

MINUTES FOR COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 22, 2025

The Meeting was called to order by Vice President Dato at 7:00 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 Lenahan and Councilman Reilly. Absent: Councilman Gross

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Fred A. Henry, Dan Balka, CFO, Deborah Brooks, City Clerk, Mark Rasimowicz, City Engineer, Kevin McManimon, Esq. (Francis Womack, Director of Law arrived at 7:27), BA Kales, OEM Director Herdman, Fire Chief Albarran and Capt. Mike Kelly

The Clerk read the Certification of Meeting Notice.

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. 25-052 through NO. 25-060 are hereby approved. **SECONDED by:** Mr. Lenahan. **ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favor. Absent: Gross**

- NO. 25-052 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSFER OF PLENARY RETAIL CONSUMPTION POCKET LICENSE NO. 1220-33-011-006 – LYNCH TO KACIC
- NO. 25-053 RESOLUTION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF CITY OF SOUTH AMBOY, COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF BEVERLY J. JOHNS AS TAX ASSESSOR
- NO. 25-054 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF THE CASH BOND TO RHETT HUFF – 243 GORDON STREET – BA-18-1016
- NO. 25-055 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT WITHOUT PUBLIC ADVERTISING DUE TO AN EMERGENCY SEWER REPAIR AT 108 DAVID STREET
- NO. 25-056 RESOLUTION APPROVING JANUARY 1, 2025 – DECEMBER 31, 2029 MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES UNION OF SOUTH AMBOY (MEUSA) AGREEMENT
- NO. 25-057 RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS’ CALCULATION OF SOUTH AMBOY’S FOURTH ROUND PRESENT AND PROSPECTIVE NEED AFFORDABLE HOUSING OBLIGATIONS
- NO. 25-058 AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT FOR SHARED SERVICES WITH WOODBRIDGE TOWNSHIP FOR ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES

NO. 25-059 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PLENARY RETAIL DISTRIBUTION LICENSE NO. 1220-44-001-008 RENEWAL FOR 2023-2024

NO. 25-060 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PLENARY RETAIL DISTRIBUTION LICENSE NO. 1220-44-001-008 RENEWAL FOR 2024-2025

DISCUSSION:

- 1) VETERAN FRIENDLY CITY RESOLUTION – Mr. Reilly stated he is happy to see the Resolution moving forward and requested that 3 parking spaces be allotted, not 2 and that full fees be waived for purple heart recipients. Mr. Conrad questioned what the point to garnering the certification would be, especially as the City is already providing most of the services mentioned in the Resolution.

RESOLUTION NO. 25-061
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 6, 2025 Council Meeting.

MOVED by: Mr. Conrad of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution No. 25-061 is hereby approved. **SECONDED by: Mr. Reilly ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favor. Mr. Gross - absent**

RESOLUTION NO. 25-062
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 16, 2025, 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. 25-062 is hereby approved. **SECONDED by: Mr. Lenahan. ROLL CALL VOTE: All in favor. Absent – Mr. Gross**

ORDINANCE

INTRODUCTION/FIRST READING

ORDINANCE 2025-01

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 –ADD 113 AUGUSTA STREET - LAMOT

MOVED by: Mr. Conrad, that Ordinance #2025-01 be introduced on first reading and advertised for second reading which is scheduled for the February 19, 2025 meeting.

SECONDED by: Mr. Reilly, **ROLL CALL VOTE:** All in favor. Absent – Mr. Gross

ORDINANCE 2025-02

AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE TO FIX NON-UNION MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM SALARIES

MOVED by: Mr. Conrad, that Ordinance #2025-02 be introduced on first reading and advertised for second reading which is scheduled for the February 19, 2025 meeting.

SECONDED by: Mr. Reilly , **ROLL CALL VOTE:** All in favor. Absent – Mr. Gross

ORDINANCE 2025-03

AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE TO FIX UNION SALARIES

MOVED by: Mr. Conrad, that Ordinance #2025-03 be introduced on first reading and advertised for second reading which is scheduled for the February 19, 2025 meeting.

SECONDED by: Mr. Lenahan, **ROLL CALL VOTE:** All in favor. Absent – Mr. Gross.

COMMENTS:

Mr. Conrad:

- Thanked Ms. Dato for presiding at this evening’s meeting.
- Thanked the Fire Department and First Aid volunteers for keeping us safe particularly in this challenging weather.
- Noted that the food pantry is in need of volunteers to help load/unload etc. Please see Mark Herdman for details.
- Noted this past Monday was Martin Luther King Day and he was happy to see the Mayor’s office posting a note recognizing the day. Dr. King was a great communicator and Mr. Conrad hopes that next year the City has a program celebrating Dr. King’s accomplishments.
- Stated he had spoken with the Mayor’s office and he is confident that the obligations to make the LOSAP payments whole will be met.

Mr. Reilly:

- Thanked the food pantry and first aid volunteers noting it is not easy to do the work in this weather.
- Thanked everyone for the support given to his family and himself at the passing of his brother.
- Reported there will be a flower sale at Independence Fire House on 2/13 from 8am to 7pm, and 2/14 8am to 5pm.
- Noted the Rotary is having a football pool with proceeds going to veterans.
- Reported he had met with the Fire Chiefs and there is a real need for volunteers.

Mr. Lenahan:

- Thanked everyone who had come out to the meeting “ on such a balmy night”!
- Sent condolences to Mr. Reilly and his family as well as the Delucia family.
- Thanked the volunteers and first responders.
- Reported the seniors are having a Valentine’s Day party on 2/14 at noon.
- Reported the Rotary is having a father/daughter dance on February 21st.
- Reiterated that Independence Fire House is having their annual flower sale.

Ms. Dato:

- Sent her condolences to the Reilly family.

- Commented on the article Mr. Reilly had published in the SA Times encouraging everyone to check on their elderly neighbors during these cold winters.
- Reported the library has employed a social worker as an added resource.
- Noted there will be a meeting at the Middle High School Media Center on January 23rd to discuss the upcoming referendum.
- Encouraged everyone to be conscientious in removing snow and ice from their sidewalks in a timely manner, especially as the children are walking to school.

Mayor Henry:

- Sent his condolences to the Reilly and Delucia families.
- Reported the BOE will be holding three public meetings about the upcoming referendum, 1/23, 2/18 and 3/4. Get informed and make an educated vote.
- Reported St. Mary's is having a blood drive on February 16th.
- Reported City Hall will be having new hours. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday will remain 8:30am to 4pm. Wednesday will be 8:30 am to 6pm and Friday will be 8:30 am to 1pm. This will give residents one day with evening hours.
- Congratulated Katie-Rose Walenty on her upcoming maternity leave.
- The red-cross is only accepting cash donations for the California Fires at the moment. Please help if you can.

Mr. Kales:

- Sent his condolences to the Reilly and Delucia families.
- Reported that in addition to the new hours, the City has appointed a new Tax Assessor, Beverly Johns; she will have open hours from 4pm to 6pm on Wednesdays.
- Noted that this year's LOSAP will be paid out and the shortfall payments will be in the 2025 budget.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mary Szaro, 370 Fifth Street, read the following statement: Our municipal code establishes rules and regulations while acting as the primary legal framework to govern our city and manage local affairs. When searching our code, I was unable to find any Affordable Housing references or regulations for a municipal trust fund, managing deposits, or for the use of funds.

On March 9, 2022, almost 3 years ago, a deposit of \$600k was made into our municipal affordable housing trust fund from "Samboy Partner Urban Renewal," which remains in that account. Another deposit of the same amount is expected shortly with the completion of the 2nd building at Station Bay. The clock is ticking on the first \$600k > New Jersey municipalities must spend or commit to spending development fees in their Affordable Housing Trust Fund within four years of collection. If they don't, the remaining balance must be transferred to the state fund.

Looking back – our 2017 Master Plan recommended that the City adopt an ordinance to address affordable housing, including the affordable housing trust fund.

The topic was discussed again in September of 2023, including the need for a "Use of Funds" ordinance to allow the distribution of money from that trust fund.

I've raised this topic to you all, individually or collectively, many times since then.

Looking forward - I would like to know what progress has been made to revise our outdated city code regarding Affordable Housing. Where does this fall in the city's action plan for 2025 – specifically a "Use of Funds" ordinance to be able to distribute money from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund?

And Who is taking the lead on this?

Joe Szaro, 370 Fifth Street, Commander of Luke A. Lovely Post #62 stated that he was happy to see the proposed resolution for Veteran City certification. He would like to see the

changes recommended by Mr. Reilly and didn't want to see the language in #2 of the resolution to hold up the entire thing. Mr. Womack will review the resolution language and the Council is looking forward to passing it. Mr. Szaro sent his condolences to the Reilly family.

Brandon Russell, 1355 Schindler Ave., sent his condolences to the Reilly family. He thanked the Mayor and Mr. Kales for bringing up the referendum vote. He is against the referendum and suggested that instead the money raised by the PILOT program go toward the BOE budget. He stated his disappointment at not being appointed to the Municipal Alliance committee. Ms. Dato noted that money from the PILOT had been used to provide chrome books to the students during COVID. The Mayor and Mr. Kales noted that there have only been 21 students added to the school system since Station Bay has been opened.

Greg Babilak, noted he appreciated the kind sentiment he received from the Council and Administration during his sons illness and thanked Mr. Womack for his weekly check in calls. He also thanked Ms. Dato for coming to visit with his mother in law. He asked if it would be appropriate for the Council members to give their opinion on the referendum question. Mr. Womack noted as it is a personal decision tonight's meeting would not be an appropriate venue. Lastly, he stated his concerns about the reckless operation of people on electric bikes and requested a change in the laws to increase safety.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mr. Lenahan and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Brooks
Municipal Clerk
Approved February 5, 2025