

REGULAR MEETING

CITY COUNCIL

MARCH 23, 2010

7:00 P.M.

The Regular Meeting of the Long Branch City Council was held on Tuesday, March 23, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 344 Broadway, Long Branch, New Jersey.

PRESENT:

David G. Brown, Councilman; Anthony Giordano, Councilman; Brian Unger, Councilman; Michael DeStefano, Council President

OTHERS PRESENT:

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

ABSENT:

Dr. Mary Jane Celli, Council Vice-President

The pledge of allegiance was recited and certification was read into the record.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. INDEPENDENT ENGINE & TRUCK COMPANY #2 DAY

The Mayor presented a proclamation to Joe Valentino and Danny Speck recognizing its 100th anniversary of the Independent Engine & Truck Company which was established on March 10, 1910 and that was the date when the Company was accepted into the Long Branch Fire Department.

READING AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

March 9, 2010 - Motion to approve the minutes of March 9, 2010 was offered by Councilperson Brown, seconded by Councilperson Giordano - Ayes 4 / Absent 1 Celli

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES

PUBLIC HEARING AND FINAL CONSIDERATION

None

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION:

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 13, 2010

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

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

Peter DeLisa - 525 Ocean Boulevard

Spoke regarding an article in the Star Ledger regarding a project in the City.

Robert Allison – 268 Ocean Avenue

Spoke regarding the Strollo's project that was discussed last year at Council meetings. Asked about an Ethics Committee. The Mayor stated that an ethics board already exists at the Department of Community Affairs and you're free to make any claim you want to that board.

Diana Multare – 21 North Bath Avenue

Spoke regarding a document that was published in the paper regarding Solomon Dwek and a zoning request that was made. Went on to speak regarding Long Branch Townhouses LLC, presentation made to the Long Branch Planning Board and the file.

Diane Zucknick – 33 Cooper Avenue

Asked if Ms. Multare could have her five minutes. Council President DeStefano stated no. Made comments regarding this evening's presentation to the Fire Department by the Mayor.

Catherine Darby – 465 Sairs Avenue

Thanked the Long Branch Police regarding concerns she had that were taken care of. Thanked the DPW for snow removal and the work that was done this year.

Jonathan Matthews – 156 Belmont Avenue

Spoke regarding the article in the paper on Sunday regarding gang violence and wants to know what the City is doing.

The Mayor stated that there are a number of programs over the years, expanded recreation programs and facilities and we work with the Housing Authority to rebuild the Bucky James Center. On the enforcement side, the Street Crimes, patrol and detective bureau all working in that effort. For the last 16 years it has been a declining crime rate. We have Police officers that coach various teams throughout the City and the Housing Authority has programs also.

John Gregory – 247 Rockwell Avenue

Spoke regarding budget and aid that will be missing and asked what does the Council / Mayor see as areas that will be taking a hit as a result of state cuts.

The Mayor spoke regarding a cut in state aid and the City is close to a 0% tax increase before that number came in. In the next two to three weeks we should have answers as to what we are going to do and where the budget will go. Went on to speak about the Governor and tools that he might give municipalities and things won't be that bad. Spoke regarding health care costs, layoffs and furloughs. Trying to avoid layoffs. It's a balancing act.

Vincent Lapore – Long Branch

Spoke regarding a conflict between Mayor Schneider and John Brockreide, Mayors participation in a mortgage refinance, Solomon Dweks property and Eatontown Land, LLC.

Harold Cooper – 113 South 7th Avenue

Suggested to the Mayor and Council to not deal with Solomon Dwek, it looks bad. Spoke against the 5 minute rule for speaking.

Harold Bobrow – 295 Ocean Boulevard

Thanked Captain Muolo for his great leadership and professionalism in a problem that he had and a great asset to the City of Long Branch. Spoke regarding Mr. Brockreide’s appointment, spoke regarding the spending of \$100,000 on a tractor and asked how much money the city took in from the beach last year approximately.

Mr. Mehlhorn stated just short of \$1,000,000,000.

Mr. Bobrow went on to speak about having separate accounts designating various items.

Went on to ask Mr. Aaron about the Star Ledger article and the file in Mr. Aaron’s possession. Asked where the eleven condo’s are, were any other attorneys involved in this transaction and who was the financing bank for that project.

Mr. Aaron stated that the name of the developer was Long Branch Townhouses, LLC, principles are not listed in the file in his possession, Mark Aikens when he was with the Carton Arvinitis firm represented the developer before the Planning Board, the attorney for the Planning Board, Maxwell Colby at the time, there is no bank finances listed in the file, its an approval, not an application for financing so there is no financing in the file.

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

RESOLUTIONS:

On file in the Clerks Office and posted on the City’s Web Site.

APPLICATIONS:

1. APPROVAL OF A RAFFLE LICENSE FOR CHRIST THE KING CHURCH
2. APPROVAL OF MAX ARCE AS STATE ACTIVE AND CITY HONORARY MEMBER IN THE INDEPENDENT FIRE COMPANY
3. APPROVAL OF WILLIAM BECKENSTEIN AS AN HONORARY MEMBER OF THE WEST END ENGINE COMPANY
4. APPROVAL OF MAXIMINO ARCE JR. AS STATE ACTIVE AND CITY HONORARY MEMBER IN THE INDEPENDENT ENGINE COMPANY
5. APPROVAL OF MICHAEL DELIA AS CITY ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE INDEPENDENT ENGINE COMPANY AND HONORARY MEMBER OF THE WEST END ENGINE COMPANY

A motion by Councilperson Brown, seconded by Councilperson Giordano to approve the above application was passed upon the following roll call vote: Ayes 4 / Absent 1 Celli

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Councilman Brown - Yes, good evening everyone and for those of you who are still here, as always, the upcoming holy season, Happy Easter, Happy Passover to each and everyone of you and your families. I have nothing else to say. I've already said it, as far as no, no means no. I don't know what we're talking about and I have nothing to do with it. Thank you.

Councilman Giordano - Thank you. Three things, one is I wish everyone a happy Easter and Passover. I will be on family vacation next meeting so I wish everybody a happy holiday. Second is, I was hoping Director Richards would be here, he was at our workshop, we had a brief conversation, he announced that he is retiring effective April 1st so I was hoping he would be here to thank him for his 30 years of service to the City and the last 7 ½ outstanding service as public safety director. It's a very tough job, a very important job and he's done a fantastic job for this City and we are all better off for it and so I will have to tell him privately and the third thing is, there's a, indirectly it impacts the City, not directly but I just want to bring it up, it has to do with the revitalization of Fort Monmouth and you probably read in the paper that there is some discussion going on between the local communities and the state. There's a Senate bill, 917 that's being worked on right now which is really going to dictate the process for who has the final say on the redevelopment of Fort Monmouth and I think it's real important that the local communities have the final input, not some state bureaucrats in Trenton or some north Jersey politicians. There is a public meeting that is going to be held on April 21st at the Shore Regional High School cafeteria at 7pm with Senator Beck and I think anybody who is interested in the revitalization, redevelopment of Fort Monmouth, I think its important to attend because it's important that the communities that are impacted which are our neighbors have the most input with what happens with Fort Monmouth, it certainly a regional issue and indirectly does impact our city and the people who have the most vested interest, those being the residents of those communities should have the final say and hopefully the final bill will reflect that, the final senate bill so I just wanted to raise that as an issue tonight, thank you.

Councilman Unger - In response to Council candidate Coopers comments, which were so articulate I would have to say, Pudgy, if I'm ever elected Mayor whether this time or next time or the time after or the time after that, within 90 days I will have term limit legislation on the agenda for the City Council to consider and some people have a constitutional problem with term limits, some people say, well just have ethic laws, just have reform your campaign laws but you see the problem in Trenton and in Washington and its just endless. The campaign donation laws never quite get reformed, you can't track the moneys, it wheels around the state. In DC the two sides can't come together and you never get campaign reform. I think term limits are an excellent idea for Long Branch and I would hope we were able to start on that on, within 90 days of July 1st. The five minute rule, that's gone, July 1st, no five minute rule. I think we have to have some kind of cap but I would suggest we have a five minute speaking portion to allow the council by their discretionary vote extend one or two minutes to each speaker and maybe someone gets six or seven minutes, if as you said Mr. Cooper, it's a substantive discussion, if its rant or if its cantor, if its just personal invective obviously you wouldn't extend the five minutes. I think this would allow some

of the discussion to continue that's actually productive. Thirdly, I think the most striking thing tonight is hearing a description of our City attorney arguing before the Planning Board and I don't know if he was the City Attorney at the time, I guess he couldn't have been for this developer Solomon Dwek who at the time had stashed a million dollars in cash and allegedly according to the trustee had instructed his bag man, Mr. Kantrowitz to take ten thousand out and give it to some Mayor and some City Council person somewhere, whether it was here or somewhere else and at the same time to have almost the co applicant be the owner of the bank who the attorney sits on the bank board who Solomon Dwek is a founder of along with Phil Konvitz another indicted coconspirator and to have the whole thing connected to a developer or another developer and a third developer and meanwhile to have these people tied to the administration and have the administration appoint the board before their arguing in front of so I think, you know, and all of this is just an appearance of conflict. You have to have professional investigation to prove these things and you have to have a trail. You need a paper trail, you need an audio trail or a video trail in order to prove these things but the fact is the appearance is corrosive of the public trust. Thank you.

Dr. Celli - Absent

Mr. DeStefano - Finally this evening, absolutely, July 1st, I don't know who will be here, who will not, speak 18 minutes, 20 minutes, 30 minutes, I already have a speech plan. I got it just under 18 minutes and I plan to deliver it so I hope you're here for that sometime under the next administration and if I babble and they try to impose the 5 minute rule then we'll have to see what happens because I'm not really sure how you determine babble from non babble although sometimes I do hear it. The other thing that I found rather interesting and amusing this evening is the Mayor just made a presentation on a 100th anniversary to one of the Fire Departments and in the process of that presentation was determined through that presentation to be disrespectful in his presentation and not only disrespectful to the fire department but (inaudible) to the public they serve which I just found, why not the Country, the state, the world, I mean, in that presentation you were just disrespectful to everybody, I don't get it. I can't believe, that's all you have as a candidate? If you're not embarrassed for yourself, I am but not necessarily for the City of Long Branch. With that, I'm adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

This meeting of the Long Branch City Council adjourned at 8:00 p.m.