

REGULAR MEETING

CITY COUNCIL

MARCH 10, 2009

8:00 P.M.

The Regular Meeting of the Long Branch City Council was held on Tuesday, March 10, 2009 at 8:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 344 Broadway, Long Branch, New Jersey.

PRESENT:

David G. Brown, Councilman; Anthony Giordano, Councilman; Dr. Mary Jane Celli, Council Vice-President; Michael DeStefano, Council President

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mayor Adam Schneider; Howard Woolley, Administrator; James G. Aaron, City Attorney; Ronald Mehlhorn, Finance Director; Irene A. Joline, City Clerk

ABSENT:

Brian Unger, Councilman

The pledge of allegiance was recited. Certification was read.

READING AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

FEBRUARY 24, 2009 – A motion was made by Councilperson Brown, seconded by Councilperson Celli to approve the minutes of February 24, 2009 was carried out upon the following roll call vote: Ayes 3 / Abstain 1 Giordano / Absent 1 Unger

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES

PUBLIC HEARING AND FINAL CONSIDERATION

#2-09 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 345-10 OF THE CITY OF LONG BRANCH COMBINED LAND USE ORDINANCES TO PROVIDE FOR AN EXCEPTION FROM COMPLIANCE WITH DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS APPROVED PRIOR TO ADOPTION OF COMPLETE DESIGN GUIDELINES (INTRODUCED: FEBRUARY 24, 2009)

A motion by Councilperson Brown to open the public hearing on said ordinance was seconded by Councilperson Giordano.

Vince Lapore – Long Branch

Asked if the ordinance was tailored for a specific development project or a specific developer.

Mr. Aaron stated, no.

Asked about the waiving of developers fees and the Council / Mr. Aaron replied that it does not waive developer fees.

After ample time was given and no one responded, a motion by Councilperson Brown to close the hearing was seconded by Councilperson Giordano.

A motion was made by Councilperson Brown, seconded by Councilperson Giordano to adopt on third and final reading was carried out upon the following roll call vote: Ayes 4 / Absent 1 Unger

#3-09 BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR PRELIMINARY DESIGN AND ENGINEERING EXPENSES IN CONNECTION WITH THE LONG BRANCH PIER PROJECT IN AND BY THE CITY OF LONG BRANCH IN THE COUNTY OF MONMOUTH NEW JERSEY APPROPRIATING \$1,000,000 THEREFORE AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$950,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE CITY TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF (INTRODUCED: FEBRUARY 24, 2009)

A motion by Councilperson Brown to open the public hearing on said ordinance was seconded by Councilperson Giordano.

Diana Multare – 21 North Bath Avenue

Spoke regarding the importance of this ordinance, the economic downturn, bringing the bond ordinance to the voters, the \$50,000 down payment being used in a different way, the City's debt, went over various other parts of the ordinance and hopes this ordinance does not pass.

Bernard Gorcey – 36 Second Avenue

Finds this whole project unbelievable. The ferries are going out of business. The cost is too great. Who is contributing to this aside from the taxpayers of Long Branch? Let it go to the voters.

Vince Lapore – Long Branch

Spoke regarding design and engineering expenses, asked what the economic justification for investing in this project is. Went on to speak about acquisition costs of the pier.

Avery Grant – 405 Atlantic Avenue

Asked about the 3 million dollars Congressman Pallone got for the study.

Mr. Woolley stated that part of this bond ordinance, it's an 80/20 match of money that Congressman Pallone got. Part of this is for the City to come up with the 20%. Congressman Pallone's money was a 4 year draw down. This is two segments of that draw down so it's about \$1,300,000. It's for the preliminary design and concept plan.

After ample time was given and no one responded, a motion by Councilperson Brown to close the hearing was seconded by Councilperson Giordano.

A motion was made by Councilperson Giordano, seconded by Councilperson Brown to adopt on third and final reading was carried out upon the following roll call vote: Ayes 4 / Absent 1 Unger

During the vote, the following comments were made:

Councilman Brown – Yes.

Councilman Giordano – Yes, before I vote I just want to clarify a couple things. One, the City is not ever going to bond \$89,000,000 to build a pier. The purpose of this ordinance tonight is to get the engineering design work off the ground and a large part of that expense is being paid for, will be paid for by a grant that was obtained by Congressman Pallone a couple years ago and this is just the beginning of that. The \$89,000,000 is the anticipated total cost of the total project once its all dealt out and that would only be able to be done if the City were to obtain significant amount of public funding whether it be from State sources or Federal sources so what we are working towards is putting the City in the best position today to obtain

stimulus package money from the Federal Government and if that doesn't come to fruition over the next couple of years then it's more likely than not that the Pier would not be built. If we are successful in obtaining a large amount of stimulus package money from the Federal Government then there is a very good possibility that the Pier would go ahead and be built so I just don't want anyone to think that the City's next step is to go out and bond \$89,000,000 because that is just an impossibility and would never happen, thank you. I vote yes.

Councilwoman Dr. Celli – What Mr. Giordano said is very true and I'm not in favor of bonding any more money for the City but in this particular case it's necessary for us to start at the beginning and we need to have the paperwork in place so when the project is ready to go, we will be right up front, shovel ready. With that, I vote yes.

Council President DeStefano – Again, what Mr. Giordano said, almost everything... the time is here and the time is now to get this going and to get the stimulus money and to be ready should we be approved for that. I vote yes.

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION:

NONE

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

A motion by Councilperson Brown to open the public portion of the meeting was seconded by Councilperson Giordano.

Diana Multare – 21 North Bath Avenue

Spoke about comments that the City made regarding the Pier, stimulus monies for New Jersey, the ferry service, the list of projects in the works in the State that are shovel ready. The Pier looks great but is totally unrealistic. It's a waste of time and waste of money.

Vince Lapore – Long Branch

Spoke regarding the 1996 Master Redevelopment Plan, Long Branch Tomorrow, zones and goals of the redevelopment master plan. Handed the Clerk the Deed between the City of Long Branch and the Ocean Place Hotel, Inc. (attached)

After ample time was given and no one came forward a motion was made by Councilperson Celli seconded by Councilperson Giordano to close the public portion of this meeting.

RESOLUTIONS:

On file in the Clerks Office and the City's Web Site.

APPLICATIONS:

1. APPROVAL OF A RAFFLE LICENSE FOR THE PTSO LONG BRANCH COUNCIL

Motion by Councilperson Brown seconded by Councilperson Giordano to approve the listed applications was approved upon the following roll call vote: Ayes 4 / Absent 1 – Unger

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Councilman Brown – Good evening everyone, I'll be very brief this evening. I just like to congratulate the Long Branch High School Wrestling Team for recently being named the number one team in the State of New Jersey from myself and the entire Administration, we give thanks to the individual team members, especially their coaches and especially the families and supporters of the Long Branch Wrestling Team of 2009. One last statement is that monies will not be used for the Pier that will directly come from taxpayers. The plan has been approved and talked about for a decade. The stimulus plan is exactly in line. We are definitely working with our Congressman, Mr. Pallone and the bottom line is that nothing will be done to encumber taxpayers and the results will be several hundred jobs that will be made from this project. We wish you all a happy evening and the coming holidays for each one of you and your families. Happy holiday, thank you.

Councilman Giordano – Thank you. I just wanted to thank the Long Branch Department of Public Works for the great job they did last week. We had a major snow storm as you all know last Monday and they did a phenomenal job clearing the roads, keeping them safe, working through the night and obviously anybody who drove in town knows that considering the circumstances they did an outstanding job as they always do whenever we have a big storm like this. Secondly, as Dave brought up, the Wrestling Team obviously the first time ever Long Branch Wrestling Team has been named number one in the State by every poll including the Asbury Park Press and the Newark Star Ledger and those kids deserve a really really big round of applause as well. They not only, keep in mind, those kids are phenomenal wrestlers and they didn't just start recently, they started 10 years ago when they were 5, 6, 7 years old in the Recreation program and have worked very hard and very diligently over the last 10 years to get to the spot where they are today as State Champions or place winners in the State of New Jersey and Coach George, number one wrestling coach in the State he was named and deservedly so, he has done a great job with the program bringing it from almost no where to one of the powerhouse programs in the whole state of New Jersey and a job well done and I congratulate all of them.

Councilman Unger – Absent

Dr. Celli – I also want to commend the Department of Public Works but from a different angle. We have many older citizens in Long Branch and some of them aren't able to get out. I had several phone calls from them and it's very important that everybody in this room realized what a really great job they did because when the Seniors got out they were able to move around in Long Branch but when they went to the neighboring towns I cant say they were very happy so on behalf of all of them, Fred, please extend to your men what a great job they did and Mrs. Multare I'd like to explain a little bit about the million dollars that the Congressman was able to get for the Monmouth Family Healthcare facility. That paperwork was something that was turned down for the last three years. He's the Chairman of the Health Committee and shame on him if he didn't get the money for our own healthcare so yes he did get it but the paperwork was right in front of him so I'm happy to say that we are going to do good things with that money, thank you.

Mr. DeStefano – No comment.

ADJOURNMENT

This meeting of the Long Branch City Council adjourned at 8:45 p.m.