

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 2, 2023, at 6:30 P.M.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Work Session of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee was held on the above date in the Memorial Municipal Building, 309 Main Street, Fort Lee, New Jersey.

PRESENT: Mayor Sokolich, Council Members Sohmer, Yoon, Suh, Drumgoole, Kasofsky, Cervieri

ALSO PRESENT: Alfred Restaino, Borough Administrator
Evelyn Rosario, Municipal Clerk
Nadine Drumgoole, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Brian Chewcaskie, Borough Attorney

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

In accordance with Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 adequate notice informing the public of the time and place of this meeting was duly published in the Record, the Jersey Journal and Star Ledger issues of November 28, 2022. Said notice was also posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board and Borough website.

RESOLUTION FOR CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS:

On motion by Councilwoman Kasofsky seconded by Councilman Sohmer and approved **unanimously**, the meeting moved into closed session.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee that:
This body shall hereafter discuss in closed session, pursuant to Section 7B of the Open Public Meetings Act, certain items which may generally be described as follows:

- 1. Personnel:**
 - a.** Administration
 - b.** Health Department
 - c.** Police Department

- d. Tax Assessor
- 2. **Legal:**
 - a. Tax Appeal Amendment: 90 Park Ave. Chen, LLC
 - b. Affordable Housing
- 3. **Contracts:**
 - a. Seagrave Fire Apparatus, LLC

The minutes of the discussion in closed session may be disclosed to the public when the Mayor and Council has determined that the need for confidentiality has been satisfied.

The open portion of the work session will resume upon completion of the closed portion.

The closed portion of the meeting ended at 7:34 P.M. The open portion of the work session began at 7:34 P.M.

PRESENTATION

Mr. Yogi Virk, Robert Anzilotti and Ryan Magee of Vanraj, LLC were present to express their desire to place an adult use cannabis retail facility at 2143 Route 4, Fort Lee NJ.

They spoke of generation of revenues, facility security, job opportunities and traffic control.

In closing, the representatives thanked the Governing Body for giving them the opportunity to come before them.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Business District Alliance 2023 Budget

The Business District Alliance budget will be introduced at the February 16th regular session meeting.

NJ DEP Grant Submission for Improvements to Inwood Terrace Park

Administrator Restaino stated project known as Improvements to Inwood Terrace Park will require public outreach. The public will be notified to attend the public hearing to solicit feedback.

A resolution authorizing the submission of an application for Improvements to Inwood Terrace Park will be placed on the proposed February 16th regular session agenda.

NJ DCA Grant Application Submission for Proposed Project Known as Facility Improvements at the Fort Lee Youth Center

Mayor Sokolich suggested facility improvements begin with the replacement of the HVAC unit, roof and windows.

A resolution authorizing the submission of an application for project known as Facility Improvements at the Fort Lee Youth Center will be placed on the proposed February 16th regular session agenda.

Proposal from May & Associates for the Provision of Affordable Housing Services, Not to Exceed \$7,500.00

Borough Attorney Brian Chewcaskie reviewed the proposal as submitted by May and Associates for the Provision of Affordable Housing Administrative Services.

A resolution will be placed on the proposed February 16th regular session agenda.

Proposal from Community Grants, Planning & Housing, LLC (CGP&H, LLC) for the Provision of Affordable Housing Administrative Agent, Not to Exceed \$40,000.00

Borough Attorney Brian Chewcaskie reviewed the proposal as submitted by Community Grants, Planning & Housing, LLC (CGP&H, LLC) for the provision of Affordable Housing Administrative Agent.

A resolution will be placed on the proposed February 16th regular session agenda.

Affordable Housing Planner Phillips Preiss

Borough Attorney Brian Chewcaskie reviewed the proposal as submitted by Phillip Preiss for the provision of Affordable Housing Planner.

A resolution will be placed on the proposed February 16th regular session agenda.

Renewal Proposal from Hoplite Communications, LLC for the Provision of 5G Telecommunications Consulting Services

A resolution authoring the renewal of a contract to Hoplite Communications, LLC for the provision of 5G telecommunications wireless consulting services pertaining to small cell technology will be placed on the proposed February 16th regular session agenda.

Change Order No.1, D.L.S Contracting, Inc. for Project Known as Improvements to Harvard Place, \$12,500.00

The Governing Body reviewed the change order regarding the above project which has been reviewed and recommended by Boswell Engineering.

A resolution will be placed on the proposed February 16th regular session agenda.

Bid Advertisement for Project Known as 10th Street Road Improvements

A resolution authorizing the Purchasing Agent to obtain specifications and advertise for bids regarding the above-mentioned project will be placed on the proposed February 16th regular session agenda.

Sale of Borough Street Signs, \$10.00 Each

Administrator Restaino stated the Borough is offering first come first serve Street Sign Sale of the original green street signs at the Fort Lee DPW. Funds received would be administered to the Charitable Foundation.

YCFL Color Run for People with Disabilities, Saturday, April 22, 2023

The Governing Body has approved the request from the Youth Council.

A resolution will be placed on the proposed February 16th regular session agenda.

Request for the Issuance of a New Hotel Liquor License at 2339 Route 4

Mr. Chewcaskie stated as previously discussed, a request was submitted from Ms. Susan Lee Cobb representing the new purchaser of the Holiday Inn Hotel and the new management company that will be hired by the new hotel owner to manage and operate. It is the intention of the new owner to transfer the existing “33 Consumption License” to their ownership and deactivate the license. In its place, they are asking the Governing Body to consider issuing a new “36 Hotel License.”

Mr. Chewcaskie stated there are two options when issuing a new license. Option one is a historical method evaluating applications received pursuant to municipality publication. Option 2 is a public sale method utilizing a bidding process.

It was the consensus of the Governing Body to move forward with the public sale method.

Authorize a Person-to-Person and Place-to-Place Transfer of Liquor License No. 0219-33-040-013 From Arcadian Holdings, Inc. to Noma Group, LLC, 2006-2010 Hudson Street, Effective February 2, 2023

It was the consensus of the Governing Body to authorize the above captioned person to person and place to place liquor license transfer.

An authorizing resolution will be placed on the proposed February 16th regular session agenda.

Vacancy Housing Authority Commissioner

Mayor Sokolich is requesting the Governing Body consider Jay Blau as a Commissioner of the Fort Lee Housing Authority.

It was the consensus of the Governing Body to take action for the Mayoral Appointment this evening.

RESOLUTION

R-1 PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

Council	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Sohmer			X			
Yoon			X			
Suh			X			
Drumgoole			X			
Kasofsky		X	X			
Cervieri	X		X			

February 2, 2023 Work Session Meeting Resolution # R-1 Carried: <u>X</u> Defeated: <u> </u> Tabled: <u> </u> Approved on Consent Agenda: <u> </u>
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BE IT RESOLVED, that the following claims, the details for which are attached hereto and made a part hereof, are hereby authorized to be paid, having been audited and found correct by the Borough Administrator and Chief Financial Officer.

ACCOUNT

AMOUNT

Current	\$3,649,069.08
Current – Grant	

Capital	393,514.14
Road Improvement Plan	
Multiple Dwelling	
Construction Fees	
COAH Fees	
Senior Citizen Advisory Council	
Trip Admissions	
Special Dog Account	
Trust Account Fund	
Redemption Account	160,133.78
Disability Insurance Trust	
Public Assistance Trust Fund	
Police Activity Trust	
Fort Lee Film Commission	
Community Development	
School Resource Account	
Dedicated Penalties (Fire Prevention)	
POAA	
Police Donation	
Police Treasury	
Police Justice	14,052.54
Flexible Spending	
Trust Account	111,555.00
Developers CONNECT ONE	63,644.85
Developers B of America	
Total:	\$ 4,391,969.39

R-2 AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF MICHAEL SARGENTI, PART-TIME EMPLOYEE IN ADMINISTRATION, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 13, 2022, \$45,000.00 ANNUAL SALARY

Council	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Sohmer			X			
Yoon			X			
Suh			X			
Drumgoole		X	X			
Kasofsky			X			
Cervieri	X		X			

<p>February 2, 2023 Work Session Meeting</p> <p>Resolution # R-2</p> <p>Carried: <u>X</u> Defeated: <u> </u> Tabled: <u> </u></p> <p>Approved on Consent Agenda: <u> </u></p>
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RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF FORT LEE AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF A PART-TIME EMPLOYEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR

WHEREAS, the Borough Administrator has performed an analysis of the Borough's operations and has determined that the need has arisen for a part-

time individual to handle tasks that will improve efficiencies within the Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have authorized the hiring of a part-time employee in the Office of the Administrator; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee, that **Mr. Michael Sargenti** be appointed to a part-time position in the **Office of the Administrator**, with an **effective date of February 13, 2023**, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this part-time position shall be at **\$45,000 per year** and consist of 19 hours per week.

R-3 AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED PROJECT KNOWN AS FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS AT THE FORT LEE YOUTH CENTER

Council	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Sohmer		X	X			
Yoon			X			
Suh	X		X			
Drumgoole			X			
Kasofsky			X			
Cervieri			X			

February 2, 2023 Work Session Meeting Resolution # R-3 Carried: <u>X</u> Defeated: <u> </u> Tabled: <u> </u> Approved on Consent Agenda: <u> </u>
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RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FORT LEE ENDORSING A NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION FOR IMPOROVEMENT TO THE FORT LEE YOUTH CENTER

WHEREAS, the Borough of Fort Lee desires to apply for and obtain a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for approximately \$100,000.00 to complete facility improvements at the Fort Lee Youth Center; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Borough of Fort Lee does hereby authorize the application for such a grant; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Borough of Fort Lee recognizes and accepts that the Department may offer a lesser or greater amount and therefore, upon receipt of the grant agreement from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, does further authorize the execution of any such grant

agreement; and also, upon receipt of the fully executed agreement from the Department, does further authorize the expenditure of funds pursuant to the terms of the agreement between the Borough of Fort Lee and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Mayor Mark J. Sokolich is authorized to sign the application, the agreement, and any other documents necessary in connection therewith.

R-4 AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF A USED CAR LOT LICENSE TO MR. GADI BEN HAMO OWNER OF 26 MOTOR VANS, LLC

Council	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Sohmer		X	X			
Yoon			X			
Suh			X			
Drumgoole			X			
Kasofsky			X			
Cervieri	X		X			

February 2, 2023 Work Session Meeting Resolution # R-4 Carried: <u>X</u> Defeated: <u> </u> Tabled: <u> </u> Approved on Consent Agenda: <u>X</u>

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FORT LEE AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF A USED CAR LOT LICENSE TO MR. GADI BEN HAMO OWNER OF “26 MOTORS VANS, LLC”

WHEREAS, Mr. Gadi Ben Hamo owner of 26 Motors Vans, LLC has submitted an application for the issuance of a used car lot license at the location of 1696 Bergen Blvd: and

WHEREAS, supporting documentation and fees relative to the issuance of a used car lot license has been received in accordance with Chapter 289, Article III of the Borough Code; and

WHEREAS, this Resolution shall supersede any and all prior resolutions related to the issuance of a used car lot license at the location of 1696 Bergen Blvd.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Governing Body of the Borough of Fort Lee, does hereby approve the issuance a Used Car Lot license to Gadi Ben Hamo for business entitled 26 Motors Vans, LLC effective February 3, 2023, through December 31, 2023.

R-5 AUTHORIZING AN AMENDING REFUND FOR SETTLEMENT OF TAX APPEAL ENTITLED 90 PARK AVE CHEN, LLC V BOROUGH OF FORT LEE

Council	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Sohmer			X			
Yoon			X			
Suh		X	X			
Drumgoole			X			
Kasofsky			X			
Cervieri	X		X			

February 2, 2023
Work Session Meeting

Resolution # R-5

Carried: X Defeated: Tabled:

Approved on Consent Agenda: X

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FORT LEE AMENDING REFUND FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF TAX APPEALS ENTITLED “90 PARK AVE CHEN, LLC V. BOROUGH OF FORT LEE”

WHEREAS, 90 Park Ave Chen, LLC is the owner and/or taxpayer of property located at Block 3352, Lot 3, Qualifier C1811, also known as 100 Old Palisade Road, #1811, Fort Lee, New Jersey (the “Property”) for tax year 2021; and

WHEREAS, the taxpayer filed a property tax appeal against the Borough of Fort Lee for the tax year 2021 in a matter entitled, 90 Park Ave Chen, LLC v. Borough of Fort Lee, which has been settled; and

WHEREAS, on November 10, 2022, the Borough adopted Resolution No. R-2, authorizing settlement of the appeal with a refund of \$3,694.21; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Assessor determined that the refund of \$3,694.21 was calculated based on the original assessment of the property, \$571,900, and not the assessment entered by the county tax board judgment, \$500,000; and

WHEREAS, it is recommended by the Borough Tax Appeal Counsel and Borough Assessor to amend the refund to accurately reflect the reduction in the assessed value of the property, and that such amendment is in the best interests of the Borough.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee that, pursuant to the settlement of 90 Park Ave Chen, LLC v. Borough of Fort Lee, for the tax year 2021 the assessment of \$500,000 will be reduced to \$420,000; resulting in a refund of \$1,945.60; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk shall keep a copy of this Resolution on file and available for inspection in the office of the Borough Clerk and shall forward a copy of this Resolution to the Mayor; Business Administrator; Borough Attorney and Borough Tax Assessor.

Councilman Cervieri addressed the Governing Body to consider pursuing the purchase of property located at 2033 Center Avenue, as it would benefit the development of the new senior center building.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

On motion by Councilwoman Kasofsky seconded by Councilman Cervieri and carried unanimously, the meeting was opened to the public for discussion.

There being no public discussion the meeting was adjourned on motion by Councilwoman Kasofsky, seconded by Councilman Cervieri, at 8:42 PM.

Evelyn Rosario, RMC, CMC
Municipal Clerk

Prepared By:
Nadine Drumgoole
Deputy Municipal Clerk