

**MINUTES  
WORK SESSION**

The Work Session Meeting of the Mayor and Council was held in the Council Chambers and called to order at 7:36pm. Adequate notification was published in the official newspaper of the Borough of Montvale. Roll call was taken.

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT**

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to The Bergen Record and The Ridgewood News, informing the public of the time and place according to the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975).

**ROLL CALL:**

Councilmember Arendacs  
Councilmember Curry  
Councilmember Koelling - absent

Councilmember Lane  
Councilmember Roche  
Councilmember Russo-Vogelsang

Also present: Mayor Michael Ghassali; Borough Attorney, Joe Voytus; Borough Engineer, Andrew Hipolit; Administrator/Municipal Clerk, Maureen Iarossi-Alwan and Deputy Municipal Clerk, Fran Scordo

***This is meeting was broadcast by Zoom Tele-Conference***

**2020 BUDGET PRESENTATION:** Councilmember Timothy Lane/Finance

**PUBLIC HEARING 2020 MUNICIPAL BUDGET****MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC:**

Municipal Budget Only

A motion to open the meeting to the public by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Curry – all ayes

**Jarret Schumacher**

Thank you for all excellent work. Did anyone do a comparison about uncollected taxes giving the current situation; Councilmember Lane stated outside buyers will buy the taxes. Did not make any adjustments to the current budget. Mr. Schumacher asked about the municipal bonds, the borough auditor, Jeff Bliss, answered by saying the borough paid down 1.4 million in debt and we issued new debt notes for 2.3 million for new projects; Another question, every year, it's a future concern regarding the sewer system, what has to happen in order for the borough to either sell it or refurbish it; the borough engineer stated the sewer system is in fairly good condition; suggested to start having the conversation about the sewer system seeing as how the interest rates are currently low.

**Carolee Adams**

Where is the surplus invested; does the surplus earn short term rates; Jeff Bliss, the Borough Auditor, added that the surplus has to be liquid and it earns a rate of 2.5% and the most recent bonds are 2.67%; Thanked Councilmember Lane for the presentation; the ordinance 2020-1482 being introduced tonight, does that relate to the budget; Councilmember Lane stated yes, the ordinance will pay for the capital items listed in the ordinance. Mrs. Adams is concerned about part of the ordinance is being used for the roads approximately 1 million and in years past the roads are being torn up by the utility companies; Councilmember Lane explained if the road was recently paved within 5 years the utility companies have to repave the entire road.

**MEETING CLOSED TO PUBLIC:**

Municipal Budget Only

A motion to close the meeting to the public by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Roche – all ayes

**Resolution: 87-2020 Self -Examination of 2020 Budget**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-78b has authorized the Local Finance Board to adopt rules that permit municipalities in sound fiscal condition to assume the responsibility, normally granted to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services, of conducting the annual budget examination, and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.A.C. 5:30-7 was adopted by the Local Finance Board on February 11, 1997, and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.2 thru 7.5 the Borough of Montvale has been declared eligible to participate in the program by the Division of Local Government Services, and the Chief Financial Officer has determined that the Borough meets the necessary conditions to participate in the program for the 2020 budget year.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Montvale that the 2020 annual budget be examined in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.6a & b and based upon the Chief Financial Officer's certification. The governing body has found the budget has met the following requirements:

1. That with reference to the following items, if applicable, the amounts have been calculated pursuant to law and appropriated as such in the budget.
  - a. Payment of interest and debt redemption charges
  - b. Deferred charges and statutory expenditures
  - c. Cash deficit of preceding year
  - d. Reserve for uncollected taxes
  - e. Other reserves and non-disbursement items
  - f. Any inclusions of amounts required for school purposes.
2. That the provisions relating to limitation on increases of appropriations pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.2 and appropriations for exceptions to limits on appropriations found at 40A:4-45.3 et seq. are fully met. (Complies with the "CAP" law).
3. That the budget is in such form, arrangement, and content as required by the Local Budget Law and N.J.A.C. 5:30-4 and 5:30-5.
4. That pursuant to the Local Budget Law:
  - a. All estimates of revenue are reasonable, accurate, and correctly stated;
  - b. Items of appropriations are properly set forth
  - c. In itemization, form, arrangement, and content the budget will permit the exercise of the comptroller function within the municipality.
5. The budget and associated amendments have been introduced, publicly advertised, and adopted in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Local Budget Law, except that failure to meet the deadlines of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-5 shall not prevent such certification.
6. That all other applicable statutory requirements have been fulfilled.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

Introduced by: Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Curry - a roll call was taken -- all ayes

**Resolution 88-2020 Adoption of 2020 Municipal Budget**

**ADOPTION 2020 MUNICIPAL BUDGET:**

Introduced by: Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Roche - a roll call vote was taken- all ayes

**ORDINANCES:**

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 2020-1482** BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS IN AND BY THE BOROUGH OF MONTVALE, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$2,250,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$2,179,250 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF.

(Public Hearing May 12, 2020)

A motion to Introduce Ordinance **2020-1482** for first reading was made by Councilmember Russo-Vogelsang; seconded by Councilmember Lane; Clerk read by title only; Councilmember Lane made a motion that this ordinance be passed on first reading and advertised in The Bergen Record; seconded by Councilmember Curry - A roll call was taken – all ayes

**MINUTES:**

April 14, 2020

A motion to accept the minutes by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Arendacs - all ayes

**RESOLUTIONS: (CONSENT AGENDA\*)**

All items listed on a consent agenda are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Borough Council and will be approved by a motion, seconded and a roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a Council member(s) so request it, in which case the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

**89-2020 Resolution of Need for the Construction of a Twenty-Five Unit Residential Family Apartment Housing Project on Summit Avenue in the Borough of Montvale**

**WHEREAS**, The Walters Group (hereinafter referred to as the "Sponsor") proposes to construct a twenty-five (25) unit residential family apartment housing project (hereinafter referred to as the "Project") pursuant to the provisions of the State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (hereinafter referred to as the "DCA"), Affordable Housing Trust Fund Program in accordance with the Program Guidelines and Procedures, the Neighborhood Preservation Balanced Housing Rules, N.J.A.C. 5.43-1.1 et seq., and the mortgage and other financing documents executed between the Sponsor and the DCA, or any other DCA programs applicable (hereinafter the "DCA Requirements") within the Borough of Montvale (hereinafter referred to as the "Borough") on a sufficient portion of a site consisting of approximately 3.3 acres, identified as Block 1002, Lots 3 and 5, on the official Tax Map of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the DCA Requirements, the governing body of the Borough of Montvale hereby determines and desires to express that there is a need for this housing project in the Borough.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Governing Body of the Borough of Montvale, as follows:

- 1) The Borough finds and determines that the twenty-five (25) unit family apartment project previously defined as the Project proposed by the Sponsor meets or will meet an existing housing need;
- 2) The Borough does hereby adopt the within Resolution and makes the determination and findings herein contained by virtue of, pursuant to, and in conformity with the provisions of the DCA Requirements to enable the DCA to process the Sponsor's application for DCA funding to finance the Project; and

- 3) The Borough Clerk is directed to provide a certified copy of this Resolution to the Sponsor, the DCA, and all other appropriate entities or agencies.
- 4) This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Introduced by: Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Roche - a roll call was taken  
- all ayes

The borough attorney explained that this resolution will help support the Walters Group to fund their project. Councilmember Curry mentioned the resolution states 25 units; Mr. Voytus stated the original agreement was 32 units, 28 senior and 4 group home, now this will be 25 family units with affordable housing rules, which was agreed upon by COAH.

**90-2020 Authorize Refunds/Various Recreational Programs**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the attached listing is hereby granted refunds for various programs for online on-line registrations and paper registration.

Introduced by: Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Roche - all ayes

**91-2020 A Resolution Extending the Grace Period for the Payment of Property Taxes Due on May 1, 2020 Until June 1, 2020, Pursuant to Executive Order No. 130**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 54:4-67 establishes a statutory 10-day grace period for the payment of property taxes without interest or penalty; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 28, 2020, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order No. 130, which permits municipalities to extend the grace period for the payment of property taxes for taxes due on May 1, 2020, until June 1, 2020, provided that a resolution is adopted by the governing body authorizing same; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council, in recognition of the economic hardship suffered by some residents and businesses due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the present State of Emergency in effect in this State, desire to provide some temporary relief from interest charged for the delinquent payment of property taxes due on May 1, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council have determined that it is in the best interests of the Borough to extend the grace period for property taxes due on May 1, 2020, until June 1, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, as with the normal 10-day grace period, if full payment is not made within the extended grace period, interest will accrue retroactive to May 1, 2020.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale, as follows:

1. As authorized by Executive Order No. 130, the Borough of Montvale does hereby extend the grace period for the payment of real property taxes due for the second quarter of 2020 until June 1, 2020;
2. Any payment of second quarter property taxes made on June 2, 2020, or later, shall accrue interest at the established rate retroactive to May 1, 2020.
3. A copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the Tax Collector.
4. The Borough Clerk shall, within three (3) days of the date hereof, provide a certified copy of this resolution to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Introduced by: Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Arendacs - a roll call was taken - all ayes

**BILLS:** *Municipal Clerk read the Bill Report*

Motion to pay bills by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Roche - all ayes

**ENGINEER'S REPORT:**

Andrew Hipolit

Report/Update

Now that the budget has been passed, we can move forward with the road program, as well as the DOT program paving Philips Pkwy, Paragon Drive and Edgren Way; Salt shed will be constructed in June; Anticipating paving about 20% more road because of the low prices of asphalt, bids will go out by the end of May.

**ATTORNEY REPORT:**

Joseph Voytus, Esq.

Report/Update

1. 25 West Grand Update

Spoke with the mortgage company and they will hold off on foreclosing until we get the environmental remediation completed

2. 26 N Kinderkamack Road Update

Submitted the variance to the Planning Board and hope to be on their next meeting of May 19

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Montvale TV Access is asking residents for digital photos – [montvaletvaccess@montvaleboro.org](mailto:montvaletvaccess@montvaleboro.org)  
Showing "Montvale Strong"

Mayor Ghassali stated that the Borough is very fortunate with all the generosity it has received from residents and surrounding neighbors with all types of donations such as masks, gloves, food and monetary donations; Mayor Ghassali will restart the Mayor's Charity Fund;

**COMMUNICATION CORRESPONDENCE:**

Bergen County will be giving the first responders much needed supplies including N95 masks, gloves and PPE;

**MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:**

**HEARING OF CITIZENS WHO WISH TO ADDRESS THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL:**

Upon recognition by the Mayor, the person shall proceed to the floor and give his/her name and address in an audible tone of voice for the records. Unless further time is granted by the Council, he/she shall limit his/her statement to five (5) minutes. Statements shall be addressed to the Council as a body and not to any member thereof. No person, other than the person having the floor, shall be permitted to enter into any discussion, without recognition by the Mayor.

A motion to open meeting to the public by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Roche – all ayes

Carolee Adams

Thank you for re-opening the recycling center; hopefully the parks will re-open soon; mentioned about waiving the late fees on tax payments; the tax collector stated there are no additional fees, just interest.

Jarret Schumacher

Are you planning on reviewing and updating the master plan; Mayor Ghassali stated that the Planning Board is the one that does that and yes it is included in this year's budget. Mentioned about the borough code 8-2, which states about raising pigs, the borough attorney mentioned that this is one of the issues being addressed in the current codification of the borough code.

A motion to close meeting to the public by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Roche – all ayes

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Curry – all ayes

Meeting adjourned at 9:17pm

The next Meeting of the Mayor and Council will be held May 12, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted, Fran Scordo, Deputy Municipal Clerk**