan Stanley for making a commitment to Red Bank noting that they would be doubling their work force in Red Bank. He noted Booz Allen's relocation as a major engineering and defense contracting firm was another major commitment to Red Bank. He said people were drawn to Red Bank because they offered a stable community, a stable government, as evidenced by the voters, but, more importantly, a community of place where one could be diverse and where people from all walks of life could live and recreate in harmony. He also cited the Borough's convenience to New York and Newark, the first class medical institution all of which were important in getting the companies to relocate to Red Bank. But more importantly, he continued, they relocate because of the warmth and affection offered by the Borough's residents and the encouragement of the elected officials.

He asked everyone to continue the progress and pledged to do whatever he could do to keep on moving forward. He said there were clouds on every horizon but said he thought 2012 would be a good year for Red Bank. He said it would certainly be a year when all of the people around the Council table would be working with their utmost energy to accomplish for every one of the residents.

He wished a Happy and Safe New Year to everyone.

Councilman DuPont noted that he had realized during the Mayor's speech that it would be the last time they would have a chance to talk to their congressman because he would be in another district. He said he wanted to thank Congressman Pallone adding that he had been a steward of the environment and a steward in fighting for Medicare and Medicaid and, more importantly, was a fighter when he fought for health care changes. He said he hoped the Mr. Pallone would ascend to the US Senate and would come back to the district. He said he just wanted to personally thank him for his efforts.

Congressman Pallone said it was true that he would not be running for reelection in Red Bank but said he would still be here and said if anyone needed help with anything they should not hesitate to call. He said Red Bank was a beautiful community and he had enjoyed representing it and just enjoyed being here.

Councilman Zipprich said he also wanted to thank Freeholder Mallet for her service. He said she had represented the people of Monmouth County valiantly. He said she had stood her ground and fought the fight when it needed to be fought. On behalf of the residents of Monmouth County, he said she had championed veteran's affairs for veterans in Monmouth County. He said she had been a great friend to Red Bank and they were grateful for her service.

Freeholder Mallet thanked him for his kind words and agreed that it was a government of, by and for the people and that was what they needed to do at every level of government. She said it had been an honor to serve at the County level and represent not only Red Bank but all 53 municipalities in Monmouth County. She said she was proud of the work that all of the members of the Council did and said she wanted to congratulate each and every one of them.

BENEDICTION– Fire Department Chaplin Menna

ADJOURNMENT

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

ROLL CALL:

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

NAYS: None

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

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Borghi