

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 4, 2021 at 6:30 P.M.**

Due to the current situation involving the COVID-19 pandemic, the work session meeting of the Mayor and Council was held remotely. This meeting was accessed by telephone, by dialing one of the numbers listed below and entering the meeting ID number 926 3069 8230.

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**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, Suh, Sargenti, Kasofsky, Cervieri

**ABSENT:** Councilman Yoon

**ALSO PRESENT:** Alfred Restaino, Borough Administrator  
Evelyn Rosario, Borough 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 issue of December 22, 2020 and the Jersey Journal and Star Ledger issues of December 24, 2020. Said notice was also posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board, on the outside door of Borough Hall and Borough website.

**RESOLUTION FOR CLOSED SESSION**

**On motion by Councilman Cervieri, seconded by Councilman Suh 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. Building Department
- c. Community Center
- d. Fire Prevention Bureau
- e. Municipal Court
- f. Recreation Department

2. **Contracts:**

- a. Shared Services Agreement: Board of Education
- b. Consultant Barrymore Film Center & Museum

3. **Legal:**

- a. Mill Creek
- b. 69 Main street

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 executive session will resume upon completion of the closed portion.

The closed portion of the meeting ended at 7:45 P.M. The open portion of the work session began at 7:45 P.M.

**PRESENTATION:**

Lynn Bartlett, Executive Director Bergen County Housing Authority  
Kurt Vierheilig, DMR Architects

Ms. Bartlett came forward and provided an overview of the proposed 100-unit senior housing project, senior center and Health Department offices which will be located on the site of the current Sr Center. Ms. Bartlett reviewed potential funding sources and indicated that the BCHA had also contracted with a parking consultant to complete a parking study. Mr. Vierheilig spoke of the parking study and current vehicle need and indicated that 10:00 AM is the peak parking time. He also reviewed a sketch/rendering of the project.

A discussion ensued regarding the proposed building size, application process.

A Preliminary Site Plan approval by the Fort Lee Planning Board is required in order to start the process and Administrator Restaino will be reaching out to Ms. Bartlett to determine and prepare any needed resolutions.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION:**

**Bergen Municipal Employee Benefits Fund Indemnity and Trust Agreement**

A resolution authorizing the renewal of membership in the Bergen Municipal Employee Benefits Fund will be placed on the March 18<sup>th</sup> proposed consent agenda.

**Community Development Block Grant COVID-19 Funding Round II Support Resolution**

A resolution endorsing a 2021 Community Development Block Grant application for Covid-19 round II grants for the installation of Covid-19 protective systems at the Richard and Catherine Nest Senior Activity Center will be placed on the March 18<sup>th</sup> proposed consent agenda.

### **Stormwater Control Ordinance**

Administrator Restaino spoke of the correspondence he received from HDR related to NJ Stormwater Rules. The rules were amended last year requiring changes to the Borough ordinance to reflect the requirement for developers to apply non-structural measures to the maximum extent possible and the requirements related to green infrastructure to meet standards for groundwater recharge, stormwater runoff quality and quantity.

### **Retirement Police K9 Ajax**

Administrator Restaino stated he received notification from Chief Hintze of the retirement of Police K9 Ajax and a request from his handler Police Officer Reuter to adopt him.

It was the consensus of the Governing Body to authorize the transfer of Police Dog Ajax to his handler.

A resolution will be placed on the March 18<sup>th</sup> proposed consent agenda.

### **Person-to-Person Liquor License #0219-33-036-013 Transfer from iPic Gold Class Entertainment, LLC Debtor in Possession To iPic Theatres, LLC**

Due to a written objection to the transfer of the above captioned license, a public hearing has been scheduled for March 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M. via teleconference at the regular session meeting of the Mayor and Council.

### **State Route 5 and Abbott Boulevard Intersection**

Administrator Restaino provided an overview of the traffic situation at the intersection of the State Route 5 and Abbott Blvd. He indicated that as the weather gets better more residents will be walking on Abbott Blvd and seeking to cross Route 5. It was suggested that a cross walk be placed across Route 5, but it is a State Roadway and permission has not been granted before.

It was determined that additional lighting and blinking pedestrian crossing signs be installed.

### **ADD-ON**

### **Redevelopment Area 10**

Mayor Sokolich recused and was not present. Council President Cervieri presided over this portion of the meeting.

A resolution authorizing the designation of 47<sup>th</sup> Street Group, LLC as redeveloper and approving and authorizing the execution of a redevelopment agreement with 47<sup>th</sup> Street Group, LLC for property known as block 2752, lot 19 in Redevelopment Area 10 will be placed on the March 18<sup>th</sup> regular session agenda.

**ADD-ON**

**R-1 RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FORT LEE DECLARING SOLIDARITY WITH THE ASIAN AND ASIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY**

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

<p>March 4, 2021 Work Session Meeting</p> <p>Resolution # R-1</p> <p>Carried: <u>X</u> Defeated: ____ Tabled: ____</p> <p>Approved on Consent Agenda: ____</p>
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**RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FORT LEE DECLARING SOLIDARITY WITH THE ASIAN AND ASIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY**

**WHEREAS**, hate crimes motivated by anti-Asian sentiment have jumped 1,900% in New York City in 2020 and almost 3,000 reports of anti-Asian discrimination between March 19 and December 31, 2020 have been recorded by the Stop Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Hate; and

**WHEREAS**, racially motivated assaults and harassment targeting of Asian and Asian-American seniors have dramatically increased, including the recent attack and subsequent tragic death of 84-year-old Vicha Ratanapakdee in San Francisco on January 28, 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, in response to the xenophobic and inflammatory rhetoric about COVID-19 President Joseph Biden issued an Executive Memorandum on January 26, 2021 during the first week of his administration; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee hereby declare racism a public health crisis to the residents of Fort Lee and support measures at the municipal and state level to combat the insidious and persistent impact of racism.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee to:

1. Condemn and denounce racism, xenophobia and intolerance in all forms.

2. Call on public officials in other municipalities and at the state level to condemn and denounce racism, xenophobia and intolerance in all forms and stand with us in solidarity with the Asian and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders communities.
3. Continues to promote and advocate for equality and equity through all policies approved by the Mayor and Council.
4. Recognize the dedication of Asian and Asian-American frontline medical workers, teachers, police and fire officers and essential workers. They along with their colleagues show up to work every day so that our society can still function. The strain of COVID is particularly heavy for Asian and Asian-American frontline and essential workers because they have been personally attacked for their ethnicity in the midst of providing their essential services to us.
5. Continue to advocate locally and through the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, New Jersey Conference of Mayors and all other appropriate associations for relevant policies that improve health in communities of color.
6. Support local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic racism.
7. Further work to solidify alliances and partnerships with other organizations that are confronting racism and encourage other local, state, regional and national entities to recognize racism as a public health crisis.
8. Support community efforts, including through the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Racial Equity, to amplify community efforts to be anti-racist and to combat discrimination and xenophobia while engaging actively and authentically with communities of color wherever they live.
9. Promote and support policies and resources that prioritize the health of all people, such as bystander intervention programs like <https://www.ihollaback.org/bystanderintervention/>.
10. Encourage racial equity training among all community partners, vendors and contractors.
11. Call upon Bergen County Executive Tedesco and the Bergen County Board of Commissioners to declare racism as a public health crisis and to enact equity in all policies in the County of Bergen.
12. Call upon Governor Murphy, State Senate President Sweeney, and State Assembly Speaker Coughlin to also declare racism as a public health crisis and to enact equity in all policies of the state of New Jersey.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be transmitted accordingly for review and potential action.

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FORT LEE ACKNOWLEDGING THE EFFORTS OF CERTAIN BOROUGH EMPLOYEES AND AUTHORIZING A ONE-TIME PAYMENT IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR UNWAVERING DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT**

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

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FORT LEE ACKNOWLEDGING THE EFFORTS OF CERTAIN BOROUGH EMPLOYEES AND AUTHORIZING A ONE-TIME PAYMENT IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR UNWAVERING DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT**

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee acknowledge that in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, a significant number of Borough employees have been called upon to go above and beyond in order to ensure the continuity of services and success of the Borough’s operations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee wishes to recognize the dedicated efforts of these employees by providing a one-time payment as compensation for their unwavering service and commitment; and

- Steve Curry \$12,500
- Bryan Drumgoole \$12,500
- Sam Ghali \$12,500
- Michael Maresca \$12,500
- Al Restaino \$25,000
- Jill Scarpa \$15,000
- Crissa Skarimbass \$ 7,500

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee that it hereby authorizes a one-time payment to the above listed employees.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

On motion by Councilman Sohmer, seconded by Councilman Suh and carried unanimously, the meeting was opened to the public for discussion.

<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Response</u>
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None.

There being no further discussions the meeting was adjourned on motion by Councilman Sohmer, seconded by Councilman Suh, at 9:15 P.M.

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Evelyn Rosario, RMC  
Municipal Clerk