

**MINUTES FOR COUNCIL MEETING FEBRUARY 7, 2024**

The Meeting was called to order by City Clerk, Deborah Brooks at 6:00 P.M. The City Clerk read the Opening Prayer, all recited the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call was taken.

PRESENT: Councilwoman Dato, Councilman Conrad, Councilman McLaughlin, Councilman Reilly and Council President Gross.

ALSO PRESENT: Deborah Brooks, City Clerk, Mark Rasimowicz, City Engineer and Christopher Zingaro, Esq.

President Gross noted Christopher Zingaro will be sitting in for Mr. Womack this evening. President Gross, in response to Ms. Szaro’s request for more communication to the public, updated everyone with the following: We are working on the TNR program, we are working on the audio/live stream project budget and it is a Council decision, no decision has been made regarding instituting an Environmental Commission, and finally we lost a good friend in Jerry Pizzillo.

The Clerk read the Certification of Meeting Notice.

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**CONSENT AGENDA:**

The following items are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be acted upon in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member so requests. In this event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in the normal sequence of the Agenda.

**MOVED by:** Mr. McLaughlin of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution NO. 24-060 through NO. 24-063 are hereby approved. **SECONDED by:** Mr. Conrad. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** All in favor.

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- NO. 24-060            A RESOLUTION FOR THE ACCEPTANCE AND ADOPTION OF THE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP) FOR LONG TERM EXEMPTION LAW AGREEMENTS FOR PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES (PILOT’S)
- NO. 24-061            RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TAX EXEMPTION OF VETERAN – GARNETT
- NO. 24-062            RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REFUND OF TAX OVERPAYMENT – VILLIG
- NO. 24-063            RESOLUTOIN AUTHORIZING A REFUND OF MISCELLANIOUS PAYMENT – BRYAN E NUNEX MONEGRO

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**RESOLUTION NO. 24-064**  
**APPROVAL AND RELEASE OF MINUTES**

**BE IT RESOLVED,** that the City Council of the City of South Amboy does hereby approve and release the Council Minutes of the January 3, 2024 Council Meeting.

**MOVED by:** Mr. Reilly of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution No. 24-064 is hereby approved. **SECONDED by:** Mr. Conrad **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Ayes: Conrad, Reilly, Gross  
Abstain: McLaughlin, Dato

**RESOLUTION NO. 24-065**

**APPROVAL OF BILL LIST**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of South Amboy does hereby receive and approve the payment of the bill list dated January 10, 2024, as presented by the Chief Financial Officer.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the bill list be appended to the official minutes.

**MOVED by:** Mr. McLaughlin of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution No. 24-065 is hereby approved. **SECONDED by:** Mr. Conrad. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** All in favor.

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**ORDINANCE**

**INTRODUCTION/FIRST READING**

**ORDINANCE 2024-03**

AN ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK  
(N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)

**MOVED by:** Mr. Reilly, that Ordinance #2024-03 be introduced on first reading and advertised for second reading which is scheduled for the March 6, 2024 meeting.

**SECONDED by:** Mr. McLaughlin, **ROLL CALL VOTE:** All in favor.

**ORDINANCE 2024-04**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING ORDINANCE NO. 1036 ENTITLED "PARKING AND TRAFFIC REGULATIONS FOR THE CITY OF SOUTH AMBOY" IN THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY -ADDITION OF 15 MINUTE PARKING SIGNS

**MOVED by:** Mr. Conrad, that Ordinance #2024-04 be introduced on first reading and advertised for second reading which is scheduled for the March 6, 2024 meeting.

**SECONDED by:** Ms. Dato, **ROLL CALL VOTE:** All in favor.

**ADOPTION/SECOND READING**

**ORDINANCE 2024-01**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING ORDINANCE NO. 1036 ENTITLED "PARKING AND TRAFFIC REGULATIONS FOR THE CITY OF SOUTH AMBOY" IN THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY -REMOVE 230 B JOHN ST. AND 138 B AUGUSTA ST.

**OPEN PUBLIC - no comment**

**CLOSE PUBLIC**

**MOVED by:** Mr. Reilly, of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Ordinance #2024-01 is hereby adopted.

**SECONDED by:** Mr. McLaughlin **ROLL CALL VOTE:** All in favor.

**ORDINANCE 2024-02**

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 119 AND 131 SOUTH BROADWAY FOR PUBLIC USE.

**OPEN PUBLIC – no comment**  
**CLOSE PUBLIC**

**MOVED by:** Mr. Reilly, of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Ordinance #2024-02 is hereby adopted.

**SECONDED by:** Mr. Conrad **ROLL CALL VOTE:** All in favor.

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**COMMENTS:**

Mr. Reilly:

- Thanked the food pantry and first responders for their continued good work.
- Congratulations to retired Police Chief LaVigne, thanks for keeping us safe and good luck in retirement. Best of luck to the two new officers, Marcus Nunez and Kyle Gasiewski
- Noted Government Week is approaching and we are moving forward with the Essay Contest for the high school students as well as the mock council meeting on April 17th. Additionally, Independence Fire House will be having an open house on April 17<sup>th</sup>.

Brian McLaughlin:

- Thanked everyone who is attending this evening’s meeting.
- Congratulated Chief LaVigne on his retirement.
- Noted we are getting an increase in the number of volunteers.
- Confirmed with Clerk Brooks that the two official papers of the City are the Home News Tribune and the Star Ledger.

Ms. Dato:

- Noted she is pleased we adopted the resolution authorizing the purchase of the two problematic properties and is sure it will help with the parking to enhance the downtown area.
- Is pleased to see the PILOT SOP’s put in place.
- Noted she missed the last meeting but is happy to see the Resolution supporting nursing staff increases was passed.
- Noted it is Black History Month and there is an event on the 29<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at the high school presented by the students on African Americans in the Arts.
- Wished everyone a Happy Valentine Day and a fun Superbowl.

Mr. Conrad:

- Congratulated Mr. Gross on being the Grand Marshal at the upcoming St. Pat’s Parade.
- Thanked and congratulated the retiring Chief of Police LaVigne and welcomed the new officers Nunez and Gasiewski.
- Thanked the volunteers and first aid workers and their families for their continued dedication.
- Noted February is Black History Month and it is a time to recognize Black History as an indelible part of American History.

Mr. Gross:

- Thanked the first responders.

Mr. Kales:

- Updated the Council on the steps moving forward to complete the purchase of the 119 and 131 South Broadway properties.
- Noted that in the last January meeting a request had been made to increase communication from the various departments to the public. Effective March 6, Department Heads will be attending the meetings as a trial run over the next 6 months.
- Reiterated that the update in the sound system and live streaming project is moving forward and just today he received a scope of work from BIS.
- Sent his condolences to the families of Jerry Pizzillo, a personal friend, and to the family of Kathy Vigilante, the former Municipal Clerk.
- Reported the PILOT SOP procedures are in place.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Joe Szaro, 370 Fifth Street, made a statement regarding the Veterans Memorial Plaza on Bordentown Avenue and how as a friend of Jerry Pizzillo and history buff and member of American Legion, he had discussed how the memorial should look and what plaques would be put up. Jerry had told him that the Park should not be named after one Veteran but should honor all Veterans and he agreed with him. To honor Jerry at the plaza Mr. Szaro has sent a proposal he hopes the Council will consider.

Brandon Russell, 327 Fourth St., wanted to clear up a few things noting Mr. Kales said he had been instructed to look into live streaming, but that is not what has been said prior and wanted to know if someone was lying and asked if the decision has been finalized that it will only be live streaming. Mr. Gross vehemently stated he is getting fed up with Mr. Russell's nonsense and that he had stated clearly at the beginning of the meeting it will be a Council decision and that at this point we are researching live-streaming and Mr. Russell keeps beating a dead horse. Mr. Russell stated he didn't know it was a dead horse and he thought it was an active discussion. Mr. Gross asked Mr. Russell if he had any other questions and Mr. Russell sat down.

Chris Smiga, 144 Second St., received information regarding the cost of the purchase of the two properties on Bordentown and the estimate of the entire project. Mr. Kales said a very rough estimate would be between seven and eight hundred thousand dollars.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 24-066**

#### **AUTHORIZATION TO MOVE INTO AN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**WHEREAS**, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) (1-9) permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances;

**WHEREAS**, the Council is of the opinion that such circumstances exist.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Council of the City of South Amboy, County of Middlesex and State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The general nature of the subject matters to be discussed is as follows:

Personnel

2. It is anticipated at this time that the above stated subject matters will be made public when the matters are concluded or as soon thereafter as it is deemed to be in the public interest to do so.
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

**MOVED by:** Ms. Dato of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution NO. 24-066 is hereby approved. **SECONDED by:** Mr. Conrad. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** All in favor.

The public portion of the meeting was closed at 6:29pm and the Council went into a closed session.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Gross and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 7:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Brooks  
Municipal Clerk  
Approved February 21, 2024