



BOROUGH COUNCIL
Borough of Florham Park
Thursday, November 2, 2023

Work Session Minutes

Acting Mayor Malone called the Regular Meeting of the Borough Council to order at 6:32 p.m.

Acting Mayor Malone asked Borough Clerk Danielle Lewis to call the roll as follows:

Governing Body	Present	Absent
Malone	X	
Germershausen	X	
Carpenter	X	
Santoro	X	
Marchal	X	
Cicarelli	X	
Mayor Taylor		X

Additional Borough Officials present were Administrator William Huyler, Borough Clerk Danielle Lewis, and Borough Attorney Joseph Bell Jr.

COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Borough Clerk stated that all requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met.

Mayor Taylor led the pledge of allegiance.

RECOGNITION OF HONORARY OFFICER THOMAS BELSCHER

Councilman Carpenter read the Resolution designating Thomas Belscher as Honorary Police Officer into the record.

Chief Orlando provided Thomas with his Badge #001 and a framed certificate.

Borough Clerk Danielle Lewis administered the Oath of Office to Thomas Belscher.

Honorary Officer Thomas Belscher was surrounded by friends, family, members of the Florham Park School District as well as the entire Falcons Football Team presented a banner and cheered Thomas on to a packed meeting room.

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

Acting Mayor Malone asked for a motion to approve the following meeting minutes:

- Minutes of the October 5, 2023 and October 19, 2023 Meetings

Councilman Carpenter made a motion to approve the minutes as stated above.

The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Santoro.

Roll Call Vote:

Council Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Malone	X			
Germershausen	X for 10/05		X for 10/19	
Carpenter	X			
Santoro	X			
Marchal	X			
Cicarelli	X for 10/19		X for 10/05	
Total	5 for 10/05 5 for 10/19		1 for 10/05 1 for 10/19	

2023 BEST PRACTICES INVENTORY

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Patrice Visco explained that the Best Practices Inventory needs to be completed annually and that there were 67 questions this year. The questions pertain to compliance with laws and statutes and is tied to financial aid.

The minimum score is a 29 and the Borough scored a 40 this year.

We do not have EV charging stations yet, which was one of the questions on the inventory. We will be reporting to the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) on water and sewer usage this year.

CONSENT AGENDA – RESOLUTIONS FOR APPROVAL

Council President Malone made a motion to approve the presented Resolutions via a single motion of the Council.

- #23-174** AUTHORIZING REAPPOINTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR
- #23-175** AUTHORIZING TAX OVERPAYMENT REFUND
- #23-176** EMERGENCY RESOLUTION – SEWER MAIN BREAK
- #23-177** AUTHORIZING BUDGET TRANSFER

The motion was seconded by Councilman Carpenter.

Roll Call Vote:

Council Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Carpenter	X			
Germershausen	X			
Malone	X			
Santoro	X			
Marchal	X			
Cicarelli	X			
Total	6			

BOROUGH COUNCIL PORTFOLIO UPDATES

Council President Malone:

Finance Committee:

Next year’s budget process continues.

Recreation:

Recreation Director John Timmons shared the following:

Basketball is underway and 92 of 100 spots for ski club have been taken. There are 5 ski trips planned right now.

Paddle tennis and pickle ball have been popular and classes have been filling up.

There will be a Rutgers Safety Class on November 21.

The country line dancing class is full and they are planning to offer another class in January.

The next Senior Bus Trip will be December 30.

The Christmas Tree Lighting in honor of Sheila Williams will be held December 1 and the Menorah Lighting will be on December 12.

Councilman Germershausen:

Historic Preservation Commission:

The HPC meeting was held on October 25 and the November meeting has been cancelled.

The subfloor was installed in the Little Red Schoolhouse and the foyer was painted. The carpet will be removed and the tile replaced.

Councilman Carpenter:

Police Department:

79 applicants for the two patrol officer vacancies completed the physical fitness assessment.

The process for hiring an additional crossing guard is underway.

The Department is participating in “No Shave November” to raise funds for various types of cancer, specifically prostate cancer.

Department of Public Works:

Waiting on the salter trucks and the Ford F-550 that was ordered.

The roof of the Police evidence room was leaking and was dug up, cleaned and sealed by the Public Works department.

There were 586 bulk pick-up stops in September. Leaf collection started the second week of October.

The DPW’s capital purchases for 2023 include a new Kubota utility vehicle that is on order and will be used all year round in the grounds department.

We also have a Bobcat compact excavator on order. It will have a variety of uses, including being able to dredge all the borough’s gullies and easements safely and efficiently.

We are also looking to replace our old 2000 Volvo garbage truck for our vegetative waste collection and to purchase a new heavy duty stump grinder so we can keep that work in house.

Engineering:

Dellwood, Woodbine, Puddingstone, and Rustic sidewalk and repavement project – Milling and paving has started. Project is progressing. NJDOT grant of \$226,000.00 for Construction received. Resident notifications have been sent out.

Annual Milling and Paving projects for this year will likely be delayed until next year due to PSE&G replacing gas mains. PSE&G is progressing slowly.

First Aid Squad:

The First Aid Squad is averaging 5-6 calls per day and their annual calls per year is up 21%.

Councilwoman Santoro:

Planning Board:

There have recently been two administrative approvals, one for the Valley Bank and another for a change of ownership of a dental office. A one-year extension for the Sisters of Charity property on Park Avenue was granted.

Councilman Marchal:

Library:

Various classes have been taking place and fall-themed children's events drew an attendance of more than 800 people in October.

The Madison Library is temporarily closed and as a result, their patrons have been visiting the Florham Park Library.

Board of Health:

Next BOH meeting will be held next week and there have been no new updates since the last meeting.

Water:

Still addressing intermittent power issues and SCADA.

Well Rehabilitation Project - Minor punch list items still being addressed. Project is complete and being closed out.

Well #2, #3, and #4 Improvement Projects kicked off with Well Contractor pulling Well #4 pump, video documenting the casing, and washing the casing. The Well motor is being disassembled and rehabilitated at Well Contractor's shop. The same will be done at Wells #2 and #3 later this year. American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding is financing the improvements.

Water Meter replacement project - There are approximately 31 residents remaining that need their water meter replaced. Additional mailings and fines have been sent out.

Water Tank Rehabilitation Design Project - The Beacon Hill Water Spheroid will be bid out in mid-2024 with a fall 2024 rehabilitation. The Tower Lane Standpipe will be bid out in late 2024 for a spring 2025 rehabilitation. Cellular Communications Consultant has notified cellular carriers of our intentions and schedule. Emergency Service antennas on each tank identified.

Sewer:

Major sewer break in Columbia Turnpike near Park Street was repaired by Contractor on October 18-20 with assistance from Sewer Department. Crews worked continuously to repair break. Approximately 1/3 to 1/2 the Borough's sewer flow ran through this pipe. Bypass pumps were set up, Contractor excavated to 16' depth to repair a 2'x3' collapsed sewer main pipe. Water Department assisted in shutting down and moving water mains in order to access repaired area.

Delaware, Minnisink, Arrowhead, and Honeymoon Sewer Main Extension Project. Eleven (11) homes will have access to public sewer once complete. Final design continues.

Generator project slowly progressing. Lead time for getting new Generator is about 550 days. This project will also eliminate an underground fuel storage tank at Sewer Plant, relocate one of two sewer generators to replace a generator at Well #4, and provide a new generator that will support power requirements in preparation for a future expansion of the Sewer Plant.

Carrigan Lane/Burnet Road Sewer and Sewer Pump Station project- No update. Awaiting formation of The Green Property Association.

Councilman Cicarelli:

Board of Education:

The Florham Park Education Foundation's Arts, Crafts & Music Festival at Ridgedale Middle School was a huge success.

The overall scores in the K-8 District exceeded the average for standardized test scores.

Work on the referendum projects has continued. Fall sports are coming to an end.

Florham Park Board of Education's next meeting will be held on November 27 and Hanover Park Regional District's next meeting will be November 15.

Environmental Commission:

EC last met on October 24 and the next meeting will be November 20. Signage and maintenance for Spring Garden Lake is still being discussed.

The Ridgedale Middle School pollinator garden project is making good progress.

Pool Committee:

A budget meeting was held yesterday regarding the municipal pool. Another meeting will be held in upcoming weeks.

Senior Citizens:

Working on the Stay Safe Program with the Police department.

The Holiday luncheon will be held at the Hanover Manor on December 13, with entertainment being provided by the Hanover Park High School Chamber Singers.

The next meeting will be held on November 8.

Councilman Marchal announced that the Ridgedale Middle School boys soccer team won the championship today.

Councilman Germershausen said the plaque for Murphy's Circle in honor of Skip Murphy has been ordered.

Borough Clerk on behalf of Administrator Huyler:

Borough Clerk Danielle Lewis requested approval from the Mayor and Council for two temporary sign permit applications for Blue Foundry Bank. The requests are for banners on the lawn facing Ridgedale Avenue and are for a maximum of thirty (30) days.

The Council unanimously approved this request.

PAYMENT OF VOUCHERS

Councilwoman Santoro read a summary of the current bills list and made a motion to approve it in the amount \$6,931,190.41. The motion was seconded by Councilman Germershausen.

Roll Call Vote:

Council Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Carpenter	X			
Germershausen	X			
Malone	X			
Santoro	X			
Marchal	X			
Cicarelli	X			
Total	6			

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mayor Taylor opened the meeting to the public.

The following members of the public wished to be heard:

The following residents of Florham Park and East Hanover spoke specifically about water quality concerns on Mann Avenue:

Greg and Janice Benacchio:

The Benacchios addressed the Council regarding the water at their home on Mann Avenue. They stated the water has a metallic smell, clothes are not getting clean in the laundry, water cannot be used to cook or to drink, and other concerns. They stated that this problem started in September. They shared photographs of the water with the Council.

Councilman Marchal stated he spoke with these residents today about their concerns.

Borough Engineer Mike Sgaramella stated that the Water department has been flushing the lines for weeks and there is an interconnection with East Hanover on Mann Avenue. He explained that the motor in Well #4 failed and it will take at least 2-3 months for repairs. He said they are working on Well #5 (former Exxon).

Mr. Sgaramella advised that the Water department flushed Mann Avenue for an hour today and the water appeared clear. He opined that there is probably sediment in the pipes at individual homes and recommended residents run their water for about an hour to flush the pipes. He said that working with East Hanover on this was probably not a possibility.

Discussion ensued with the Governing Body about suspending water payments/bills for residents effected by this problem.

Ryan Wilson:

Mr. Wilson asked how many wells are in Florham Park and was told 4 wells, 2 large and 2 small. Mr. Sgaramella said that Well #5 supplies water to the entire town.

Mr. Wilson asked about other causes of the water quality issues on Mann Avenue other than the well. Discussion ensued on Mann Avenue being a dead end street and the collection of sediment.

Mr. Sgaramella said he is having a meeting with the Borough's water consultant tomorrow.

Terry Simmons:

Mr. Simmons asked about what testing is conducted on Borough water.

Mr. Sgaramella said that everything is tested except for iron and manganese since it is not regulated by the Department of Environmental Protection. All levels tested are in compliance.

Mr. Wilson asked if testing can be done on the tap water. Discussion ensued on same.

Ralph Demasi:

Mr. Demasi said he is the last house before the valve and discussed repairs to the water line. He stated that he has changed the aerator, filter, and flushed the valve at his home to no avail.

Councilman Marchal and others discussed filters for the water.

Terry Simmons asked if the results from water testing can be shared and discussion ensued on the notification system for water testing and flushing.

A contact list was drafted and will be distributed to Councilman Marchal to forward to the Borough Engineer.

The following members of the public spoke on other matters:

David Fox:

Mr. Fox was told that the Council is unable to comment on the current Zoning Board application for the corner of Elm Street and Columbia Turnpike, because the Borough code provides that any appeal of the Zoning Board's decision would be heard by the Governing Body.

Councilwoman Santoro, who also sits on the Zoning Board of Adjustment, stated she estimates there will be another 5-6 Board meetings on this application.

Peggy Peters:

Ms. Peters shared her concerns with speeding on Insley Road. She explained that this has become a cut-through street and can be dangerous. She is requesting that the street be considered for a speed hump.

John Winters:

Mr. Winters inquired if the Borough is moving forward with the Morris County Co-op for energy aggregation and was advised that the rate is still not favorable.

Mr. Winters discussed and questioned about speed tables, traffic calming measures, and an acceleration lane.

ADJOURNMENT

It was regularly moved by Councilman Gemershausen that the meeting be adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Danielle M. Lewis, RMC, CMC, CMR
Borough Clerk
November 2, 2023