



Minutes
Open Sessions

December 16, 2021
7:32 pm

Virtual Regular Meeting
Mayor and Council of the Borough of Bogota
Bogota Council Chambers
375 Larch Avenue
Bogota, NJ 07603

Roll Call of 2021 Council

Mayor Kelemen	Present
Council President Carpenter	Present
Councilman Connors	Present
Councilwoman Fede	Present
Councilwoman Granquist	Present
Councilwoman Murphy	Present
Councilman Robbins	Present

Also Present: Borough Attorney, William Betesh; Borough Administrator, Joseph Scarpa and Deputy Clerk, Yenlys F. Bolivard.

Salute to the Flag

A motion was made by Councilwoman Murphy and seconded by Council President Carpenter to go into Closed Session, all in favor.

A motion was made by Council President Carpenter seconded by Councilwoman Murphy to go into Open Session, all in favor.

Citizen Remarks: One five (5) minute time limit per person.

Councilman Robbins made a motion for citizen remarks seconded by Council President Carpenter, all in favor.

Harper – Expressed her disappointment by the OPRA response she received. Concerned about the Borough not taking the time review her request.

Sofia- Had a question regarding the overhead cost for the recreation center and how much it will cost the taxpayers. Questioned who will be able to attend the new recreation center and how much it will cost, and what type of programs will be offered.

He also mentioned that he would like to know how many speeding tickets are issued per month. Mr. Sofia expressed his concern regarding the traffic at Palisade Ave and mentioned the population from the Atwater is going to make traffic worst.

Mayor and Council answered citizen remarks:

Council President Carpenter – addressed Mr. Sofia questions by mentioning that the bids for the recreation center will be received on January 12, and by then more details can be provided regarding the cost. She also said the funds will come from the developer at the Atwater. Some changes cannot be made due to the amount already invested in it.

Councilman Connors – Addressed the speeding question to Mr. Sofia. He stated the Borough is planning to install about two speed alert signs on local streets over the next few years. This will help to reduce speeding on the streets of Bogota. Regarding the report on speeding tickets issued in Bogota he will share the numbers. The report will be transparent and organized by street names. He hoped to meet with the administrator and discuss the matter. Regarding the recreation center, it will be available for everyone including seniors and the cost is 99 % free. He is not aware of any program that will charge.

Mayor Kelemen - Regarding Ms. Harper and Mr. Sofia questions, the Bid for the Recreation Center will be in January and more information will be offered after the bid. He is not certain of how many trees are going to be removed. There is a lot of work to do. The Atwater has around 400 apartments which is adding to the Bogota population, however it will bring revenue to the town.

Discussion:

Request of Handicapped Parking Spot –Councilman Connor- spoke regarding the approval of a handicapped parking requested by the police Chief Maye.

Borough Attorney Betesh said the traffic ordinance needs to be modified and that it is unusual to grant a handicapped parking space to a property has that has a driveway. After the Council agreed to move forward, Mr. Betesh advised that he will prepare an Ordinance amending Chapter 7A of the Bogota Code to authorize the placement of a handicapped parking space on the street in front of 127 Highview Place, and it can be voted on at the next council meeting.

Councilwoman Fede, added that if the person requesting the handicapped parking moved, the ordinance would need to be revised. Police Chief Maye said that a correction to the ordinance has been done several times in the past after a resident left.

Motion made by Councilman Connors to give the Borough Attorney Betesh authorization to prepare an Ordinance amending Chapter 7A of the Bogota Code to authorize the placement of a handicapped parking space on the street in front of 127 Highview Place, seconded by Councilman Robbins, all in favors.

Meeting Live or Zoom for 2022 – Councilman Connors expressed his interest to be transparent with all the meeting and the best way is by holding the meetings via Zoom and Live. It is a positive thing to have as many people as possible participating in the meetings. He also said that he will ask the Administrator Mr. Scarpa to get in contact with Mr. Kennedy at the Board of Education regarding the way they do their meetings.

Councilwoman Murphy- Planning and Zoning voted at the last meeting to continue with Zoom meetings until further notice. Councilwoman Fede, also added that she was at the Planning and Zoning meeting and they will continue their meetings via Zoom.

Councilman Robbins- if the council wished to go live maybe doing the meeting at the senior center will be a good choice. He said, there is more space and everyone can feel comfortable.

Council President Carpenter – expressed her interest starting the council meeting live, since many others Municipalities have already.

Mayor Kelemen- expressed his concern regarding going live since the Borough is in orange again, he recommended to continue with the Zoom meetings for the next 3 months of 2022.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Murphy to continue holding the meetings via zoom until March of 2022, because of the rising number of positive cases of the covid-19 virus, and its variants. Seconded by Councilman Connors, all in favors. Resolution # 2021-188b

Increasing Dog Licenses Fee- Councilman Robbins, spoke regarding the proposed increase of the dog license fee. It was discussed at the Board of Health meeting and all members were in favor of introducing the changes in January 2022.

Borough Attorney Betesh asked Mr. Robbins if he has all the figures with him. Councilman Robbins said that they didn't have time to present it however it will be done at their next Health Meeting in April.

End of Discussion Items.

Consent Agenda:

- 21-177 Cancel small tax balances for 2021
- 21-178 Uniform Shared Services Agreement: Maintenance and Repair of Vehicles 2022
- 21-179 Uniform Shared Services Agreement: Mid-Bergen Regional Health Commission
- 21-181 Authorizing cancelation of outstanding checks and reconciling items
- 21-182 Authorizing Transfer of Budget appropriations
- 21-184 Approving the corrective action plan
- 21-185 Chapter 159 for click it or Ticket Grant
- 21-186 Chapter 159 for Driver Sober or get pull over
- 21-188 Authorizing Shared Service Agreement-County Radio System

Motion was made by Council President Carpenter to approve the consent agenda and seconded by Councilman Robbins, all in favor.

Resolution to be voted on separately:

PC21-19 Payment of Claims

Motion was made by Council President Carpenter to approve PC21-19 Payment of Claims and seconded by Councilwoman Fede, all in favor

21-183 Re-appoint CFO Gregory Bock

Motion was made by Council President Carpenter to Re-appoint CFO Gregory Bock and seconded by Councilman Robbins, all in favor.

21-187 Hiring Arthur Sopelsa Construction code official to replace the retiring Dan Howell

Motion was made by Councilman Robbins to hire a Construction Code Official Arthur Sopelsa to replace the retiring Dan Howell and seconded by Councilwoman Fede, all in favor.

Approvals:

Minutes 12/02/2021

Motion was made by Council President Carpenter to approve the minutes of 12/02/2021 and seconded by Councilman Robbins, all in favor. Councilwoman Murphy was absent at the December 2, 2021 meeting so she abstained.

Closed Session

Motion was made by Council president Carpenter to approve the closed sessions minutes Part 1 of 12/2/2021 and seconded by Councilman Robbins, all in favor. Councilwoman Murphy was absent at the December 2, 2021 meeting so she abstained and Councilwoman Fede recused herself from the first part of the closed session so she abstained.

Closed Session

Motion was made by Council President Carpenter to approve the Closed Session Part #2 minutes of 12/2/2021 and seconded by Councilman Robbins, all in favor. Councilwoman Murphy was absent at the December 2, 2021 meeting so she abstained.

2nd Citizen Remarks:

One Five (5) minute time limit per person

Motion was made by Councilman Connors to approve going into 2nd Citizen Remarks, and seconded by Councilman Robbins, all in favor.

Mr. Fede- spoke about the dog license recommendation as he is a member of the Board of Health. He told the Borough Attorney that the Code needed to be amended, and addressed the mayor and council by saying "please don't take this wrong, but let start the New Year by not making motions in your committee reports." The purpose of an agenda is to give the public the opportunity to see ahead of time what will be discussed at the meeting, for example he said "for the next year add to the agenda new business and old business. Therefore if something needed to be addressed it can be in there. And for the new people in town please don't take those meeting as a negative thing. This is a great town with great people."

Cruz- Mentioned her disappointment of not getting any notifications regarding the street being closed for repairs. She thanked the police department for their assistance during the time the street was closed. She hopes to start getting notifications regarding any closing of the street.

Diaz- questioned if the Bogota Police Chief was aware of the student mentioned in online video about threatening acts of violence at schools this Friday, December 17th. This threat was not aimed at any one school or state.

Nunez – addressed Mr. Fede's comments by adding that the Borough of Bogota is a wonderful community. He thanked Mr. Robbins for responding to an email that he sent out and was disappointed by Council President Carpenter's response.

Rodriguez- He asked the Council to look into the overnight parking ordinance. She feels it should be revised and overnight parking should be allowed.

Solomov – Wished everyone a wonderful Holiday. Also mentioned that all Christmas packages for senior are ready. She thanked Mr. Fede for his wonderful words.

Motion made by Councilwoman Murphy to close 2nd citizen remarks, seconded by Carpenter, all in favor.

Mayor and Council answered citizen remarks:

Councilwoman Murphy –addressed Mrs. Rodriguez question in referring to the Titok video by saying that the Ridgefield Park Schools have sent out emails to all the parents. And regarding the parking ordinance she will revisit them in January.

Councilman Robbins – Addressed the question referring to the overnight parking by saying that the town has very narrow streets. Therefore it is very difficult to have a fire truck moving around if there is a fire. And also agreed with Councilwoman Murphy in trying to revise the ordinance.

Bogota Police Chief Maye addressed the public about this situation. Chief Maye said that they are aware of this video and have been in contact with Bogota School Superintendent Mr. Kennedy. Both organizations have taken action to add extra security at all the District's schools. Chief Maye said that he met with the schools Special Law Enforcement Officers-class 3 for the Public School (SLEO-3) and advised them of the heightened security needs. Chief Maye added that the Bogota police force is also on heightened alert.

Councilman Connors – Expressed Mrs. Rodriguez' concern about overnight parking. However he agreed with Councilwoman Murphy and Councilman Robbins that the town has very narrow streets, and most of the people in town don't agree with having overnight parking. But he agreed to look into the ordinance.

Council president Carpenter – Thanked Mr. Fede for his comments and agreed on his recommendations to not make any motions during committee reports. Also thanked Sherri for her dedication in helping the community.

Granquist – Mentioned she spoke with the DPW regarding sending notifications when there is a closing of the street. The engineer and contractor are responsible for it.

Mayor Kelemen- Thanked Mr. Fede for his wise advice on how to conducts the meetings. He also said that he understands that the last meeting was not a good one, but let's move forward. Thanked Sherri Solomov for all her hard work and her dedication. Regarding the overnight parking ordinance he said he will look into it.

Reports:

Five (5) minute time limit per Council Member

Mayor, Council Committees, Borough Administrator, Borough Attorney, Deputy Clerk

Mayor report:

He congratulated Dan Howell from the Building Department on his retirement, wishes him well. Good luck to the Fire chief on his appointment. Congratulations to Councilman Robbins, he did a great job swearing them in. The Borough has 18 new COVID cases over the past seven days and Bogota suffered another death making a total of 16 people since the pandemic started.

The Christmas tree lighting was great—one of the best one, thanked Mr. Moore and Mr. Frank Miranda.

The next Borough of Bogota Council meeting will be on Sunday, January 2, 2022. This will be the annual Sine-Die and Re-Organization meeting. The start time will be at 12:00 noon.

Councilwoman Granquist- The school sent parents information regarding the titok video and the measures they are taking. The DPW is doing the best they can with the man power they have, they are working hard to continue to keep the town clean.

Councilman Connors – During the Board of Education meeting they spoke about all the measures they are taking with the unvaccinated students. The Board is giving parents all the tools and education on what to do if their kids have any symptoms. The school is also posting data regarding any new cases. Mentioned he was not aware of the titok video but was happy to know the Board superintendent is taking action. Mr. Connors wanted to express his gratitude to the police department for all their support during his term as Police Commissioner. He was not at the last recreation meeting but would like to say thank you for the great job. The Christmas tree event was a great success thanks to Mrs. Claus and Mrs. Youla for all they do every year. He wished everyone Happy Holiday and Merry Christmas.

Council President Carpenter- The grant applications for the Ridgefield Ave preservation improvement and for the Local transportation project in Fairview Ave was completed and submitted to the State. All the fire departments has new appliances. Additionally, she is working with Police Chief Maye regarding another DDF and flashing light in-front of the Trinity school were ordered. Mrs. Carpenter, asked the Borough Attorney Betesh if it is possible to calculate how many tons of recycled materials are collected at its recycling center. She expressed her concern of having shared service and charging the residents.

Councilwoman Murphy- She attended the Library Board meeting and the library director Chelsea Coleman is interviewing people for a few positions at the library. Even though she still is on maternity leave she is coming into the office a few times a week. The library brings revenue from the passport applications. Regarding the Planning and Zoning meeting they will be conducting their meetings via Zoom until March 2022.

Councilman Robbins- He attended the Fire Chief election and it went well, congratulations to them. He thanked Mr. Fede on the clarifications of the dog license fees and on his advice on how to run the meetings. He attended the Board of Health meeting, where REHS Dabrowski reported on the Satisfactory and Conditional retail food establishment inspections conducted. Also reported on the Sanitary Code, Public Nuisance, Property Maintenance, and Animal complaints. The 2022 free rabies clinic in the Borough of Bogota will be held on 4/30. The proposed Ordinance amendment to increase the Borough of Bogota's Dog Licensing fees was voted on and accepted by the Board.

Councilwoman Fede- Expressed her concern about how many people submitted RFQs in previous years. However this year only one or two applied for particular positions. She recommended the RFQ's be re-advertised. Also mentioned the senior center getting new appliances.

Mayor Kelemen- also made the recommendation for the RFQ to be re-advertised to give more bidders an opportunity to submit responses.

Motion was made by councilwoman Murphy to reject the RFQ's and re-advertise, seconded by councilwoman Fede, all in favor, Council President Carpenter voted no. Deputy Clerk Flores-Bolivard will re-advertise the RFQ and contact all the professionals to make them aware of the mayor and council's decision.

Motion made by Councilwoman Fede to continue past 10:30 pm, seconded by Councilwoman Murphy. All in favor.

Borough Attorney Betesh, recommended that a bylaws committee be formed so that the Council would have the ability to make changes to the bylaws if it wished before their adoption at the upcoming reorganization meeting. A committee was formed, but it was agreed that they would not meet until after the reorganization meeting. Regarding the recycling center, he stated for the record that the delay in providing data to Linda Murphy was caused by the fact that the Borough does not currently possess the data of how many tons of recycled materials are collected at its recycling center. This information needs to be collected going forward and will be provided once it's obtained.

Motion made by Council President Carpenter to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilwoman Fede, all in favor.

Adjournment 11:00 pm

Revised: 1/26/2022

I hereby certify that this is a true copy of the minutes.

Yenlys F. Bolivard