

BRANCHVILLE BOROUGH
Regular Meeting
March 6, 2024
7:00 P.M.

MEETING MINUTES

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC NOTICE

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Branchville Borough Council has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof sent to the New Jersey Herald.

FLAG SALUTE was led by Mayor Frato.

ROLL CALL was conducted by Clerk Leissler, Present were Council members Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Also present were representatives from Frankford Township School, Dave Silverthorne, Jeff Lewis, Keith Whitehead, Mike Clune, Mike Little, Amanda Bellis, Melinda Tanzola, Kaitlyn Frato and many members of the community.

Motion was made by Councilman Doremus, seconded by Councilwoman Bansemer to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2024 meeting. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bathgate, seconded by Councilman Bellis to open the public comment portion. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Mr. Mooney and Mr. Lessard presented the council and public with their plan to save funds at Frankford Township School. The public was directed to attend the next school board meeting at Frankford Township School on March 18, 2024 at 6 p.m. On motion of Councilwoman Bathgate, seconded by Councilman Bellis the clerk was

asked to advertise that the mayor and council may attend the same meeting. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Dave Silverthorne offered the mayor and council \$500,000 for the Borough owned property on Mattison Avenue. No action taken.

Darren Haggerty, Branchville Borough Road department reviewed needed items with the mayor and council.

On motion of Councilman Van Stone, seconded by Councilman Bellis motion was made to approve the quote from Durable Door to perform preventative maintenance on the overhead doors at the Borough DPW. The quote approved was \$600.00. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Darren Haggerty stated that the internet service is terrible at the DPW. The clerk stated she has issues at the municipal office with same. Motion was made by Councilman Bellis, seconded by Councilwoman Bansemer to authorize the mayor to investigate Planet Network internet service for both locations. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Darren Haggerty discussed the crushed pipe under Fox Hill Road. Motion was made by Councilman Bellis, seconded by Councilwoman Bathgate to approve Harold Pellow to prepare bid specs to repair the pipe. A section is also in Frankford Township. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Darren Haggerty provided proof of replacement signs at the entrance on Route 206. The mayor and council reviewed the quotes. Branchville recycles and Branchville Rotary will be added to the signs. Councilwoman Bathgate made a motion, seconded by Councilwoman Bansemer to approve the quote. Discussion took place concerning what the signs materials are. Darren was asked to inquire and get back the Borough Council on same. The vote was not passed.

Darren Haggerty discussed building new flower boxes. Motion was made by Councilwoman Bathgate, seconded by Councilman Doremus to purchase enough supplies for 1 box. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Darren Haggerty asked the status of fuel supply for the DPW.

Mr. Geddis (softball) discussed his need to use a ballfield in the Borough of Branchville. The field is only available Friday and Saturday. Mr. Geddis was given a facility use form to complete.

Melinda Tanzola discussed her issues with the website, sidewalks, tenant information and the playground status. Melinda feels it is “unethical” to have others post municipal information.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bathgate, seconded by Councilman Doremus to close the public comment portion. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Motion was made by Councilman Doremus, seconded by Councilman Bellis to approve the raffle applications (#05-24 and #06-24) as presented by BHC. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

On motion of Councilman Doremus, seconded by Councilman Bellis motion was made to approve Resolution # 13 - 2024, JCP and L with the added language to include \$8 million should be allocated to Branchville Borough. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

(Resolution follows minutes)

On motion of Councilman Doremus, seconded by Councilwoman Bathgate motion was made to approve Resolution # 14 - 2024, Playground Grant. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

(Resolution follows minutes)

Motion was made by Councilman Doremus, seconded by Councilwoman Bathgate, Ordinance # 01 – 2024 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE THE BOROUGH'S ADDITIONAL FUNDING OF THE FRANKFORD/BANCHVILLE REGIONAL DETENTION BASIN PROJECT WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF BRANCHVILLE AND TO PROVIDE FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING THEREOF was approved on first reading. Roll

Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

(Ordinance # 01-2024 follows minutes)

Motion was made by Councilman Doremus, seconded by Councilman Bellis to open the public comment portion. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Councilman Bellis discussed the fuel issue. Councilman Bellis made a motion to contract Petro Mechanics to get a revised quote for double wall tank or 2 single tanks. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Bansemer. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Van Stone. Nay – Orr. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Councilman Bellis offered to help Mayor Frato with safety items such as barricades, etc. with upcoming borough events.

Councilwoman Bathgate asked the mayor and council to review the proposed website and comment within a week to Kate.

Councilwoman Bansemer asked the status of the Remind notifications. Mike Clune supplied contact information to Kate to set up the Remind notifications for business owners.

Motion was made by Councilman Orr, seconded by Councilman Bellis to authorize our CFO, Christine, to prepare a capital ordinance for \$10,000 for sidewalks. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Van Stone. Nay – Orr. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Councilman Orr expressed concerns with work done by the road department and the finance department. Attorney Valenti reviewed the RICE notices and when they are needed.

Mayor Frato will contact Selective Insurance about parking in the center of the Borough.

Councilman Orr made a motion to authorize the Borough of Branchville to write a letter to Selective Insurance suggesting that they by Cliff's Garage to help with their parking issues. No one seconded the motion.

Motion was made by Councilman Doremus, seconded by Councilman Bellis to approve \$2000.00 towards the playground, using recycling funds. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Van Stone. Nay – Orr. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Discussion took place about a new recording system. The clerk will get some quotes and send them to all council.

When road closures occur the road department and or Elizabethtown Gas has to notify the school, etc. of same.

Motion was made by Councilman Bellis, seconded by Councilwoman Bathgate to approve BHC to borrow the Borough's CO2 detector. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Van Stone. Nay – Orr. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Attorney Valenti updated the mayor and council on the AFFF MDL – Du Pont situation. Mr. Valenti is sure the Borough of Branchville will receive a settlement.

Motion was made by Councilman Bellis, seconded by Councilwoman Bansemer to go into executive session for negotiations. Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Minutes of the executive session will be made available to the public once the matter of discussion has been settled.

Motion was made by Councilman Van Stone, seconded by Councilwoman Bathgate to exit executive session for negotiations. Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Mayor Frato and Attorney Valenti will set up a meeting to talk to Frankford Township's mayor and attorney about the clear title issue at the Mattison Reservoir properties.

The following bills were presented for payment. On motion of Councilman Doremus, seconded by Councilman Bellis they were ordered paid after being properly audited, paid out of correct account and subject to the availability of funds. Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

(List of bills follows minutes)

On motion of Councilman Bellis, seconded by Councilman Van Stone, the meeting was adjourned. Aye – Bansemer, Bathgate, Bellis, Doremus, Orr, Van Stone. Nay – None. Absent – None. Abstain – None.

Kathryn Leissler-CMR CTC RMC