

BOROUGH OF BRADLEY BEACH

BUDGET AMENDMENT SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

JULY 8, 2022 AT 5:00 P.M.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT, PUBLIC MEETINGS MAY BE HELD IN PERSON OR BY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT TO INCLUDE STREAMING SERVICES AND OTHER ONLINE MEETING PLATFORMS (N.J.S.A. 10:4-8b).

THIS MEETING WAS HELD IN-PERSON AND THROUGH ZOOM MEETING PLATFORM, BEING BROADCAST FROM BOROUGH HALL, 701 MAIN STREET, BRADLEY BEACH, NJ 07720. PUBLIC

PARTICIPATION FOR THIS BUDGET AMENDMENT INTRODUCTION SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING OF JULY 8, 2022 WAS AVAILBLE IN PERSON OR THROUGH THE ZOOM LINK POSTED TO THE WEBSITE AND ADVERTISED IN THE ASBURY PARK PRESS ON 7/1/22 AND THE STAR LEDGER ON 7/6/22.

WITH ADEQUATE NOTICE HAVING BEEN GIVEN, THE MUNICIPAL CLERK IS DIRECTED TO INCLUDE THIS STATEMENT IN THE MINUTES OF THIS MEETING.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fox opened the meeting with a salute to the flag.

Sunshine Law

The meeting has been noticed publicly according to the Open Public Meetings Act requirement.

ROLL CALL 5:00 P.M.

Present: Councilman Bonnell, Councilman Gubitosi, Councilman Sexsmith, Councilman Weber, Mayor Fox
Borough Administrator, Kimberly M. Humphrey
Chief Financial Officer, Anthony Mannino
Alternate Borough Attorney, Christina Malamut
Municipal Clerk, Erica Kostyz
Deputy Municipal Clerk, Michele Whille

Public Commentary on the Agenda Item:

In Person:

Thomas J. Coan, 612 Third, inquired about the Library, Beach and Sewer Utilities, and taxable amount in the Budget Amendment.

Mr. Mannino and Ms. Humphrey addressed Mr. Coan's inquiries.

ZOOM: None

Budget Amendment Resolution:

Mr. Mannino, read the Budget Amendment Resolution by line item and amount for the Governing Body and the Public.

Mayor Fox addressed the following:

- **Recapped Council concerns and reasons for turning down the Amendment on the 6/28/22 Agenda.**
- **Stated concerns , risk factors and pay-outs.**
- **Increase in tax levy.**
- **Tax Rate decrease of 10.7 percent**
- **Uncertainty in expenses.**
- **\$100,000.00 not being taken from the Utility Accounts**
- **Spending level has been decreased over the last couple of years.**

Mayor Fox stated his intentions for this Budget are not political and his decisions and rationale are in the best interest for the town. Mayor Fox stated he compromised by not transferring funds from the Utility accounts to the Current Fund and stated he will not make short term decisions that will affect the town long term. Mayor Fox urged Council to pass this amendment. Mayor Fox thanked the Administrator and the CFO for their challenging work and diligence.

Councilman Gubitosi had several inquiries regarding tax levies, insurance line items and surplus.

A lengthy discussion ensued amongst Councilman Gubitosi, Administrator Humphrey and Mr. Mannino and Mayor Fox addressing Councilman Gubitosi's inquiries.

Councilman Bonnell commented there are a majority of line items that exceed the spending amount from 2021 significantly.

Ms. Humphrey explained the reason for this was to properly allocate departments, which was not being done previously.

Councilman Sexsmith did not have any comments.

Councilman Weber acknowledged the Mayor honored the Council's request to not transfer funds from the utilities, however stated he did not expect this change would cause a tax increase for residents. Councilman Weber suggested future budgets and/or amendments be shared with the entire Council first for approval before sending to the State.

Ms. Humphrey stated the process done this year is the process in this form of government, however a different method can be looked into next year.

Resolutions:

Resolution 2022-186 Budget Amendment Resolution

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2022-186 Budget Amendment Resolution

Councilman Gubitosi gave the following statement:

I referenced in our last Council meeting that this was an outrageously horribly flawed budget process. I went literally two months asking questions without getting answers. I had personally called the DCA a number of times. I had our Mayor contact residents directly telling them that “Councilman Gubitosi was going to be responsible for a large increase that was coming in our taxes,” and I only found out about that because the residents contacted me and said, “What are you doing Councilman Gubitosi?.” As it turns out, you have seen that we do not have a large increase in our taxes and certainly, it was not anticipated at that point in time.

I did go two months asking questions. I have this documented. Without getting answers to my questions. One of the most significant questions was “Why are Salaries and Wages increasing \$700,000? I never was given an answer. However, on May 20th, when we did meet with the CFO, and in that meeting, we were reviewing the budget Amendment at that time, and Anthony shared with me at that time that we DID reduce Salaries and Wages at that time from \$700,000 to about. We reduced Salaries and Wages \$301,000. And I said “Great, how did you do that?” The answer was, working with Kim, they cut back on planned new hires. So, through this fairly lengthy process, that was like “pulling teeth” for us to get answers, the one thing I have said from the beginning, was I wanted to manage taxes effectively for the residents. I resent anyone who says that I had any motive other than to do what’s right for our residents. Regarding the budget, I do think we are at a much better place than we’ve been, but it was painful getting here. I do not understand the full math Mr. Mannino, it would have been nice if someone could have explained it to the rest of the Council as to why we had to increase taxes instead of why we could not increase anticipated surplus. My final comment for the residents here and on Zoom, this process was so bad, that a little while back, I reached out to an attorney and I said:

“I cannot get answers to my questions. I am a Council member here. Is there a way that I can sue the Borough on behalf of the Council, to compel the Administration to answer my questions?” The attorney said “No. You cannot compel the Administration to collaborate with you. All you can do as a Council member is to vote NO.”

So, for that reason, I am voting “NO.”

ON MOTION: by Fox/Bonnell to approve the Budget Amendment Resolution.

ROLL CALL: AYES: Bonnell, Sexsmith, Mayor Fox
NAYS: Gubitosi, Weber
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

APPROVED

Public Commentary:

In Person:

Joe Kulick, 509 Monmouth Avenue, inquired if the Borough will be in compliance with the upcoming pay-outs.

Ms. Humphrey addressed Mr. Kulick's inquiry.

Allen Rapaport, 512 Newark Avenue, spoke about surplus and performing better practices moving forward.

A discussion ensued for several minutes between Mr. Rapaport, Ms. Humphrey, and Mr. Mannino regarding management practices and various financial topics (ex. Bond Anticipation Notes and Arbitrage).

Thomas J. Coan, 612 Third Avenue, congratulated the Governing Body on passing the budget amendment and had several inquiries.

Ms. Humphrey and Mr. Mannino addressed Mr. Coan's inquiries.

Thomas Gavin, 414 Fourth Avenue, had inquiries regarding surplus in the utilities.

Mr. Mannino and Ms. Humphrey addressed Mr. Gavin's inquiries.

Linda Duffy, 312 Brinley Avenue, thanked the Administrator and CFO and Council for passing the Budget Amendment.

ZOOM: None

ADJOURNMENT

Fox/Bonnell moved to adjourn the Special Meeting at 6:40 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 6:40 P.M.

Erica Kostyz

Erica Kostyz, RMC, CMR
Municipal Clerk