

Borough of New Stanton
Borough Council
March 17, 2020
Minutes of Meeting

Attendance

Council members: Todd Bartlow, Joshua Bennett, Linda Echard, Ray Strosko, and Mayor Ronald Echard. Also: Borough Manager Jeffrey McLaughlin and via telephone, Borough Solicitor John Campfield. Absent: Councilmembers Art Cicero, Scott Sistik, and Tom Theis. Excused: Emil Bove.

Call to Order

President Raymond Strosko called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Prayer

Jeff recited a prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was recited.

Opportunity for Public Comment -- Items Not on the Agenda

There were none.

Council Additions to Agenda

There were none.

Opportunity for Public Comment -- on Agenda Items Only

There were none.

Agenda

1. M/V to Endorse Mayor's Declaration of Emergency

Todd made a motion seconded by Linda to endorse and extend the Mayors Declaration of Emergency. Motion passed unanimously.

2. M/V Regarding Employee Work Status Until April 8, 2020

Todd made a motion seconded by Linda that borough employees remain paid in full until April 8, 2020 while Anita will be working from home, Jeff will continue to report to the borough building, and the Public Works employees will be on on-call. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion Regarding Zoning Hearing Board Meeting Scheduled for April 14, 2020

Jeff stated that an application has been submitted to the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) for a Special Exception to house an automotive repair garage in the former beer distributor on S. Center Avenue. He asked council if they had any opinion on the matter so that when he attends the hearing he will know how to represent the borough. He also asked, given the COVID-19 Pandemic, if the meeting should be postponed since access to the borough building was being limited. John asked what the date was on the application. Jeff did not have the original date on hand but stated that the application was incomplete, and the applicant was notified. In response, the applicant submitted a survey on March 11, 2020, completing the application. John stated that he could talk to John Sweeney, the Solicitor for the ZHB, to see if he has any concerns about complying with requirements to hold the meeting in a timely manner or if the meeting could be postponed by reason of the pandemic. John also stated that a separate issue would be if the borough would allow the ZHB to use the building and what would the rules be in using the building. John also mentioned that the ZHB could look into the feasibility of teleconferencing for the parties involved including ZHB members, the stenographer, the applicants and residents. He said an open question is if the stenographer would be allowed/able to work under these conditions. John also stated that such a meeting would still need to be advertised.

Tom Smith, Resident

Resident Tom Smith said that there are a lot of people in that neighborhood that are not for the Special Exception, but they may not be willing to attend.

Linda made a motion seconded by Josh that we engage the borough solicitor to talk with the ZHB solicitor as to the absolute deadline to conduct the hearing and to give authority to the solicitors to come to a conclusion. Motion passed unanimously.

Additional Opportunities for Public Comment

Tom Smith, Resident

Tom Smith stated that earlier in the meeting he did pass up his opportunity to comment on item #2 on the agenda. He said that, given the wording on the agenda, he did not realize what the motion would be that was adopted. He concluded by saying that since the motion was passed, there was no reason to make a comment.

Adjournment

Todd made a motion seconded by Josh to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 PM. There were no objections.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey McLaughlin
Secretary