

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Borough of Bogota held on Thursday, March 2, 2017 in the Bogota Council Chambers at 7:30PM.

Salute to the flag was led by Councilwoman Fede.

Roll Call: Mayor Kelemen and Council members Fede, Gates-Ferris, Macfarlane, Miranda, Murphy, and Napolitano were present. Also present were Borough Administrator Scarpa, Borough Attorney Bossong, and CFO DiMaria.

The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been satisfied as notice was sent to two newspapers and posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board on December 30, 2016.

Motion was made by Councilman Napolitano, seconded by Councilwoman Murphy, to approve the following Resolution. Motion carried.

17-068 Settlement of Tax Appeal: Singh Real Estate Dev – Block 71, Lot 1

Motion was made by Councilman Napolitano, seconded by Councilwoman Murphy, to approve the following Resolution. Motion carried.

17-069 Refund of Tax Overpayment for Block 35, Lot 20.

Motion was made by Councilman Napolitano, seconded by Councilwoman Murphy, to approve the 2/16/17 Minutes. Motion carried with Councilman Miranda abstaining due to his absence from the 2/16/17 meeting.

Discussion took place concerning the Council by-laws. Councilwoman Fede detailed the requested amendments to the by-laws proposed by the By-laws committee (Council members Fede, Gates-Ferris, and Murphy). Amendments included changing the word Counsel to Borough Attorney, allowing only 15 minutes to determine if a quorum is present, ending meetings at 10:30pm instead of 10:00pm, and removing requirement for written reports. Discussion of Special meetings took place as well. A vote was taken by Council members concerning Citizen Remarks. Council members Fede, Macfarlane, Miranda, and Napolitano voted for Citizen Remarks to be placed before the consent agenda. Council members Gates-Ferris and Murphy voted to have Citizen Remarks before the consent agenda and after the reports. A resolution with the amendments will be presented at the March 16th meeting for approval.

Discussion took place concerning expanding the Community Garden. Councilwoman Fede explained the dimensional increase which was proposed at the February 16th meeting. The Environmental Commission will oversee and approve the use of the added space. A shed and park benches will be installed. The Construction official was consulted for the acceptable size for the shed. A wood sign was agreed upon, and a local artist would like to donate a sculpture of a bird.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Fede, seconded by Councilman Macfarlane, to approve the expansion of the Community Garden. Motion carried.

Administrator Scarpa explained the details of the multi-purpose bond which will be introduced at the March 16th meeting. He said that the DPW Superintendent and the Borough Engineer drove around town to find necessary improvements. Department heads put in requests. For example, computer upgrades are needed for the police department. He explained that it is financially wise to keep the bonding under \$1,000,000 each year and gave a detailed listing to all Council members of what the bond covered. CFO DiMaria provided a list of bond payments etc. and explained that bond ordinances are really capital ordinances because they are used to purchase capital items that have different life expectancies etc.

Motion was made by Councilman Napolitano, seconded by Councilwoman Murphy, to have the bond counsel prepare the multi-purpose bond ordinance. Motion carried.

Reports:

Mayor Kelemen thanked all the Council members for agreeing to move forward with the multi-purpose bond ordinance due to the needs of the town for fire equipment, a sweeper, sidewalk repair, etc. He spoke to DPW Superintendent Kohles about repainting curbs yellow in appropriate areas, painting fire hydrants red, and cleaning the streets. Mayor Kelemen also spoke to the Superintendent of Schools about removing tree stumps from the high school field and replacing a fence. He reported that the Board of Education purchased a generator that is insufficient for their needs and agreed to give it to the Borough. The Recreation building and the Fire Department both need generators, so one of them can have it. He prepared a committee to discuss overnight parking which will include the Police Chief, the Fire Chief, Council members Murphy and Napolitano, Board of Education representative Amanda Montgomery, Cornelia Geraty, and John Powner. Mayor Kelemen will be reading Dr. Seuss in Steen School tomorrow and will be attending the induction ceremony for Bogota Jr./Sr. High School National Honors Society.

Councilwoman Gates-Ferris: DPW – She reported that the demolition of the condemned DPW building will begin next Tuesday.

Councilman Miranda: Police – He congratulated the police for the great turn-out for civilian auxiliary officers. Nine people applied and seven were approved to start at the academy. He also received positive responses from the community about the Reverse 911 being sent in English and Spanish.

Recreation – He thanked Jason Kearns for running the basketball program so efficiently with new uniforms and an increase in registrations. The Recreation Committee asked Council members Miranda and Macfarlane to walk through park for suggestions of improvements. They are looking into new software to make it easier for people to register for programs.

Councilwoman Fede: Rescue - She reported that Rescue training is fairly long, about 7 months. Rescue members will be attending the Bergenfield St. Patrick's Day parade on March 12th.

Environmental Commission - The 5th grade poster contest will take place in April. Green Fair will take place on May 13th at Waterfront Park in Ridgefield Park from 10am to 3pm. The Hess Case and the Sifford Pontiac Case are not in compliance.

Sgt. Cole prepared a report concerning handicapped parking for the VFW on West

Shore Avenue and Leonia Avenue as well as Maple Street, Fairview Avnue, and Palisade Avenue. An ordinance will have to be prepared for the changes.

Councilman Napolitano: Finance – He reported that the 2017 budget is almost ready to introduce. In 2014 there was a 5% tax increase; the cell tower was sold and overspending was over \$340,000. This year there is a “0” tax increase.

Senior Citizens: The Seniors had a Valentine’s Day Party with donuts and coffee. Every one received a rose. Shoveling of snow for the Senior Citizens needs to be coordinated.

Infrastructure: PSE&G is upgrading gas lines. Roads need to be repaved. Drainage is continuing with the Midtown Bridge. An updated Master Plan is in the works. The DPW demolition will begin soon.

Councilwoman Murphy: Fire Department – She reported that the Fire Department wrote a letter to Suez Water asking Suez to come to Bogota and look at water mains which are not conducive to holding water. Hose 2 truck went out for repair. The Fire Department would like to do a boot drive. Councilwoman Fede suggested contacting Wayne Sorge from Rescue who knows the process.

BACSA – She sent an email to BACSA but has not heard back.

Councilman Macfarlane: Board of Education – The Board of Education met on Monday. The parking lot is on hold waiting for grant approval. The gym floor is being redone for \$100,000. Painting of the gym is also being done. Boiler upgrades are needed at all schools and are in the works.

Library Board – The Library Board is waiting to find a date to dedicate the memorial to Nikki Spiegel.

Borough Administrator Scarpa reported that PSE&G will be digging up Cross Street to East Fort Lee Road. Suez Water is responsible for the fire hydrants. Bogota pays a flat fee to Suez, about \$100,000. The demolition of the DPW building was on hold waiting for PSE&G to cut off the gas lines. Road repaving for 2017 will include Kovar Street, Grey Street, Elmwood Avenue, and East Fort Lee Road. Maplewood Avenue had to be put on hold. Borough Hall will be getting a new security system. Swipe cards will also be ID. Cameras will be placed at entrance points including the cell. Prisoner security will be improved, and police desks will have monitors etc. He announced that the CFO gave a copy of the budget to the Mayor and Council. Insurance is statutory. Salary and Wages include contractual obligations for the FOP and the DPW and a 2% increase for non –union employees.

The Borough Attorney had no report.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Murphy, seconded by Councilwoman Fede, to open the meeting to Citizen Remarks. Motion carried.

Lisa Kohles said that she heard Councilman Napolitano bashing the last administration about bad things happening. She said that for the last three years she was the minority on Council. One employee cannot get a pension loan now. She told Councilman Miranda not to say that the Recreation Committee runs better than the Recreation Commission. She worked hard on the Commission. She said that the Council always had two public comments and the Republicans took it away.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Murphy, seconded by Councilman Napolitano, to close Citizen Remarks: Motion carried.

Councilman Napolitano said that he did not mention names. He explained facts. He did research from news articles and factual information.

Councilman Miranda said that his concern for the Commission was the Commission in place when he became a Councilman. He was not referring to all past Recreation Commissions.

Mayor Kelemen explained that he was on the Council four years ago. Lisa Kohles was not in the minority then. There were four Democrats and two Republicans. The Democrats argued with each other. The town was put on State financial watch in 2014. Mayor Kelemen said that he went down to Trenton to solve the financial issues with Administrator Scarpa and CFO DiMaria who was hired by the former administration. Also, there were never two times for citizen remarks on the agenda.

Motion to go into Closed Session was made by Councilman Napolitano, seconded by Councilwoman Fede. Motion carried. Resolution 17-069C was added to the agenda.

Meeting reconvened at 11:25pm and motion was made by Councilman _____, seconded by Councilman _____ to adjourn. Motion carried.