

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 17 , 2023, at 5:00 P.M.**

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Work Session of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee was held on the above date in the Memorial Municipal Building, 309 Main Street, Fort Lee, New Jersey.

PRESENT: Mayor Sokolich, Council Members Sohmer, Yoon, Suh, Drumgoole, Kasofsky, Cervieri

ALSO PRESENT : Alfred Restaino, Borough Administrator
Evelyn Rosario, Municipal Clerk
Nadine Drumgoole, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Brian Chewcaskie, Borough Attorney

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

In accordance with Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 adequate notice informing the public of the time and place of this meeting was duly published in the Record, the Jersey Journal and Star Ledger issues of November 28, 2022. Said notice was also posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board and Borough website.

RESOLUTION FOR CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS:

On motion by Councilman Cervieri seconded by Council woman Kasofsky and approved **unanimously** , the meeting moved into closed session.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee that:

This body shall hereafter discuss in closed session, pursuant to Section 7B of the Open Public Meetings Act, certain items which may generally be described as follows:

1. **Personnel:**
 - a. Department of Public Works
 - b. Administration
 - c. Building Department
 - d. Community Center
 - e. Police Department
 - f. Recreation

2. **Legal:**
 - a. Affordable Housing Ordinance
 - b. Redevelopment Area 11 (Presidential)
 - c. Palisades Park Sewer Litigation Settlement
 - d. Tax Appeal: Suh and Lee vs. Fort Lee

The minutes of the discussion in closed session may be disclosed to the public when the Mayor and Council has determined that the need for confidentiality has been satisfied.

The open portion of the work session will resume upon completion of the closed portion.

The closed portion of the meeting ended at 6:10 P.M. The open portion of the work session began at 6:10 P.M.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Authorize the Person-to-Person Transfer of Liquor License No. 0219-33-041-016 from JJ Sushi, Inc T/A SOMA to 1550 Chois Inc.

Borough Clerk Rosario stated that the applicant has met all the requirements for the transfer of the above captioned liquor license.

An authorizing resolution will be placed on the August 17th proposed agenda.

America Korea United Society Event Sunday, October 1, 2023

Councilman Yoon received a request from the America Korea United Society to utilize the Fort Lee Community Center on October 1, 2023, to commemorate the 70th anniversary.

An authorizing resolution will be placed on the August 17th proposed amended agenda.

Hellenic Civic Club Annual Oxi Day Celebration at the Adult Activity Center, Saturday, October 28, 2023

Administrator Restaino stated Ms. Crissa Scarimbias received a request from the Fort Lee Hellenic Civic Club to utilize the Senior Center on October 28, 2023, for the above captioned.

An authorizing resolution will be placed on the August 17th proposed amended agenda.

9th Annual Paws in the Park Saturday, October 28, 2023

A resolution authorizing the above captioned will be placed on the August 17th proposed amended agenda.

Knights of Columbus Soccer Challenge at Van Fleet Park Saturday, October 14, 2023

Councilman Cervieri stated he received a request to permit a soccer challenge event at Van Fleet Park on Saturday October 14th.

An authorizing resolution will be placed on the August 17th proposed amended agenda.

Whitey Lang Park and Van Fleet Park Turf

Administrator Restaino reviewed the revised proposal in the total amount of \$1.128M as submitted by Athletic Fields of America for the above captioned turf field replacements.

A resolution authorizing the award of a contract will be placed on the August 17th proposed amended agenda.

Action Data Services Payroll Services

Administrator Restaino reviewed the renewal contract from Action Data Services for Payroll and Accounting services.

A resolution approving the above captioned will be placed on a future agenda.

Proposal from Boswell Engineering for the Provision of Engineering Services Regarding Project Known as Improvements to Stillwell Avenue, Not to Exceed \$48,200.00

Administrator Restaino reviewed the proposal as submitted by Boswell Engineering for the preparation of construction plans and specifications as well as providing construction inspection regarding the above captioned project.

A resolution authoring the award of a contract will be placed on the August 17th proposed agenda.

Bid Advertisement: Ambulance Corps Window Replacement and Roof Membrane Replacement

A resolution authoring the purchasing agent to obtain bid specifications and advertise for bids for projects known as Ambulance Corps Window Replacement and

Roof Membrane Replacement will be placed on the August 17th regular session amended agenda.

2022 Corrective Action Plan

The Governing Body reviewed the audit findings, recommendations and corrective action plan for the year ended December 31, 2022.

A resolution approving the 2022 corrective action plan will be placed on the August 17th regular session amended agenda.

2022 Certification Annual Audit

A resolution certifying the 2022 Borough Audit will be placed on the August 17th regular session amended agenda.

Emergency Appropriation for Down Payment on Improvements

A resolution authorizing an emergency appropriation for down payment on improvements in the amount of \$74,024.00 will be placed on the August 17th regular session amended agenda.

Capital Budget Amendment: Acquisition of Property

A resolution authorizing an amendment to the capital budget section of the 2023 budget will be placed on the August 17th regular session amended agenda.

Bond Ordinance: Acquisition of Real Property

A bond ordinance authorizing for the acquisition of real property, appropriating \$3,030,000.00 and authorizing the issuance of \$2,878,500.00 bonds or notes to finance part of the cost, will be introduced at the August 17th regular session meeting.

Change Order No. 1 \$219,625.68, Abbott Boulevard Streetscape and Parking Improvements

The Governing Body reviewed the change order regarding the above project submitted by The Neglia Group.

An authorizing resolution will be placed on the August 17th regular session amended agenda.

Insertion Item of Revenue and Appropriations: CDBG 12th Street Road Improvements, \$89,000.00

A resolution authorizing the approval to amend CY-2023 Municipal Budget by inserting item of revenue from the Bergen County Community Development Block Grant

in the amount of \$89,000.00 will be placed on the August 17th proposed amended agenda.

Mediterranean House Amendment to Financial Agreement

An ordinance amending and supplementing Ordinance 2021-27 authorizing long term tax exemption agreement between the Borough of Fort Lee and Mediterranean House Apartments Urban Renewal, LLC will be introduced at the August 17th regular session meeting.

Certificate of Completion Fort Lee Redevelopment Associates, LLC, Block 4851.04, Lots 1,2,3 and 4

*Councilman Cervieri recused from discussion

A resolution authorizing the execution of a certificate of completion between the Borough of Fort Lee and Fort Lee Redevelopment Associates, LLC will be placed on the August 17th proposed amended agenda.

Rent Control Ordinance Revision Request

Borough Attorney Brian Chewcaskie stated correspondence was received in April 2023 from Mr. Gordon J. Golum, Esquire, who represents Sterling NJ, LLC. Mr. Golum is requesting a revision to Section F. to modify market rent price.

Recognition Spring Youth Sports

Councilman Drumgoole expressed his desire for the Borough to host a celebration honoring the youth baseball and softball teams. The event will be held at the Recreation Center on Sunday September 10th from 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Many participants are willing to donate food and entertainment. The cost from the borough would be roughly 11K.

Mayor Sokolich stated Congressman Josh Gottheimer announced bipartisan legislation providing tax credits for families to lower the cost of little league youth recreation sports and equipment.

E-Bikes

Fire Official Steven Curry and Police Chief Matthew Hintze were present for this portion of the meeting.

The Mayor and Council along with the Fire Official and Police Chief discussed the following topics related to E-Bikes:

- Buildings are not equipped to withstand charging and storage.
- It would be problematic for the town to not act but enforcement of an ordinance will be hard to implement.
- Some building managers have implemented enforcement.
- Issues with gas emanating from e-bikes and the purchase of modified batteries to

- make the e-bike faster.
- A separate structure for battery charging would be needed to not harm individuals should an explosion occur.
 - Copious amounts of water are needed to extinguish an electric vehicle.
 - No tow operators will tow electric vehicles to their tow yard due to possible explosion.
 - If a resolution stating the police department would ensue enforcement and impounding, where would they store the impounded e-bikes.
 - Food deliverers using e-bikes harm the restaurant and public by charging in between deliveries.

It was the consensus to continue to investigate and evaluate.

Mayor Sokolich stated he has received complaints from the Business District Alliance that individuals and businesses are using the phrase “Be Fort Lee.” The B.D.A. is requesting private Fort Lee businesses ask them for permission prior to use.

The mayor believes local public organizations should be able to utilize the phrase with a level of consistency.

The mayor and council also discussed the possibility of installing an interactive sign at the Oak Tree Mall, The Modern and or the Barrymore Film Center.

On motion by Councilman Cervieri seconded by Councilman Suh and carried unanimously, the meeting was opened to the public for discussion.

There being no public discussion the meeting was adjourned on motion by Councilman Cervieri, seconded by Councilman Suh, at 6:47 PM.

Evelyn Rosario, RMC, CMC
Municipal Clerk

Prepared By:
Nadine Drumgoole
Deputy Municipal Clerk