

## BOROUGH OF TOTOWA

### MINUTES OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

**March 26, 2024**

**PRESENT:** Mayor John Coiro, presiding, Council President Lou D'Angelo, Councilman Anthony Picarelli, Councilman John Capo, Councilman Patrick Fierro, Councilman Sanders Reynoso, Municipal Clerk Joseph Wassel and Municipal Attorney Kristin Corrado.

**ABSENT:** Councilman William Bucher.

Mayor John Coiro called the meeting to order and asked the Municipal Clerk to call the roll.

Municipal Clerk Wassel recited the Prayer of the Meeting followed with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag with the public participating.

Mayor Coiro asked the Clerk to read the statement of the meeting.

Municipal Clerk Wassel read the following statement: This meeting of the Mayor and Council held on this day is being held in accordance with Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 of the State of New Jersey as amended. The agenda for this meeting has been prepared and distributed to the Mayor and Council and a copy has been on file in the Office of the Municipal Clerk.

Mayor Coiro asked if any members of the Council, the Municipal Clerk or the Municipal Attorney wished to address the Council.

Councilman Picarelli: Commented that this is the first time that he attended the Easter Bunny Breakfast as a parent and thanked Recreation Director Mark Monteyne, Board of Recreation President Mickey Pascucci and the Board of Recreation, and the Barnyard & Carriage House for a job well done.

Councilman Reynoso: Reiterated those comments.

## CITIZENS HEARD:

John Mancinelli, 14 Mountainwood Court: Said he is the President of the Arlington Hills Homeowners Association and when they usually meet only a handful of people attend, but at their last meeting 60+ residents came out and the reason was because of the traffic due to the apartments that were built on Shepherds Lane and that it's only going to get worse because The Manor is adding on and further down the road there will be other apartment complexes. Advised that they have two suggestions to alleviate the problem: 1) Install a traffic light at Union Boulevard and Shepherds Lane, but concedes that that will also back up traffic; and 2) Install an access road between Shepherds Lane and Boyle Avenue, if possible, to help them out because he said that their homes are assessed very high, they are good citizens and they vote.

Ray Diaz, 26 Hamilton Trail: Remarked that the access road would also allow their children to cut through to get to the PAL. Also, stated that there is a lot of speeding on Hamilton and he shoots baskets in the street with his kids.

Glenn Nicholls, 105 Shepherds Lane: Stated that he lives across the street from The Manor and the speeding is bad and his cars have been hit and damaged and asked if speed bumps could be installed.

Patti Sesso, 35 Stirling Terrace: Asked for stop signs to be installed at Mountainwood Court/Hamilton Trail and Huntington Terrace/Hamilton Trail.

Mayor Coiro: Advised that he would address these in reverse order: 1) Regarding the stop signs he asked DPW Superintendent Jim Niland to check the intersections and paint the road and put up signs; 2) For the speeding he asked Detective Sergeant Gary Bierach to have our officers patrol there more and also put up the speed monitor. And, with the speed bumps, we would have to get Department of Transportation approval and in the past they have not allowed them on hills; 3) Regarding the traffic light, we can look into that, but would also need County approval and would have to get traffic counts and have a traffic study performed. Asked who is making the left turn onto Union Boulevard and the response was the employees from Coronet, the residents from The Manor and patrons from Quick Check, then was told that these people are basically making two lanes already. Asked DPW Superintendent Niland to measure Shepherds Lane to see if a left turn and right turn only lanes would fit and to contact our engineer.

A conversation ensued.

Kelly Rosiello, 10 Murphy Court: Asked about having sidewalks installed along Shepherds Lane to make it safer for the children waiting for the school bus. Mayor Coiro: Responded that we would have to research it, but ultimately the cost would be assessed

to the property owners. Requested Detective Sergeant Bierach to have an officer follow the school bus for a while.

Val Mancinelli, 14 Mountainwood Court: Said that when an apartment complex goes up you only give notice to property owners within 200 feet and asked if that could be extended and they could be notified because they are directly affected. Mayor Coiro: Explained that legally we can't force the applicant to extend the 200 foot limit, but we can certainly let you (President of the Association) know so you can attend the meetings.

Mayor Coiro: Getting back to the access road from Shepherds Lane to Boyle Avenue, he said that we don't own the property and that it's in a Riparian Zone listed on the Department of Environmental Protection maps, so we can't build on it.

Ray Diaz, 26 Hamilton Trail: Mentioned that the property at Jeremy Estates is a mess with soil runoff again. Mayor Coiro: Told him that our Building Department has been out there and issued warnings/summonses.

Frank Grosso, 131 Shepherds Lane: Suggested you install the speed bumps in front of his house and make Willard Avenue a one-way street. Mayor Coiro: Reexplained the issue with speed bumps and that we would have to talk to the residents of Willard Avenue before making their road a one-way. We also restricted parking on Union Boulevard in the morning to help alleviate the traffic.

Patti Sesso, 35 Stirling Terrace: Replied that the no parking on Union Boulevard helps, but can we also restrict parking on Willard Avenue by the Krausers. DPW Superintendent Niland: Told her the curb is already painted yellow for no parking.

Ismael Rodriguez, 18 Murphy Court: Said that The Manor doesn't have any security at the entrance to let delivery drivers in, so the drivers pull in then have to back out and sit on Shepherds Lane waiting for someone to go in or out and then try to beat the gate to get in and while waiting they leave a lot of garbage and debris on the street. And now with another 100 units coming it's only going to get worse. Mayor Coiro: Responded that we will talk to the owner about getting security.

John Mancinelli, 14 Mountainwood Court: Agreed with Mr. Rodriguez about the delivery drivers and also asked that The Manor install a stop sign coming out of their complex. Mayor Coiro: Told him that he would also talk to the owner about installing a stop sign.

There was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to approve the Minutes of the Mayor and Council for the meeting of March 12, 2024. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE:

There was a motion by Councilman Picarelli, seconded by Councilman D'Angelo to approve Resolution No. 2024-07 for the payment of bills. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

There was a motion by Councilman Picarelli, seconded by Councilman D'Angelo to approve Resolution No. 2024-08 Authorizing The Transfer Of 2023 Budget Appropriations. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

There was a motion by Councilman Picarelli, seconded by Councilman D'Angelo to adopt the following resolution authorizing the Treasurer to issue refunds to various property owners pursuant to State Tax Court judgments. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, there has been a State Tax Court Judgment to reduce the evaluation on the following.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Treasurer of the Borough of Totowa is authorized to refund this amount.

<u>Block</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Property/Owner</u>	<u>Payable To:</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Amount</u>
177	2	Totowa Plaza Rt. 46 LLC 1 Route 46	Mandelbaum Barrett PC Trust Account	2023	13,976,900	11,550,000	\$62,929.52

There was a motion by Councilman Picarelli, seconded by Councilman D'Angelo to adopt the following resolution authorizing the Treasurer to issue a tax refund for Antonio Lujan, 138 Washington Place, Block 112, Lot 14 due to a 100% Exemption for a 100% permanent and total disability. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

## RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Antonio Lujan, 138 Washington Place, Block 112, Lot 14 has applied for a 100% exemption for a 100% permanent and total disability due to a wartime service connected disability; and

WHEREAS, he meets all the requirements for the exemption; and

WHEREAS, the 100% disability became effective on November 8, 2023, and he applied for exemption on March 20, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Corelogic paid the property taxes from March 20, 2024 to March 31, 2024 in the amount of \$276.37, and is now entitled to a refund of \$276.37.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Treasurer is authorized to refund \$276.37 to Corelogic and upon paying the refund due to the Taxpayer, this property will be exempted from future tax payments.

A letter from the American Legion Memorial Post No. 227 inviting the Mayor and Council to participate in the Annual Memorial Day Parade on Sunday, May 26, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. was received and filed.

### COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY:

There was no report.

### COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS:

There was no report.

#### COMMITTEE ON ENGINEERING & PUBLIC PROPERTY:

A letter was received from the Totowa Public Library requesting permission to use the Municipal Parking Lot for the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission Agency on Wheels on the following dates: Monday April 15, Friday May 10, Friday July 19, Tuesday October 2 & Monday November 4, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. There was a motion by Councilman Capo, seconded by Councilman Reynoso to grant permission. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

A request was received from the Board of Recreation to use the Municipal Parking Lot for their Annual Car Show on Sunday, April 21, 2024. There was a motion by Councilman Capo, seconded by Councilman Reynoso to approve the request. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

A letter was received from resident John Mancinelli requesting permission to use the Municipal Parking Lot for a bus trip to New York City on Sunday, April 21, 2024. There was a motion by Councilman Capo, seconded by Councilman Reynoso to approve the request to use the lower parking lot at the PAL off of Crosby Avenue. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

#### COMMITTEE ON LIAISON & INSPECTION:

There was no report.

#### COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION & ORDINANCES:

There was a motion by Councilman Fierro, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to introduce on first reading, refer to the Planning Board for review and advertise for public hearing the following entitled ordinance. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

**ORDINANCE NO. 06-2024**

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF TOTOWA  
CHAPTER 415 ENTITLED "ZONING AND LAND USE", PART 3, "SUBDIVISION  
AND SITE PLAN REVIEW", ARTICLE XIII, "DESIGN STANDARDS", SECTION 98,  
"GRADING AND SOIL REMOVAL"**

There was a motion by Councilman Fierro, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to adopt the following Proclamation In Honor And Celebration Of Patricia Knapp. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

**PROCLAMATION IN HONOR AND CELEBRATION OF PATRICIA KNAPP**

WHEREAS, Patricia Knapp was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1933 and raised in Garfield, New Jersey. She graduated from Montclair State Teachers College in 1955 and went on to earn a Master's Degree from Jersey City College. In 1960, Patricia and her husband Andrew Knapp made Totowa their home and they raised their daughters Cynthia and Andrea in the community they came to cherish; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1970's, Patricia Knapp signed on as a substitute teacher in the Totowa School District and that job lead to a full-time position as a 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts Teacher at Memorial School. Throughout her career, Patricia Knapp was a respected and valued educator. She will forever be known for her pioneering role in establishing Totowa's Gifted and Talented Program where she served as the G and T Teacher until her retirement in 2000; and

WHEREAS, Patricia Knapp was appointed to the Borough of Totowa Public Library Board of Trustees in February of 1982 by then Superintendent of Schools Nat Giancola and became an invaluable member of the Board serving as Vice President for many years. She enjoyed championing the library's causes and being a part of its achievements; and

WHEREAS, during her tenure as a Trustee, Patricia Knapp saw the Borough of Totowa Public Library move into the digital age through automation; supported the library and staff during 3 renovations and a 2,700 square foot expansion; and witnessed the library's lifelong learning offerings and services grow substantially to include arts and crafts, book discussions, writing groups, coding classes, computer classes, workshops, fitness classes, knitting groups, story times, yoga classes and more; and

WHEREAS, Patricia Knapp attended hundreds of board meetings, countless open houses, numerous Dr. Seuss' birthday celebrations and memorable occasions including the library's 50th anniversary celebration in 2007; and

WHEREAS, by continually demonstrating her devotion to the Borough of Totowa through her steadfast commitment to maintain and improve the public library for its citizenry, Patricia Knapp has established a model to emulate and set a standard of excellence toward which others might strive.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa do hereby congratulate Patricia Knapp upon her retirement and pays tribute to her service, leadership, and commitment and extends sincere best wishes for continued success in all her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED, that this proclamation be made a part of the permanent records of the Borough of Totowa.

There being no further business to come before the Council, there was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli that the meeting be adjourned. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

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Joseph Wassel, RMC  
Municipal Clerk