

SPECIAL MEETING MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL April 7, 2020

Meeting called to order via ZOOM at 7:00 p.m. by President McGuigan with a salute to the flag. Roll call was recorded as follows:

Present: Johnston, D'Adamo, Toto, Owen, Dill, Gerety, McGuigan

Also Present: Mayor Glasser, Administrator Swain, Assistant Administrator Frost, City Clerk Samuelsen, Deputy Clerk Heath, City Solicitor Thomas Smith, City Engineer Greg Schneider and Police Chief Robert Somers James

Absent: None

Open Public Meetings Act:

Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided. Agenda for this meeting has been provided to two local newspapers and posted in the City Clerk's Office and the City's website at somerspointgov.org. In conformity with recommendations and advice of County, State, National and International Public Health agencies regarding public gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic, including any directive of the N.J. Division of Local Government Services (DLGS), City Council will provide live streaming capabilities of its meetings, commencing Tuesday, April 7, 2020. The public is restricted from attending the meeting at City Hall. However, the public may provide questions and comments via live streaming. The Special City Council Meeting will begin April 7, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will have a full agenda to address any and all City business that will be available on the City's website (somerspointgov.org) and formal action will be taken. Instructions are as follows: To join the ZOOM Meeting you may dial: One tap mobile +16465588656 ,2314924591# US (New York) +13126266799, 2314924591# US (Chicago) Dial by your location +1 646 558 8656 US (New York) +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago) +1 301 715 8592 US +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston) +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose) +1 253 215 8782 US. Once you are dialed in enter the Meeting ID: 231 492 4591. If you want to speak during the Public Portion, please press *6 to unmute or mute and *9 to raise your hand. Council President McGuigan explained to the public that they will have an opportunity to speak. Additionally, he stated that people are saying this is the new normal, and he wants the old normal back. He continued that the Governing Body has been charged to take care of the City of Somers Point, and he assured the public that they will carry out their responsibilities. Also, Council President stated encouragingly that we will get through this together.

Communications:

None

SPECIAL MEETING MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

April 7, 2020

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Glasser stated that these are unprecedented times in the U. S., and we are all working to get through this difficult time. Mayor Glasser thanked everyone especially City Council for their guidance and leadership. He continued to thank the City Administrator, Wes Swain, Department Heads, First Responders and the Police Department. Mayor Glasser requested the public to please bear with us and to please listen the Federal and State Governments to combat the virus and stay healthy and safe. Mayor Glasser mentioned another Executive Order from the Governor regarding closing all State and County parks. Mayor Glasser mentioned that we will come out of this stronger than we were before.

Councilwoman Johnston complimented the school lunch program. She is very pleased with the healthy meals being provided and the organization of distributing the meals.

Council President McGuigan is dismayed that some people are removing their gloves in the Shoprite parking lot after shopping and stated, of course, the employees of Shoprite must pick them up and dispose of them. Council President McGuigan requested everyone to dispose of their used gloves properly.

Administrator's Report:

Wes Swain, City Administrator, expressed his appreciation to all the employees for working under unusual circumstances. He mentioned that the regulations regarding employees and COVID-19 dealt with State employees only. He mentioned that the City has a policy on this evening's agenda for consideration. Mr. Swain stated that the N.J. Division of Local Government Services has extended the deadlines for the introduction and adoption of the Budget. Additionally, Mr. Swain stated that the Governor extended the State of Emergency for an additional 30 days.

Solicitors Report:

City Solicitor, Thomas Smith, reported that he conferred with City officials regarding closing the beach and Kennedy Park. At this time, those areas will not be closed to the public.

Committee Reports:

SPECIAL MEETING MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL April 7, 2020

Councilman Gerety indicated that Shore Medical Center contacted him regarding the desperate need of blood for The Red Cross. Councilman Gerety arranged for a blood drive and is happy to report that every appointment was booked. He thanked the residents of Somers Point for a great job and suggested to make the blood drive an annual event. Council President McGuigan extended his appreciation to Councilman Gerety for his efforts and mentioned that it is a nice reflection on the community.

Council President McGuigan reported that the Budget Committee met via a teleconference and had discussions and will continue to work on the Budget.

Council President McGuigan reported a COAH Committee meeting was held via teleconference and discussed various options available to the City. The Committee will continue to work on the options.

Approval of Minutes:

None

Ordinances:

None

Public Portion on Resolutions:

The Public Portion was duly opened, and hearing nothing further from the public, it was duly closed.

Resolution No. 85

M/S- Gerety/Dill

The resolution was adopted by unanimous vote of those present.

No. 85 of 2020

Subject: Authorizing Competitive Contracting for the Operation, Management or Administration of the Higbee Avenue Marina

SPECIAL MEETING MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL April 7, 2020

Introduced by: Council President McGuigan and Councilmen Dill and Gerety

WHEREAS, the Governing Body of the City of Somers Point is interested in soliciting proposals from entities to provide for the operation, management or administration of the Higbee Avenue Marina; and

WHEREAS, per N.J.S. 40A:11-4.1b.(2) competitive contracting may be used in lieu of public bidding for the hiring of an entity to provide for the operation, management or administration of recreation facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Somers Point as follows:

1. Competitive contracting is hereby authorized for the hiring of an entity to provide for the operation, management or administration of recreation facilities as per N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.
2. The competitive contracting process shall be administered by the City Administrator.

Resolution No. 86

M/S-Toto/Dill

The resolution was adopted by unanimous vote of those present.

Councilman Dill stated that two weeks of leave is not enough to properly protect our employees and recommended the leave be extended. City Council, City Administrator Swain and Solicitor Smith discussed the amount of time and concurred to up to four weeks or longer if determined by a medical professional. Additionally, Councilman Dill requested the initial policy issued by City Administrator Swain on 3/20/20 be attached to this documentation.

No. 86 of 2020

Subject: Authorizing COVID-19 Employee Absence Policy
Introduced by: Council President McGuigan

WHEREAS, it is recognized that, among many reasons, the health of the City's employees is imperative to the continuance of our local government's operations and ability to provide services for the residents of Somers Point; and

WHEREAS, in response to COVID-19 the City Council of the City of Somers Point deems it necessary to provide a temporary policy concerning employee absences.

SPECIAL MEETING MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL April 7, 2020

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Somers Point as follows:

1. The COVID-19 Employee Absence Policy attached hereto and made a part hereof is hereby adopted on a temporary basis for as long as is necessary in response to the current health crisis, but not later than December 31, 2020, unless further extended by council.
2. The City Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to implement this policy in a practical manner, and adjust the policy as may be necessary due to evolving nature of this crisis.

Resolution No. 87

M/S-Dill/Adamo

The resolution was adopted by unanimous vote of those present.

Council President McGuigan stated that even though we are facing a global pandemic, we must keep in mind that there are still families dealing with the weight of Autism in their family.

No. 87 of 2020

Subject: Supporting Autism Awareness
Introduced By: Council President Sean McGuigan

WHEREAS, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) represents a broad group of disorders that vary widely from mild to severe, and is characterized by difficulty with social interaction, communication, severely limited interests, and repetitive behaviors; and

WHEREAS, The Autism Society recognizes that the prevalence of autism in the United States has risen from 1 in 125 children in 2010 to 1 in 59 in 2020; and

WHEREAS, Autism is the fastest-growing developmental disability in the United States, and knows no racial, ethnic, or social boundaries;

WHEREAS, there is no known medical detection or cure for Autism;

WHEREAS, a variety of public and private organizations and agencies strive to provide quality care and support or services to children and adults with ASD to enable them to live as independently as possible and to reach their full potential; and

WHEREAS, locally in Atlantic County, FACES 4 Autism and nationally organizations such as Autism Speaks, are non-profit organizations dedicated to autism awareness, education and support of children with Autism and their families, together with other local, state, and national non-profit organizations with similar goals; and

SPECIAL MEETING MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL April 7, 2020

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Somers Point supports the efforts to increase awareness of autism and recognizes April as Autism Awareness month in the City of Somers Point;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council encourages the citizens of Somers Point to seek more information on this condition and to recognize the challenges families face who have been touched by Autism.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Councilwoman Johnston expressed her concern regarding the State's proposal of closing Exit 30. Council President McGuigan concurred with her concerns. Council President McGuigan mentioned that these concerns have been discussed previously. He stated that the well established business corridor depends heavily upon the traffic to and from Ocean City; therefore, diverting the traffic would pose substantial undue hardships on the business owners. Mayor Glasser, City Council, Administrator Swain and City Engineer Schneider thoroughly discussed the issues regarding the proposal to close Exit 30. It will again be addressed in the upcoming Steering Committee meeting.

Councilman Dill reported that he is researching a \$25,000 grant. Mr. Swain mentioned that it requires a 25% match. There will be an update of the progress of applying for the grant at the next City Council meeting.

Discussion of Bills:

Administrator Swain reported Record of Payments dated 4/1/2020 in the following amounts: \$ 1,392,789.12, \$1,508.00 and \$ 967,679.73.
\$ 1,950.00, a Record of Payment dated 2/20/2020 in the amount of \$400.00, a Record of Payment in the amount of 352.00 and a Bill List dated 2/25/2020 in the amount of \$1,321,954.65.

Public Portion

SPECIAL MEETING MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL April 7, 2020

The Public Portion was duly opened. Hearing nothing from the public, it was duly closed.

Councilwoman Johnston thanked Clerk Samuelson for arranging the electronic meeting. Mayor Glasser thanked City Council, Administration, the Department of Public Works, all the employees for coming to work and providing City services. He wished everyone a Happy Easter with God's blessing. Councilman Dill concurred with the above sentiments and added his sincere thanks and gratitude for the well-wishers and thoughts and prayers from everyone regarding his recent surgery. Council President McGuigan mentioned he is very happy that he is recovering and doing well. Council President McGuigan thanked all the employees and requested everyone to have good thoughts for the many citizens and small businesses that are suffering. He added a special thanks and appreciation for the Police Department, Fire Departments and first responders. Council President McGuigan reminded everyone that the April 9th City Council Meeting is cancelled. The regular schedule of meetings will resume using the electronic means utilizing ZOOM.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before Council, Councilman Gerety moved, Councilman Toto seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucy R. Samuelson, RMC
Municipal Clerk
Approved: 4/23/2020