

**BOROUGH OF BUENA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 8, 2010**

The regular meeting of Mayor and Council of the Borough of Buena was held Monday, March 8, 2010 commencing at 7:00 p.m. at the Borough Hall with Council President Santagata presiding. The Council President led the flag salute and announced that this meeting was being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and notices of this meeting have been provided to the Press of Atlantic City, the Daily Journal and the Atlantic County Record as well as having been posted on the bulletin board at Borough Hall.

PRESENT: Councilpersons Andaloro, Baker, Santagata, Zappariello, Cugini, and DeStefano, Robert De Santo Solicitor and Maryann Coraluzzo, Borough Clerk

ABSENT: Mayor Baruffi

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Council President Santagata read the following letter from Mayor Baruffi:

My Fellow Borough Residents,

Due to an ongoing illness, I am unable to attend this evenings meeting. However, I want you to know my thoughts and feelings on this budget issue. I would like to address the steps taken throughout the year to try to alleviate this budget crisis, steps that are being taken to circumvent this budget crisis, and most importantly preparations being investigated if this budget crisis becomes the "worst case scenario" predicament.

Last year, the Mayor and Council reduced hours worked by Borough Hall employees. Also, Mayor and Council cut a position in the Borough Clerks Office, cut a seasonal worker position as well as reducing a fulltime position to part-time. In addition all Municipal salaries were frozen.

Currently, Mayor and Council are actively pursuing a Cops Universal Grant through Federal Stimulus money that will help cover the cost of three full time police officers...this is Federal money available to all Municipalities to help defer the burden on local taxpayers. As in the past, Mayor will again lobby the state for Extraordinary Aid, this Aid is provided to Municipalities that would not be able to provide essential services to the community without a substantial increase in their property tax rate.

Lastly, Mayor and Council are investigating options with precautionary yet pro-active foresight. With this being said, I ask council to NOT pursue layoff notices to any employees until all State Aid, Grants, Extraordinary Aid figures are confirmed.

Council President Santagata opened the meeting by saying how disappointed he was with the false flyer that was passed around to the residents in the Borough. The President then turned the meeting over to Solicitor DeSanto for an overview of the RICE process.

Solicitor Robert DeSanto stated that dispatchers were served with a RICE Notice because council might be preliminarily discussing an agreement with Egg Harbor City at the meeting. As for the police, he said, there also was to be preliminary discussion regarding possible layoffs. No discussions were held due to lack of information, however, the public portion was held at this time.

Middle School Principal Ken Nelson asked Council to reconsider laying off police officers. He told of all the positive reinforcements these men and women have been to the students during his tenure in Buena.

Eric Hollinger stated that he was involved in a shooting and officers saved his life. He was not in favor of laying off officers.

Lois Errickson questioned the non collection of court fines. Council President Santagata explained that an audit was conducted and the majority of those fines were determined to be uncollectible.

Dispatcher Cindy Moriarity stated that there are issues with the sound quality between Egg Harbor City and emergency personnel which could result in delayed responses, injury or death. Ms. Moriarity questioned why some part time employees receive full state health benefits. She also asked Council to reconsider any and all layoffs in public safety and to look elsewhere for money saving options.

Mr. Wheeler from Tuckahoe Road asked PBA Attorney Stuart Alterman what concessions his union has made in dealing with our tough economic times. Mr. Alterman responded that police officers go to work every day knowing that they may be seriously injured or killed. Mr. Alterman also stated that the PBA will be conducting an audit of the Borough's books to determine if cuts can be made in other departments.

Dispatcher Elizabeth Battelini stated that she has been with the Borough for 22 years and only has 3 more years until she is eligible for retirement. She stated that the dispatchers care about our town and asked Council to reconsider closing the department.

Elizabeth Llamas stated that our police officers have helped her tremendously over the years, including while raising her children. Many have become like family to her. She does not want to see any layoffs.

Council President Santagata reminded everyone that this was just precautionary, and Council is exploring many options at this time. Chief Adams recommended placing these matters on the November ballot as a non-binding referendum.

ORDINANCE 568 INTRODUCED AND PASSED ON FIRST READING:

BOND ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF BUENA, IN THE COUNTY OF ATLANTIC, NEW JERSEY, AMENDING SECTION 3(a) OF BOND ORDINANCE NO. 482 FINALLY ADOPTED MAY 7, 2001, SECTION 3(g) OF BOND ORDINANCE NO. 536 FINALLY ADOPTED MAY 9, 2005 AND SECTION 3(e) OF BOND ORDINANCE NO. 539 FINALLY ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 25, 2006.

m/Baker s/Andaloro

| AYES: | NAYS: | ABSENT: | ABSTAIN: |
|-------------|-------|---------|----------|
| Andaloro | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Baker | | | |
| Santagata | | | |
| Zappariello | | | |
| Cugini | | | |
| DeStefano | | | |

RESOLUTION 22-10 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TAX COLLECTOR TO TRANSFER REFUND OR APPLY OVERPAYMENTS.

m/Baker s/Andaloro

| AYES: | NAYS: | ABSENT: | ABSTAIN: |
|-------------|-------|---------|----------|
| Andaloro | n/a | n/a | Cugini |
| Baker | | | |
| Santagata | | | |
| Zappariello | | | |
| DeStefano | | | |

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RESOLUTION 23-10 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC FROM A MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF BUENA TO BE HELD MARCH 8, 2010.

|Tabled to a future meeting.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: Solicitor DeSanto disseminated the Civil Service rules and time line regarding layoffs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

RECYCLING: (COUNCILWOMAN ANDALORO)

Councilwoman Andaloro reported that Buena Business Park will be receiving weekly recycling pickup. The Councilwoman is hopeful this will help with our rate. Newsletter preparation and visits to schools are underway.

FINANCE: (COUNCILWOMAN BAKER)

Councilwoman Baker reported that the finance department worked on the formulation of the new ordinance. This included combining three old ordinances into one. The balances will remain the same and additional wording was used to explain the uses of the money.

Councilwoman Baker informed Council that the audit is ongoing.

A further temporary budget is being worked on. We are still waiting for municipal aid figures from the Governor.

STREETS/ROADS: (COUNCILMAN SANTAGATA)

The Road Department Itinerary was given. FEMA will be reimbursing the Borough approximately \$12,000.00 for the December snowstorm.

RECREATION: (COUNCILMAN ZAPPARIELLO)

Councilman Zappariello stated that the following events will take place during the month of March:

March 14th Buena Exchange Club Breakfast at the Community Center from 7:30 to 11:30

March 20th Easter Egg Hunt at 10:00 for ages 1 through 12

March 27th Buena's Walk to Haiti to Lend a Hand. Buena Regional High School from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

March 27th Notre Dame School 2010 Super Bingo 50/50

PUBLIC SAFETY/STREET LIGHTS: (COUNCILMAN CUGINI)

A Police Performance Report was disseminated. Director Cugini reported that one gun was purchased through Hidden Acres Firearms at cost. The department was short one gun and was unable to purchase one from anywhere else in a timely manner.

Officer Matthew Molnar was commended for outstanding police work during a recent car stop.

BLDGS/GROUNDS/IMPROVEMENTS: (COUNCILMAN DESTEFANO)

Councilman DeStefano reported on the upcoming demolition of the Mazzoni building, the house located at 117 South Harding Highway and the old municipal building. A picture of the new marquee was disseminated. Bids will be advertised after the final adoption of the bond ordinance introduced tonight.

Solicitor DeSanto has prepared and forwarded a surrender agreement to the Historical Society to be signed and their next meeting.

PUBLIC PORTION OF THE MEETING:

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CLERK'S REPORT:

Minutes of the regular meeting of were approved m/Baker s/DeStefano RCVU

CORRESPONDENCE:

**NOTRE DAME REGIONAL SCHOOL PTA REQUEST
FOR BINGO LICENSE NO BA M BAKER
SANDALOROCVU**

**CORRESPONDENCE FILED M BAKER S DESTEFANO
RCVU**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS NONE

NEW BUSINESS NONE

BILLS PAID AS LISTED M BAKERS SANDALORO RC UU

NEXT MEETING MARCH

MEETING ADJOURNED M BAKERS SANDALORO RC UU

MARYANN CORALUZZO BOROUGH CLERK