

**COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING  
430 WESTFIELD AVE., CLARK, NJ**

**April 4, 2022**

**7:30 pm**

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Council Members Albanese, Mazzarella, O'Connor, Smith, Toal, Minniti

Absent: Hund

Also Present: Salvatore Bonaccorso, Mayor; James F. Ulrich, Business Administrator; Mark Dugan, Township Attorney; Edith L. Merkel, Township Clerk

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG: MOMENT OF SILENCE**

This meeting is in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (Chapter 231, P.L.1975) as adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by mailing the Annual Schedule of meetings to the Star Ledger, Union County HAWK, Union County Local Source, and TAP into Clark, by posting such Annual Meeting Schedule on the bulletin board in Town Hall reserved for such announcements, as well as the Official Website of the Township, and the proper filing of said Notice.

**PROPOSED ORDINANCE:**

**1. Multipurpose Bond Ordinance**

Township Clerk: I will be receiving it from Bond Counsel; it is to be introduced on April 18<sup>th</sup> and the Public Hearing will be on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Council President Minniti asked for a mover and second on this Proposed Ordinance

Mover: Smith

Second: Albanese

**RESOLUTIONS:**

- 2.** Authorizing the Township Planning Board to undertake a Preliminary Investigation to determine whether the Proposed Study Area, which includes Lots 8.01, 9, 10, 10.01, 35, 36 and 37 in Block 91 qualifies as an Area in Need of Redevelopment

Discussion: None

Council President Minniti asked for a mover and second on this Resolution

Mover: Mazzarella

Second: Smith

- 3.** Re-appointing Nancy Raymond as Registrar of Vital Statistics and confirming the appointments of David DeRosa as Deputy Registrar and Nicole Castellucci and Gail Paterno as Alternate Deputy Registrars

Discussion: None

Council President Minniti asked for a mover and second on this Resolution

Mover: Toal

Second: O'Connor





**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Each person addressing the Council shall give their name and address to the Clerk. All remarks shall be addressed to the Council as a body and shall not exceed 10 minutes in duration.

Council President opened the meeting to the public

Rob Pettenato, 48 Ivy Street: expressed his view about the present allegations.

Mark Semler, 56 Conger Way: questioned the council about the use of taxpayer's money.

Mr. Dugan: referred to the (agreement) resolution, which is a public record.

Sanjay Vasu, 110 Williams Street: spoke of transparency and asked about recourse as taxpayers.

Mayor Bonaccorso: stated that the words "corruption" and "hidden" are untrue comments.

Mr. Dugan:

- stated that he was not admitting or denying allegations.
- there has been no allegation of action taken

Sanjay Vasu: asked about recourse.

Mr. Dugan: again, stated the election process and spoke of other options that can be taken.

Ebtsam Sayed, 1483 Raritan Road: questioned the female police officers that were hired under the Prosecutor's Office.

Mayor Bonaccorso:

- spoke of allegations not being a crime
- gave a brief explanation with regard to being unhappy with two female officers in town, and male officer, 10-12 years ago, not doing their jobs effectively and properly for the taxpayers of Clark
- explained the hiring process; the police department does the vetting of potential hires, the interviewing and the process, and when the potential hires are brought to the hiring authority (Mayor Bonaccorso) whether being male or female, they are hired

Jessica Pizzella, 412 Goodmans Crossing: Expressed concerns over allegations.

Anthony Cortazzo, 56 Conger Way: questioned the presumed financial allegations.

Mr. Dugan: announced that the council members are refraining from speaking under his direction.

Lisa Alexander, 19 Brown Terrace, Cranford: requested answers to allegations.

Seeing no one coming forward Councilwoman Albanese made a motion to close the public portion of the meeting, seconded by Councilman Smith

Council President Minniti directed roll call: All Ayes

Aye: Albanese, Mazzarella, O'Connor, Smith, Toal, Minniti

**MAYOR, COUNCIL AND PROFESSIONAL COMMENTS:**

Mayor Bonaccorso:

- addressed the allegations
- specified that he will be giving a statement within the next day or two
- explained the insurance company process was done as a business decision
- the officers on administrative leave follow New Jersey State law
- stated Clark has no control over the Union County Prosecutor’s Office
- mentioned the resolution to settle the matter was placed on the February 3, 2020 agenda, and was discussed at an open public meeting
- spoke of everything being done legally, ethically and above board
- mentioned the hurtful allegations
- stated that the town council is the legislative body, explaining that they vote on what the administration and legal counsel recommend to them.
- added that it was the decision of the insurance company urging our attorney to settle
- added that out of the \$400,000.00 settlement the township picked-up \$70,000

Councilwoman Albanese: No comment

Councilman Mazzarella: No comment

Councilman O'Connor: No comment

Councilman Smith: announced the Clark Girls Softball and Clark Little League Parade is 9am, Saturday, April 9, 2022.

Councilman Toal: stated everything was done properly and that a full explanation will be given to the public when the legal-ease allows.

Councilman Minniti: mentioned that the Easter Egg Hunt is being held at the Municipal Building, Saturday, April 9, 2022, at noon.

Mr. Ulrich: No comment

Township Clerk: No comment

Mr. Dugan: No comment

Council President Minniti asked for a motion to adjourn  
A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Toal, seconded by Councilwoman Albanese

ROLL CALL: All Ayes  
Aye: Albanese, Mazzarella, O’Connor, Smith, Toal, Minniti

MEETING ADJOURNED