

**MINUTES FOR COUNCIL MEETING DECEMBER 11, 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: Councilman Conrad, Councilwoman Dato, Councilman McLaughlin, Councilman Reilly, and Council President Gross.

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Henry, Deborah Brooks, City Clerk, CFO Balka, Attorney Womack, City Eng. Rasimowitz.

The Clerk read the Certification of Meeting Notice.

\*\*\*\*\*

**ANNUAL BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING**

TOM SIKORSKI – Reviewed his experience with the Middlesex County Board of Health and emphasized that South Amboy has 24/7 service coverage.

\*\*\*\*\*

**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:** Ms. Dato of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolutions NO. 24-193 through NO. 24-199 are hereby approved. **SECONDED by:** Mr Conrad. **ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favor.**

\*\*\*\*\*

NO. 24-193 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING VETERAN TAX DEDUCTION – KALES

NO. 24-194 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SENIOR CITIZEN TAX DEDUCTION – SONSIADCK

NO. 24-195 RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE INSERTION OF A SPECIAL ITEM OF REVENUE IN THE BUDGET PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 (CH. 159, P.L. 148) – PUBLIC AND PRIVATE REVENUES OFFSET BY APPROPRIATIONS

NO. 24-196 RESOLUTION AWARDED CONTRACT FOR ROAD IMPROVEMENTS BROADWAY PHASE 1 TO DLS CONTRACTING

NO. 24-197 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF SOUTH AMBOY TO ENTER INTO THE NEW JERSEY COOPERATIVE PURCHASING ALLIANCE COOPERATIVE PRICING AGREEMENT

NO. 24-198 RESOLUTION CERTIFYING ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP WITH SOUTH AMBOY FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR NEW JERSEY STATE FIREMEN’S ASSOCIATION ELIGIBILITY – KROSS

NO. 24-199 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF A CASH BOND TO DONNA CARVER – BA-2-1031- 136 GEORGE ST.

\*\*\*\*\*

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**RESOLUTION NO. 24-200 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 November 25, 2024 Council Meeting.

**MOVED by:** Mr. Reilly of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution No. 24-200 is hereby approved. **SECONDED by: Mr. Conrad ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes: Conrad, McLaughlin, Reilly , Gross Abstain: Dato.**

**RESOLUTION NO. 24-201 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 December 5, 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. Conrad of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution No. 24-200 hereby approved. **SECONDED by: Ms. Dato. ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favo.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**COMMENTS:**

Mr. McLaughlin:

- Thanked everyone who attended this evening’s meeting.
- Stated that tonight was his last meeting. Over the years he ran for Council twice and Mayor twice and is batting 500. He noted it was a coincidence that tonight’s date of December 11<sup>th</sup> was the same day he started working for NYC District Carpenters Union 1556. He presented a check from the Carpenters Union to the Friends of South Amboy Organization. Mr. McLaughlin spoke about his experience of dirty politics he encountered over the years and while he could take it, it upset him that it affected his wife Amy who has done so much in fundraising, etc. for the residents of South Amboy over the years with her “Front Porch” project and food bank efforts. He also presented a check on behalf of his wife’s photography business. He noted it has been a wild ride and he has enjoyed every minute of it. He thanked Lucas Brothers Construction Co. and Lagoda’s for their contributions to Toys for Tots. He thanked Mr. Kales and the residents who supported him over the years and noted he would be supporting Mr. Smiga in his upcoming run for Mayor. He wished incoming Councilman Lenahan good luck and wished all a Merry Christmas.

Mr. Reilly:

- Thanked the food pantry and first responder volunteers for their continued efforts and asked those that can, to please donate time or money.
- Wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.
- Reminded everyone that the FOSA fundraiser is on the 21<sup>st</sup>, first game at noon.
- Noted he had spoken to Mr. Kales about offering late hours one day a week so residents who couldn’t get to City Hall during the work day would be able to come during the extended hours. Mr. Kales notes that he would be starting a pilot program which will extend Wednesday hours until 6pm and would shorten Friday hours to 2pm.

- Requested the banners/flags would be reinstalled on Main Street. Mr. Kales said it was scheduled to happen in the spring.
- Sent congratulations to Charles Honimar as the incoming 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Fire Chief.
- Thanked outgoing Fire Chief Tim Gay for his service.
- Thanked Mr. McLaughlin for his eight years of service as a Councilman.
- Noted it is his honor to continue in service to the residents of Ward 2 and he tries to add something of value to the Council and is happy with the way things have moved forward since Mr. Kales has come on board.
- Thanked all who came out and supported him in the election.

Mr. Conrad:

- Thanked the first responder volunteers and their families.
- Thanked Fire Chief Gay for his service over the past year.
- Thanked Mr. McLaughlin for his 8 years of service.
- Wished all a happy, bright holiday season and new year.
- Stated he is looking forward to 2025 and asked any residents with ideas for the upcoming budget to feel free to reach out to him.
- Wished the Council Merry Christmas.

Ms. Dato:

- Thanked Mr. McLaughlin for his 8 years of service and thanked Mr. McLaughlin's wife Amy for her efforts over the years as well.
- Reported the tree lighting events were both a success and thanked all involved in putting together the events.
- Noted the Library held a successful holiday event and that the library has now added a social worker as a resource.
- Wished all Merry Christmas and happy Hanukkah noting there will be a menorah as well as a nativity scene put up this year.

Mr. Gross:

- Wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
- Wished the best of luck to Mr. McLaughlin.

Mayr Henry:

- Thanked Mr. McLaughlin for his time on the Council.
- Echoed Ms. Dato's sentiments about the success of the tree lighting.
- Thanked Fire Chief Gay for his time as Chief.
- Wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mr. Kales:

- Thanked Mr. McLaughlin for his service to the residents and for being a good friend and wished him good luck in whatever he does next.
- Stated that 2024 was a success for the city and is looking forward to moving forward in 2025.
- Thanked everyone for their support and thanked Mr. Gay for his service and support as Fire Chief.
- Wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Mr. Womack wished all Happy Holidays.

Mr. Rasimowicz wished everyone happy holidays.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Joe Szaro, Commander of Post 62, 111 David Street read the following statement:  
"As the main representative of the American Legion, one of my duties is to defend it. It has come to my attention that the integrity of the American Legion and Stars and Stripes Veterans Center of South Amboy has come into question. I was informed last week that the city council was upset with my statement from the November 25 council meeting. I was told that I made a comment that the city has done nothing to support us in building this new building. That is not true. At 26 minutes and 40 seconds of the November 25th meeting I am recorded saying, "I commend the city, they have been great. Mr. Kales, the mayor, we got the park." Later in this meeting, the project manager and I state how we always mention this positive support from the city in our presentations, whether it be to the Middlesex County government officials, 2 Rotary clubs of our area or Legion meetings on various levels being local, county or the state.

My entire statement from that meeting was to be informative and based on facts. I made this statement so the entire city council would be aware of our urgent need to obtain the necessary funds to keep our project moving forward. One of my jobs is to keep this project moving forward also. As I have stated before, I have superiors who I must answer to. If they have questions, I need to have answers.

I am sorry there has been some type of confusion. I am easily able to be reached. I believe everyone up there knows where I live and has my phone number. Should a situation like this occur in the future, please do not hesitate to contact me. My door is always open to discuss this very important subject or any other concerns that deal with the American Legion and the Stars and Stripes Veterans Center of South Amboy."

## **ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Ms. Dato and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Brooks  
Municipal Clerk  
Approved 1-6-2025