

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 26, 2023**

The Work Session of the Board of Commissioners of the Borough of West Cape May was called to order by Mayor Sabo at 7:00 p.m. The Open Public Meetings Statement was read by Mayor Sabo, who then led those present in the flag salute. Mayor Sabo, Deputy Mayor Crawford, and Commissioner Dick answered roll call. Also in attendance: Municipal Clerk Theresa Entead, Deputy Clerk Erin Seer, Solicitor Frank Corrado, CFO Frank Donato, Deputy CFO Doris Hartman, and Engineer Anthony Chadwell.

OLD BUSINESS

Sewer on Second Avenue

Mayor Sabo said a special meeting was held Monday, April 24th. She said the discussion was thorough and the meeting was well attended. The Commission is still reviewing all the information.

Planet Networks Proposal for Fiber Optic Internet

Solicitor Corrado said he is waiting on Mr. Haase, the representative with Planet Networks, to provide information discussed at the last meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC PORTION

At this time, Mayor Sabo officially opened the meeting for Public Portion.

Pam Kaithern, 207 Stevens Street, requested that the commissioners discuss in more detail, the items that are on the consent agenda, during the workshop portion of the meeting.

Linda Riccio, 722 Maple Avenue, said she received a letter about a possible partnership with Habitat for Humanity at the Willow Avenue location. Ms. Riccio said she is an advocate at Branches and she is fully aware of low- and moderate- income housing. She expressed her concerns and opposition to any construction at that location. Mayor Sabo said no decisions have been made and the topic will be discussed in detail at the May 10th Commissioners meeting.

When no one else expressed a desire to speak, the Work Session was concluded at 7:08pm.

REGULAR MEETING

2023 Municipal Budget:

Ordinance for Second Reading and Public Hearing

623-23 An Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank for CY 2023

Mayor Sabo opened the public hearing.

When no one expressed a desire to speak, the public hearing was closed, Deputy Mayor Crawford made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dick, to adopt Ordinance No. 623-23. The motion was carried unanimously on roll call vote.

Resolutions

Resolution No. 78-23 Read by Title Only and Public Hearing – Public Hearing on 2023 Budget

Borough CFO Frank Donato said the 2023 budget was introduced March 29th and tonight the budget is on the agenda for second reading, public hearing, and adoption. He said the budget was properly advertised, reviewed by the state and approved by the state for adoption. Mr. Donato summarized the budget and said the Borough is in good financial condition. He said the municipalities in the region that were able to maintain reasonable increases to their budgets were those that thought outside the box and introduced new revenues. He said the Borough's ordinance to adopt a municipal occupancy tax has been very beneficial and without it, the tax rate increase would have been twice as much.

Mayor Crawford made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dick, to adopt Resolution No. 78-23. The motion was carried unanimously on roll call vote.

Mayor Sabo opened the public portion.

Pam Kaithern, 207 Stevens Street, asked if the occupancy tax amount was an estimate based on the six months of revenue that was received. CFO Donato said the Borough had five or six months of revenue that was used to reasonably anticipate the balance for the year. He said it is a conservative estimate that had to be certified to the state.

Gerry Alloco, 318 Third Avenue, wanted to know why cannabis revenue could not be estimated for this budget, given the revenue figures from other municipalities. CFO Donato said he doesn't currently have any West Cape May figures on which to base a projection. Solicitor Corrado said the Borough cannot base a budget projection on what is happening in another municipality.

Mr. Alloco commented on Ordinance 628-23, saying the salaries have doubled. Solicitor Corrado noted that Ordinance 628-23 is on the agenda for introduction. He explained that it will not increase salaries; it will amend the range for salaries. He said the ordinance will have a second reading and public hearing prior to adoption.

When no one else expressed a desire to speak, the public portion was closed.

Resolution No. 79-23 Authorizing Adoption of Municipal Budget for the Year 2023

Deputy Mayor Crawford made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dick, to adopt Resolution No. 79-23. The motion was carried unanimously on roll call vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion of Deputy Mayor Crawford, seconded by Commissioner Dick, the following Consent Agenda was unanimously approved on roll call vote.

Minutes:

April 12, 2023 – Work Session and Regular Meeting

April 12, 2023 – Closed Session

Ordinances for Introduction and Publication:

627-23 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 30 of the Borough of West Cape May Code Regarding Specimen Trees

628-27 An Ordinance Amending the Borough of West Cape May's Salary Ordinance (No. 360-06)

Resolutions:

80-23 Authorizing Special Event Permit to Cape May MAC for the Gardens of Cape May Tour

81-23 Establishing the West Cape May Public Accommodations Policy

82-23 Authorizing the Borough to Enter into an Assurance of Voluntary Compliance with the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights

83-23 Accepting the Resignation of Part-Time Municipal Tax Assessor Louis M. Belasco

84-23 Approving Bill Payment

NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Ordinances for Second Reading & Public Hearing:

626-23 An Ordinance Amending the West Cape May Borough Code to Establish Section 9-1.9 Entitled "Municipal Buildings, Restricted

Mayor Sabo opened the public hearing.

When no one expressed a desire to speak, the public hearing was closed and Deputy Mayor Crawford made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dick, to adopt Ordinance No. 626-23. The motion was carried unanimously on roll call vote.

Resolutions:

None

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Deputy Mayor Crawford noted Resolution 83-23, accepting the resignation of Tax Assessor Lou Belasco, who has accepted a new position elsewhere. Deputy Mayor Crawford said he will be sad to see Lou Belasco go, but wishes him well in his future endeavors. He said the Volunteer Fire Company finances are in good shape and he thanked all Borough employees for their work on the budget.

Commissioner Dick said he had nothing to report at this time.

Mayor Sabo wanted to recognize administrative professionals' day. She said she appreciates the level of professionalism and service from the Borough staff and cannot thank them enough. She also thanked the finance department for their hard work on the budget.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Sabo opened the meeting for public portion.

Pam Kaithern, 207 Stevens Street, asked what the final increase to the budget was. CFO Donato said 1.7 cents. She asked if Lou Belasco also did flood plain management work. She was advised that the flood plain management position is provided by the City of Cape May in the shared service agreement to provide construction code services between the Borough of West Cape May and the City of Cape May.

Dawn Vitagliano, 117 Emerald Avenue, said she heard there were plans to add restrooms to Wilbraham Park. Mayor Sabo said there have been no public discussions, but if the commission decided to take action on that matter, it would be done so by formal action at an open public meeting. She also confirmed that the increase in taxes was 1.7 cents.

Gerry Alloco, 318 Third Avenue, asked which commissioner would oversee the cannabis business. Mayor Sabo said she is the commissioner in charge of finance. She also said she doesn't report on sales of other businesses and isn't sure she would be able to do so for the cannabis business. Mayor Sabo said the occupancy tax check is submitted from the state with no detail. Mr. Alloco asked how the money from the cannabis tax would be used. CFO Donato said the money would go into the general fund, and that would reduce taxation.

Bud McDonough, 135 Third Avenue, does not believe public restrooms should be constructed in Wilbraham Park.

When no one else expressed a desire to speak, Mayor Sabo closed the public portion.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51pm on motion of Deputy Mayor Crawford, seconded by Commissioner Dick.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Enteadó
Municipal Clerk