

**MINUTES FOR COUNCIL MEETING APRIL 3, 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, David Kales, BA, Mayor Henry, Dan Balka, CFO, Mark Rasimowicz, City Engineer and Francis Womack, Esq.

The Clerk read the Certification of Meeting Notice.

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**SWEARING IN OF OFFICERS:** Mayor Henry swore in the below officers in the presence of friends and family.

- Capt. Brian McCabe
- Lt. Michael Kelly
- Sgt. Christopher Norek

**PROCLAMATION:** Mr. Reilly read the Proclamation honoring Jamie Norek in the presence of friends and family.

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**BUDGET ADOPTION:**

Gary Higgins reviewed the budget and noted the Division of Local Government Services had given their authorization to the Council to adopt. He discussed the reserve, the small increase and the general great shape the finances of the City of South Amboy are in.

President Gross asked the Council members if they had any questions or comments. Mr. Reilly noted the budget is in better shape than last year and received confirmation regarding the PILOT payments. Mr. McLaughlin thanked Mr. Kales, Mr. Balka and Mr. Higgins for their good work and noted his only dissent with the budget was the Confidential Aide to the Mayor position. Ms. Dato is pleased with the budget and noted how Mr. Kales and Mr. Balka listened to the needs of the Council and made it work regarding areas such as the swimming lessons, equipment for the First Aid Squad, holding taxes, etc. Mr. Conrad appreciated the collaborative effort that went into putting the budget together

**RESOLUTION 24-083**  
**ADOPTION OF 2024 BUDGET**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of South Amboy, County of Middlesex that the budget hereinbefore set forth is hereby adopted and shall constitute an appropriation for the purposes stated of the sums therein set forth as appropriations, and authorization of the amount of \$23,316,806.34 for municipal purposes.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the summary of revenues and appropriations are approved as attached.

**MOVED by:** Mr. Conrad of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution NO. 24-083 is hereby adopted. **SECONDED by:** Mr. McLaughlin. ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes: Conrad, Dato, McLaughlin, Reilly, Gross

Mayor Henry thanked the Council for adopting the budget and thanked Mr. Kales and Mr. Balka for there hard work. Noted the cooperation between the Administration and the Council.

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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. Conrad of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution NO. 24-084 through NO. 24-085 are hereby approved. **SECONDED by:** Ms. Dato. **ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favor.**

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- NO. 24-084 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF THE CASH BOND TO AMBIENT CONDITIONING -PB#444-23
- NO. 24-085 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OR HIS DESIGNEE TO EXECUTE THE PURCHASE OF ONE PIERCE FIRE APPARATUS- MODEL 23P-105-ENFORCER PUMPER-1023 THROUGH THE HOUSTON GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL ("H-GAC") COOPERATIVE PURCHASING PROGRAM

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**RESOLUTIONS:**

**RESOLUTION NO. 24-086**  
**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 March 20, 2024 Council Meeting.

**MOVED by: Mr. McLaughlin** of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution No. 24-086 is hereby approved. **SECONDED by: Mr. Conrad** **ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favor**

**RESOLUTION NO. 24-087**  
**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 March 28, 2024, as presented by the Chief Financial Officer.

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

**MOVED by: Ms. Dato** of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution No. 24-087 is hereby approved. **SECONDED by: Mr. Conrad.** **ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favor.**

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**COMMENTS:**

Mr. Gross noted that the TNR Ordinance was still in Mr. Womack’s hands for his review and that as soon as it was approved, the Administration will be reaching out to the TNR Association for a meeting.

Mr. Reilly:

- Thanked the First Responders and Food Pantry volunteers for their continued support.

- Reminded everyone that Government Week will be celebrated at the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting and would include the Independence Open House, announcing the Essay Winners and the 6pm Mock Council held by the middle school government club.
- Stated the budget is great and reinstitutes a bigger arts & crafts program, address parking with the purchase of the Broadway properties and still maintains an excellent surplus.
- Congratulated Administration for the purchase of the new fire truck.
- Noted there will be an AOH fundraiser on April 13<sup>th</sup> at 271 Second St. from 6-10pm.
- Congratulated the newly promoted officers and Mr. Norek.

Mr. McLaughlin:

- Congratulated the newly promoted Officers and thanked Mr. Norek for his years of volunteerism.
- Noted the weather had been keeping OEM busy with all the rain.
- Noted the Ferry Terminal project was moving forward.
- Thanked Mr. Kales for straightening out the issues with the PILOT reporting.

Mr. Conrad:

- Congratulated the newly sworn in Officers and thanked Mr. Norek for his service as a volunteer. He noted many of our volunteers and First Aid workers serve double duty at the food pantry.
- Reiterated that the budget was a success due to the collaborative efforts of the Council and Administration and it keeps faith with the priorities of the City, commitments made to the volunteers, didn't cut programs, is focusing on the downtown area and is addressing the parking situation. He is hoping upcoming budgets will focus on more observances which mark the City's great diversity.

Ms. Dato:

- Congratulated the newly promoted Officers and Mr. Norek.
- Stated appreciation for Speaker Coughlin in appropriating funds for the new fire truck.
- Reminded everyone the Primary is June 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Thanked the Department Heads for being available at the meeting.

Mr. Gross:

- Congratulated the Officers on their promotions.
- Stated he is happy with the budget.
- Noted the Council will be going into Executive Session.

Mayor Henry:

- Stated the budget was very good and thanked Speaker Coughlin for his help in attaining the grant funds for the new fire truck.
- Congratulated the newly promoted Officers and thanked Jamie Norek for all his contributions to the City.

Mr. Kales:

- Thanked the Department Heads for attending this evening's meeting
- Noted the budget was truly a collaborative effort and thanked Mr. Balka and Mr. Higgins for their efforts.
- Thanked Larry Parsons for being the squeaky wheel in attaining the new fire truck.
- Reported the Recreation Program will be moving forward and will be held at the elementary school.

Mr. Womack – stated he will save his comments for the Executive session.

Mr. Rasimowicz – noted the Bike Lane striping project is out to bid and the demolition of 131 Broadway project should be out to bid shortly.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Melissa Steele, 214 Catherine St., stated her concern over the lack of response from Woodbridge Animal Control and hoped the City might re-evaluate the contract. She thanked the Council for the TNR update.

Greta Grasso, 413 David St., reiterated Ms. Steele’s concern with the lack of response from Woodbridge Animal Control and the need to take a look at the contract.

On motion by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. McLaughlin and passed unanimously, Resolution 24-088 was adopted and the Council went into Executive Session. The public portion of the meeting was closed.

**RESOLUTION NO. 24-088**  
**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:  
  
Litigation - JIF
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.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. McLaughlin and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 7:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Brooks  
Municipal Clerk  
Approved 4-17-24