

APRIL 5, 2010  
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NJ

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held at the Collingswood Community Center, 30 W. Collings Avenue, Collingswood, NJ, on the second floor, at 7:00 P.M. Mayor M. James Maley, Jr., called the meeting to order, with Commissioner Joan Leonard present and Commissioner Michael Hall present. Mayor Maley read the Sunshine Notice stating that the Borough has complied with provisions of the Sunshine Law by adopting prior to January 10 of this year, a resolution prescribing the dates, times and locations of all regular meetings of the Commission. This meeting was one of the meetings listed on the resolution. He led the Pledge of Allegiance. The previous meeting's minutes and the Tax Collector, Construction Code Officer and Treasurer reports were approved and seconded.

The Commissioners called for second reading and public hear of Ordinance 1476 Implementing a Redevelopment Plan for an Area Located in the Borough of Collingswood which is located within that Area of Land Known as Block 31, Lots 21, 23, 23.01 and 24 also known as 765 Haddon Avenue Pursuant to NJSA 40A:12A-7. Mayor Maley explained this ordinance is referring the to TD Bank North property on Haddon Ave. The purpose is to try to get TD Bank to do something with the vacant property. The Mayor opened the ordinance for public hearing. Tim O'Neill, 18 W. Linden Avenue thought the property was already sold. Mayor Maley explained that the deal fell through and the property had not sold. With no further comments, he moved the ordinance be adopted on second reading which was seconded and approved by the following call of the roll:

Aye: M. James Maley, Jr.  
Abstain: Joan Leonard  
Aye: Michael A. Hall

The Commissioners called for of First Reading of Ordinance 1477 Authorizing a Utility Easement and Mitigation Area of Certain Borough Properties on Route 130 to the New Jersey Department of Transportation. Mayor Maley explained this is to assist NJ DOT in completing the Route 130 project. He moved the ordinance be approved on first reading, published, and the second reading and public hearing to be held on May 3, 2010 which was seconded and approved by the following call of the roll:

Aye: M. James Maley, Jr.  
Aye: Joan Leonard  
Aye: Michael A. Hall

The Commissioners called for the First Reading of Ordinance 1478 Amending Ordinance 1148 "An Ordinance Implementing a Redevelopment Plan for an Area Located in the Borough of Collingswood" Known as the Eldridge Gardens and West Collings Avenue Project Area Adopted on April 6, 1998. Mayor Maley explained this ordinance is in reference to the Borough owned property located at 1024-1026 Collings Avenue. Mayor Maley stated someone is interested in purchasing and building a twin home on the property. This ordinance would make a zoning change to the property. He moved the ordinance be approved on first reading, published, and the second reading and public hearing to be held on May 3, 2010 which was seconded and approved by the following call of the roll:

Aye: M. James Maley, Jr.  
Aye: Joan Leonard  
Aye: Michael A. Hall

The Commissioners called for the First Reading and Public Hearing of Ordinance 1479 Salaries and Wages for 2010. Mayor Maley explained there was a delay in introducing this ordinance in the hopes that it would create funds to help with negotiations with the collective bargaining units. Mayor Maley commented that did not work out that way. Pay raises of 3.75% will go into effect on 5/14/10. He moved the ordinance be approved on first reading, published, and the second reading and public hearing to be held on May 3, 2010 which was seconded and approved by the following call of the roll:

Aye: M. James Maley, Jr.  
Aye: Joan Leonard  
Aye: Michael A. Hall

The Commissioners called for the First Reading and Public Hearing Ordinance 1480 Authorizing Funding for the Lumberyard Redevelopment Project appropriating the sum of \$750,000.00. Mayor Maley explained this is a restructuring of debt that will allow the funding of this year's \$150.00 Pride Grant and it will help offset additional increases in the budget. He moved the ordinance be approved on first reading, published, and the second reading and public hearing to be held on May 3, 2010 which was seconded and approved by the following call of the roll:

Aye: M. James Maley, Jr.  
Aye: Joan Leonard  
Aye: Michael A. Hall

The following resolutions were approved without a dissenting vote.

32. Adopting the 2010 Business Improvement District Budget. Mayor Maley opened the resolution for public hearing, and with no comments, moved the public hearing closed and moved to adopt the 2010 BID Budget, which was seconded And approved by the following vote:  
Aye: M. James Maley, Joan Leonard, Michael A. Hall
45. Authorizing the preparation and submission of an application to the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust in the amount of \$2,500,000
46. Appointing Jorge Franco as a Full Time Member to the Collingswood Historic Preservation Commission.
47. Approving Emergency Temporary Budget Appropriations in the 2010 Municipal Budget
48. Authorizing and Supporting the Submission of an Application for the Recreation Facility Enhancement Project and the Execution of Said Grant if Received.
49. Authorizing an Interlocal Services Agreement with the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority for a Direct Connection to the Authority's Interceptor.
50. Authorizing Execution of an Agreement between the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency and the Borough of Collingswood for the Live Where You Work Program.
51. Authorizing to Advertise for the Reconstruction of East Palmer Avenue.
52. Authorizing To Advertise for the Collings Avenue Bump - Out Project.
53. Authorizing To Advertise for the Roberts Park Sewerage Pump Station Replacement Project.
54. Awarding a Contract for Fireworks Display as an Extraordinary Unspecified Service to Schaefer Pyrotechnics, Inc.
55. Participating in the *Click It or Ticket* 2010 Seat Belt Enforcement Grant from May 24 to June 6, 2010.
56. Updating the Borough's Employment Practices Liability Insurance Risk Management Loss Control Plan.
57. Designating Recipients for the Camden County Housing Rehabilitation Program and Authorizing Camden County Division of Community Development as Administrative Agent.
58. Approving the Payment of Bills in General Accounts.
59. Approving the Payment of Bills in Water Accounts.
60. Approving the Payment of Bills in Sewer Accounts.
61. Authorizing the Planning Board to Review Amendments to the Redevelopment Plan Adopted Under Ordinance 1148 for the Eldridge Gardens and West Collings Avenue Project
64. Approving the Application of a Recycling tonnage Grant

Mayor Maley opened the meeting to the public.

Bob Eckert, 610 Newton Lake Dr. indicated he is a retired Collingswood Fire Chief with Mike Hall replacing him as Chief. Mr. Eckert said fire department was rebuilt with a total of 17 career firefighters to enhance the ambulance and fire protection of the town. Mr. Eckert respectfully asked the Commissioners to rescind the upcoming layoffs of fire department personnel. Mr. Eckert commented that the ambulance portion of the fire department generated 40% of the Fire Department Budget. He asked if cuts could be made in nonessential areas in order to keep firefighter jobs. Mayor Maley commented he did not know if Mr. Eckert's budget figures were accurate. The Mayor explained that because of the troubled economy, normal operating increases, pension increases, health insurance increases, property tax appeals and the decrease in state aid will force layoffs in the police, fire and public works departments. Mayor Maley added other departments such as Borough Hall and the Library are not filling the positions of retired staff. The Mayor stated we are trying to get the job done with less. The Mayor added layoffs are not something himself and the Commissioners want to do but not going ahead with layoffs would increase property tax bills \$800.00 to \$1000.00. The Mayor said that is not an option. Mr. Eckert recommended reopening conversations with the collective bargaining units. Mayor Maley said he and the Commissioners would be available to listen to any proposal any collective bargaining unit had in order to save jobs. Mr. Eckert questioned if the Mayor believes the layoffs would jeopardize public safety. The Mayor Maley responded that he did not believe so.

Sandy Rowan, 804 Park Ave, stated in May of 2008 her home caught fire. She credits the Collingswood Firefighters for saving her home and pets. She would like to go on the record opposing firefighter layoffs.

Art Pope, 247 Crestmont Terrace, asked the Mayor if the Ordinance Authorizing Funding for the Lumberyard Redevelopment Project in the amount \$750,000.00 could be used to save firefighter jobs. Mayor Maley explained the funds are not new money. It is the restructuring of debt to pay for the 2009 Pride Grant and the

balance has been allocated for budget increases. Mr. Pope said he thinks the sentiment of the town would be to forego the Pride Grant in order to save jobs. The Mayor explained the Pride Grant will help off set some of the property tax increase we will see this year and these funds can not be used to save jobs because it is a one time revenue source and it would only put off layoffs until Jan 1.

Ann Fleming, 722 Bettelwood Ave., asked with the reduction in staff if funds have been allocated for firefighter overtime or in the event a firefighter is injured. The Mayor responded overtime was looked at last year and that more overtime rules were made in an attempt to control overtime and the same will be in affect this year.

Mike Petrolli 1030 Harrison Ave. asked what were some of the items discussed during negotiations with the firefighter's union representatives. Mayor Maley explained he had a very unsuccessful meeting with them. Mayor Maley said he told the representative of the collective bargaining unit what numbers were needed in order to save jobs and that he would be open to hear proposals anytime. Mayor Maley added that laying people off is not something that he and the Commissioners want to do.

Tim O'Neill, 18 W. Linden Avenue, suggested that when residents receive the \$150.00 Pride Grant that they give it back to the fire department in a form of a donation or contribution to save the firefighters jobs until January. The firefighter would have a job and a raise until January. He also suggested the Borough go to Trenton to apply for aid or a grant to save Firefighter and Police Officer jobs. Mr. O'Neill then expressed feelings about being a public employee and beliefs about how special considerations should be made during budget discussions for the police and fire departments. Mr. O'Neill suggested some different ways the Borough could save money such using volunteers in the Borough Hall recycling and converting to Solar energy.

Paul Stankiewicz, 130 Lawnside Ave. explained his partner has diabetes and was experiencing low blood sugar. Mr. Stankiewicz credits the EMS department with saving his partners' life. He asked if funds could be found from any Borough Projects to save anyone from being laid off.

Conchetta Reissila, 122 Woodlawn Ave. asked if the Borough receives the funds from the application being submitted to the NJ Environmental Infrastructure Trust for 2.5 million could help in retraining of the individuals being laid off so they would still have employment. Mayor Maley explained the funds are for improvements to the water system. The Mayor explained that the funds can not be used for retraining purposes or for salaries. He explained further that companies that specialize in water system repairs need be hired to do the work.

Bill Filinuk, 1002 Haddon Ave. stated he understands and respects the firefighters. He explained he did the job as a volunteer and as a career firefighter in Burlington County and it is a demanding job. He asked if discussions could continue and concessions made before anyone is laid off. Mr. Filinuk expressed concerns about public safety if the lay offs in the Fire Department are to take place. Mr. Filinuk said to keep the \$150.00 Pride Grant and raise property taxes in order to save these jobs.

Nancy Caruso, 1211 Eldridge Ave. Haddon Twp, asked if there were any representatives from the Haddon Twp. Fire Department. No one replied. Ms. Caruso stated funds from her property taxes were used to pay for Collingswood Fire Department services. Mayor Maley agreed Haddon Township does make a payment for Collingswood services to Haddon Twp extension. Chief Amet said Collingswood receives a payment of \$24,000.00 from Haddon Twp. Mayor Maley expressed that the situation with layoffs is not something he wants to do. Mayor Maley said all Borough Departments work very hard at their jobs. He explained over the last 21 one years he has served Collingswood he has seen departments expand. Mayor Maley explained that the cause of the layoffs is the gap in funds. He stated he is fearful that if the 2.5 % cap proposed by the Governor goes into effect we could lose half of the Borough's workforce.

Bill Duhart, 11 W. Coulter Ave. asked that if the current number of reductions in employees will not affect public safety what number would? Mayor Maley responded because there have been prior layoffs with the Police Department there is a better idea what that number would be then compared to the Fire Dept. Mayor Maley continued to explain that there were three officers laid off last year in addition to the three officers who left and were not replaced. And this year there are going to be three lay offs, bringing the number to 28 officers. Mayor Maley said if we were to go below 28 officers there could be a serious impact. Mayor Maley explained if taxes are only allowed to be increased by a certain amount there will not be enough money for the services we have now and cuts will continue. Mr. Duhart asked if the budget was available online. Mayor Maley explained the formal budget has not been introduced because of the continuous changes the state and the Local Finance Board are making to the municipal cap rules and because of the reduction in state aid the budget had to be redone a couple of times. Mayor Maley explained the 2010 Budget will be online and that the 2009 Budget is available online.

Brian Cogne, President of the FOP Lodge 76, representing the Collingswood Police Officers stated he was in receipt of a notice from the Borough indicating the

possibility of five layoffs. Mayor Maley responded there will be three layoffs and one officer left and will not be replaced. The Mayor continued saying there was a position we thought that would have to be eliminated but will be saved due to a Federal Grant. Mr. Cogne asked about concessions that could be made by the Police and Fire Departments. Mayor Maley responded this is not the place for negotiations.

Linda Eckert 610 S. Newton Lake Dr. asked Commissioner Hall his feelings on the lay off situation. Commissioner Hall said he is sick over what could happen to the police, fire and public works departments. He said he does not want to see anyone out of work. He continued to explain that there is no where to make up the shortfall of funds and that he is truly sick over the situation.

Christina Zakrzewski 724 Woodlynne Ave. asked if more money could be obtained from Woodlynne. Mayor Maley responded that the police relationship with Woodlynne would be ending in June and the Fire Department's relationship is under review. The Mayor further explained there is a Mutual Aid agreement for fire service in Woodlynne but they do not pay for Collingswood Fire Services. Ms. Zakrzewski said she was concerned about the police no longer going to Woodlynne. She believes that since the police started going into Woodlynne it has made her street safer. Ms. Zakrzewski said she was afraid her street would be forgotten without the police presence. Mayor Maley responded he does not want that to happen. Ms. Zakrzewski asked why Woodlynne does not pay for Fire Services. Mayor Maley said in the world of Public Safety everyone helps everyone. The Mayor further explained Police and Fire respond when the public is at risk.

Ryan Engle 422 Lincoln Ave. asked what is the plan if the 2.5 % cap goes into effect and half of Borough employees lose their jobs. Mayor Maley replied he doesn't know but that it is not just our town that would be facing these problems. Mayor Maley said he hopes for a compromise between the Governor and the Legislature. The Mayor continued that the effect of the 2.5% cap would be a 2-3 million dollar change for the budget. Mayor Maley said the many people he has spoken with like the Governor's plan but he fears they do not realize the impact it could have. Mayor Maley said that maybe the thinking behind the 2.5% hard cap plan could be to force town consolidation and if that is the case towns still won't be saving money. Mr. Engle asked about pension payment deferment. Mayor Maley explained that last year the Borough paid \$500,000.00 to the pension system and deferred \$500,000.00. The deferment will be paid back starting in 2012 over a 15 year period. This year the Borough's pension payment is 1.2 million dollars. Mayor Maley continued to say that in 2005 the pension contribution was \$175,000.00. This year the contribution is 1.2 million dollars.

John Jacobs 338 Comly Ave., said that his major concern is that the Borough is being referred to as a business and he asks that we take into consideration that it is not a business but a community. Mr. Jacobs understands that the money is not there but asked if there is any way this can be resolved. Mayor Maley replied he is available for continued discussion and proposals but as of yet he has not been approached. Mayor Maley then explained that the Borough is not like a business. He said we are not looking for a financial return like a business; we take care of people and make neighborhoods better while keeping it affordable for people to live here.

Camille Forte 520 Collings Ave., as a business person I understand the bottom line. As a community resident I am concerned of the quality of my safety if the people who protect us are not here. They are the reason I live here. If I no longer feel safe here I will leave. Ms. Forte asked what she could do to help Collingswood. She continued by stating, there are many educated people with various skills who live in town who could help. Mayor Maley thanked Ms. Forte.

Walt Kucinski 331 Comly Ave. said he is in support of the Police & Fire Departments. Mr. Kucinski said they do a great job. Mayor Maley agreed. Mr. Kucinski said that over the several months there have been three sewer leaks with sewage running down his street. Mr. Kucinski said there are 30-40 homes being effected and asked when it would be repaired. Mayor Maley referred the question to Craig Spencer, Assistant Superintendent of Public Works. Mr. Spencer said the problem is from the force main at the pumping station. Mayor Maley added the the resolution Authorizing an Interlocal Services Agreement with the CCMUA for a Direct Connection to the Authority's Interceptor will help this problem. Mayor Maley asked Mr. Kucinski to leave his phone number for a follow up call about the project.

John Gregor, Vice President FOP Lodge 576, asked if the police service agreement with the Borough of Woodlynne expires on June 30, 2010. Mayor Maley said it would but the date is July 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Gregor asked if there was any way Collingswood would consider extending the agreement. Mayor Maley explained that in the spring of 2009 the Borough contacted Woodlynne Borough about continuing services. Mayor Maley explained Collingswood's service relationship with Woodlynne such police protection, municipal court services and fire and housing inspections. Mayor Maley said during the first year there were more serious injuries to our police officers then he had ever seen. But after a year it started to improve. Mayor Maley attributes the improvement on the police presence but it was also due to the fire and housing inspections. Mayor Maley explained these services need to be done together to gain success. The same services are used here in Collingswood. Mayor Maley continued to explain that after the



2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year Woodlynne leaders decided they wanted to handle the inspection process themselves as a means to generate income. Mayor Maley spoke about the inspection agreement Collingswood had with Woodlynne, including the number of inspections done, the fees collected and funds disbursed back to Woodlynne. Mayor Maley explained when Collingswood contacted Woodlynne last Spring about the Borough of Collingswood continuing Police services in Woodlynne that Fire and Housing Inspections would be part of the agreement. Mayor Maley stated without all three components our police officers would be put in harms way. Mayor Maley said the Borough of Woodlynne is not interested in extending the agreement. The Mayor also pointed out that Collingswood contacted Woodlynne 16 months before the expiration of the agreement. Mayor Maley said he is very concerned about the situation. Mr. Gregor said he understands how the quality of life issues will impact the amount of time the police department is there but he questioned whether an extension to the contract would help with the budget shortfalls and possibly save jobs. Mayor Maley said it could but the Mayor of Woodlynne has held money due to Collingswood and he is not sure if he would do it again. Mayor Maley added that he is available to the Mayor of Woodlynne but the little communication he has had has not been nice.

Helen McNeill Dwight Ave., said I am here in support of the EMT's and Firefighters. Ms McNeill said the firefighters put their life on the line, they are trained professionals and they deserve every consideration that is available. Ms. McNeil continued by adding there is money to by buildings and for the Lumberyard. Mayor Maley explained over the past 5 years we have reduced our debt by almost 10%. We do not spend all our money on redevelopment. Mayor Maley expressed that he agreed with Ms. McNeill about the great job done by our firefighters and all the Borough employees.

A resident commented she had a fire in her home and the fire department did a great job. She said they were there when she needed them.

A resident asked about the consolidation of municipalities. Mayor Maley explained the pros and cons of the consolidation concept.

Christina Zakrzewski 724 Woodlynne Ave. commented on the problems she is having because of water from the Creek behind her home flooding her yard. Mayor Maley said there has been a problem with flooding in that area for years. The Mayor added the Borough has been in talks with the Army Corp of Engineers about dredging the creek and the Borough will also be in contact with NJ DOT about the portion of the Route 130 Project that has not been completed, which should also make a difference. Ms. Zakrzewski asked if the soil would to be tested.

Mike Gattone asked if the Mayor participated in negotiations. Mayor Maley responded that the Borough attorney was present during some sessions. A discussion ensued about the Fire Department layoffs.

Jeff Carroll 810 Park Ave. understands the economic constraints everyone is facing now but asked is there anything the Borough can do, even in the short term to save firefighter jobs.

A resident from Knight Ave. asked why is it that the Commission Meetings seem like everything is funny or an argument? The resident continued that because the Borough spends money and now we can not afford the firemen. Mayor Maley said that no one thinks this is funny and this is not fun. We have been faced with these issues for two years and we are trying to make it work. The Mayor continued that the Borough is has reduced our debt by almost 10%. A discussion continued about municipal spending, development, property taxes and jobs.

A resident asked about selling cars on eBay. Mayor Maley explained that auctions are used to sell municipal equipment. The resident then asked if she can help the Borough with marketing. Mayor Maley thanked her.

Linda Skowronek 215 E Madison Ave., said she is in support of the police and fire department. Ms. Skowronek expressed her concerns about public safety.

Annette Fleming 772 Bettelwood Ave., said the Fire Department is there during many types of emergency. Ms Fleming added that the Firemen deserve the utmost respect. Mayor Maley agreed.

Joel Shannon 435 E Summerfield Ave., said that he is not against the public servants in town. Mr. Shannon said many residents in town are not getting raises. Mr. Shannon added he respects the Firefighters but he is concerned because his property taxes keep going up.

Steve Rustle, President of FMBA Local 108 thanked all the residents for their support of the Collingswood Firefighters. Firefighter Rustle said the firefighters have been working with the Borough and stated we are willing to give up our raises if that is what is needed. He thanked everyone again, adding that the Collingswood Firefighters and EMS will always be there for the community.

Mayor Maley ended the Public Portion of the meeting.

Commissioner Hall stated that the last two years have been very difficult, he said there have been a lot of sleepless nights. Commissioner Hall said he worked for the Fire Department for over thirty years and has hired many of the


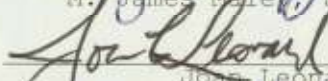
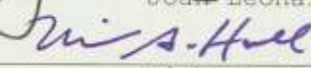
firefighters. He does not want to see anyone lose their jobs. But he was elected as Commissioner to serve the entire town. Commissioner Hall said it is his job to be able to balance it all and as painful as this is, it is what has to be done. Commissioner Hall said that himself, Mayor Maley and Commissioner Leonard are willing to listen to any proposals the firefighters have. Commissioner Hall said it is his job to listen to the people. He added he wants to see a resolution to this, he wants people to be able to pay their taxes and live in this great town. Commissioner Hall said he has lived here his whole life and wants it known that he is not taking any of this lightly.

Commissioner Leonard said she also is not taking any of this lightly and that she works very hard at helping people directly and personally. Commissioner Leonard explained that herself, Commissioner Hall and Mayor Maley have been working very hard trying to come up with ideas to resolve this situation. But there is more that the unions need to do. Commissioner Leonard said she appreciates and respects the work the Borough Employees do, adding that she depends on their services as well. Commissioner Leonard stated that this is a Financial crisis and residents are faced with not being able to afford their property taxes. We need to do our job to help residents stay here in Collingswood. Commissioner Leonard continued that the other issues mentioned this evening are being worked on. And we will continue to work so that the residents of this town will continue to love living here as much as we do.

Mayor Maley said he has been working at this for 21 years and during those years there has always been a push to move forward, expand, grow and improve and do it differently. There has never been a time like this where we have to reduce, cutback, and do less. It is the times we are in. Mayor Maley said the only answer is to expand the ratable base. Mayor Maley congratulated Commissioner Hall for becoming the grandfather of twins. Mayor Maley asked everyone to please fill out their Census forms. Mayor Maley explained that money is distributed based on the numbers. Mayor Maley added that Men's Journal has cited Collingswood as being on the Best Places to Live without a car crediting Public Transportation, Collingswood's walk ability and the success of the Bike Share Program. Mayor Maley talked about the new parking meter system. The Mayor announced the Roberts Pool Summer Swim sale explaining pool tags for families would be discounted until June 15<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Maley explained sales were down last year and we thought this might be a way to have more people sign up and help families too.

With no further comments, Mayor Maley moved the meeting be adjourned at 8:40 PM, which was seconded.

  
K. Holly Mannel  
Acting Borough Clerk

  
M. James Maley, Jr.  
  
Joan Leonard  
  
Michael Hall  
Borough Commissioners