

**BOROUGH OF STOCKTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
APPROVED: 12/8/14**

**REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 10, 2014**

A Regular Meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton was called to order by Mayor Stephen Giocondo at 7:07 pm on November 10, 2014. The following members of the Borough Council were present: Mr. Aaron Lipsen, Mr. Nic Messina, Tim Nemeth, Mrs. Kate Steffanelli and Mr. Donald Vandegrift. Borough Administrator/Clerk Michele Hovan and Borough Attorney Michael Butler were also present. There was one member of the public present.

Mayor Giocondo read the "Sunshine Statement" indicating the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and led the flag salute. Mayor Giocondo then asked for a moment of silence to honor the memory of longtime Councilman and Council President, Neal Esposito.

Mayor Giocondo opened the meeting to the public. There being no questions or comments the meeting was closed to the public on motion by Mr. Vandegrift, seconded by Mr. Nemeth and carried.

Tribute to Council President Neal Esposito

Mayor Giocondo asked for patience in advance of his reading of the memorial resolution, recognizing the gravity of the task. Mayor Giocondo then read Resolution No. 2014-63 in its entirety, as follows:

In Memory of Council President Neal Esposito

WHEREAS, the Stockton Borough governing body has learned with great sadness that Council President Neal Esposito passed from this life on October 25, 2014; and

WHEREAS, Neal Esposito shall be remembered first, foremost and always as a loving father, devoted husband and extraordinary friend who enriched the lives of those around him; and

WHEREAS, Neal's commitment to the Borough of Stockton was fierce and unwavering, from his decades of service to the community as a Borough Councilman and as a longtime member of the Stockton Fire Company, for which served as its President, Vice President, Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief and Captain; and

WHEREAS, Neal Esposito worked tirelessly to ensure the health, safety and welfare of Stockton Borough citizens, preserving and protecting the quality of life so dearly cherished by residents, offering guidance, support and assistance wherever he could; and

WHEREAS, Neal Esposito was a quiet, steady, passionate community leader, spearheading initiatives and tackling issues too numerous to list, but some - like his oversight and command of the Borough's streets and infrastructure and his dedication to public safety as the link connecting fire, rescue and law enforcement services - have

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protected and improved his beloved community for decades to date and for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Neal Esposito did not just volunteer to serve his community; he defined the words “volunteer” and “community” with his actions and his selflessness; and

WHEREAS, Neal Esposito was a leader, a mentor and a role model – a brother to all – and a dependable, competent and skilled advisor that led and inspired others to serve; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Stockton is a better, stronger community because Neal Esposito lived here, loved his life here and worked tirelessly to protect and improve it always; and

WHEREAS, Neal Esposito has indeed left a lasting impression on the Borough of Stockton, both in the form of his many accomplishments permanently recorded in Stockton Borough history and in the hearts and minds of its citizens;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Stockton that it hereby extends with great sorrow, on behalf of all citizens of the Borough, sincere condolences to Neal’s wife Prissy, his daughters Reath and Leigh and the entire Esposito family; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we – the members of the Stockton Borough governing body and the community of Stockton Borough - will remember Neal Esposito always and fondly, and with great reverence and deep appreciation for his service to our town and his commitment to it; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the flags of the Borough have been displayed at half-staff in honor of Council President Neal Esposito for his years of dedicated service to the Borough of Stockton; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be spread in full in the Official Minutes of the Borough of Stockton.

The resolution was unanimously adopted on motion by Mrs. Steffanelli and seconded by Mr. Lipsen.

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Nomination of Council President – unexpired term to expire December 31, 2014

Mayor Giocondo asked for nominations to fill the now-vacant Council President post. Mrs. Steffanelli nominated Mr. Lipsen. Mr. Lipsen and Mr. Vandegrift suggested Mr. Nemeth serve as Council President in advance of assuming the mayoral post on January 1. On motion by Mr. Vandegrift, seconded by Mr. Messina and carried, Mr. Nemeth was elected Council President for the balance of 2014.

Minutes – the minutes of the October 13, 2014 regular meeting, as amended to include Mr. Lipsen’s comments regarding how the PennEast pipeline might affect or interfere with drainage and water diversion plans above Stockton, were approved on motion by Mr. Vandegrift, seconded by Mr. Nemeth and carried.

Resolutions

Resolution No. 2014-64, as filed in the Borough Clerk’s office and listed below, was adopted on motion by Mr. Nemeth, seconded by Mr. Lipsen and carried.

2014-64 Consent to Water Quality Management Plan Amendment

Roll Call: Ayes: Lipsen, Messina, Nemeth, Steffanelli, Vandegrift
 Nays: None
 Absent: None
 Abstain: None

Resolution No. 2014-65, as filed in the Borough Clerk’s office and listed below, was adopted on motion by Mr. Messina, seconded by Mr. Vandegrift and carried.

2014-65 Budget Transfers

Roll Call: Ayes: Lipsen, Messina, Nemeth, Steffanelli, Vandegrift
 Nays: None
 Absent: None
 Abstain: None

Absent: Esposito
Abstain: None

Claims for Payment

The Claims for Payment, as attached, were approved on motion by Mr. Messina, seconded by Mr. Nemeth and carried. Mrs. Steffanelli asked if grass cutting was done for the season and Ms. Hovan said she would make certain that it was. There was additional discussion regarding the

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USDA loan from 1992 and I&I issues. Mr. Messina and Mayor Giocondo explained the history of illegal sump pumps in the Borough and how the situation was improved.

Roll Call: Ayes: Lipsen, Messina, Nemeth, Steffanelli, Vandegrift
 Nays: None
 Absent: None
 Abstain: None

Discussion/Possible Introduction – Property Maintenance Ordinance

Mayor Giocondo and Mr. Butler provided an overview of the ordinance draft. In response to a question raised by Mrs. Steffanelli, Mr. Butler said that since no comments were received, none were incorporated. Mr. Butler discussed the natural settings comment raised by Mr. Lipsen and extended discussed followed regarding that, rear yards, and more. Additional discussion included enforcement, especially during states of emergencies. Discussion also centered around intruding the ordinance so that there would be no further enforcement delays and on motion by Mr. Vandegrift, seconded by Mr. Messina and carried, the ordinance was introduced, with public hearing scheduled for December 8, 2014, at 7pm.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Giocondo said that he was pleased that there was movement on the property maintenance ordinance and described past efforts to get real estate agents and banks to follow up with maintenance issues. Mayor Giocondo said that the services for Mr. Esposito were fitting and proper and he thanked the fire department and the mutual aid departments for their amazing efforts to pay their respects. Mayor Giocondo relayed the graveside tribute, as Hunterdon County dispatch gave a "last call" for Neal Esposito and how chilling and touching it was.

Mayor Giocondo opened the conversation regarding the filling of vacancies and said that the democratic committee had three names – Noelle Petruzelli-Marino, Tony Grecco and Kenneth Kozuhowski to consider. Mrs. Steffanelli praised Mr. Grecco and his ability to fill in the streets and roads area that Mr. Esposito previously handled. Extended discussion ensued. Mayor Giocondo reminded all that there are two seats to be filled in January - once because of Mr. Esposito's passing and re-election and one created with Mr. Nemeth's election as Mayor beginning in 2015. After continued discussion, it was agreed that Mr. Esposito's current seat through December 31, 2014 would remain vacant and that Council would consider replacements in January. Mrs. Steffanelli and Mr. Lipsen expressed a desire to hear from Mr. Grecco, who was in attendance. Mr. Messina and Mr. Vandegrift preferred the suggestion that the candidates submit a resume or letter of interest for Council to consider.

Mrs. Steffanelli asked what the status of the snow plow RFP was and Ms. Hovan said that she anticipated Council to recommend an award at its next meeting.

Council Liaison Reports

Mr. Lipsen discussed plans for the park and discussion turned to a need for a park master plan. Mr. Vandegrift said it would even be helpful to have a sketch of the improvement areas. Mayor

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Giocondo left the meeting at this time. Mr. Lipsen discussed various park items. Mrs. Steffanelli said that items will need to be budgeted in 2015. Mrs. Steffanelli said she started a facebook page to solicit park ideas. Mr. Lipsen said that he was interested in getting the tree work done. Mr. Nemeth said that he knew of another contractor if another quote was needed.

Mayor Giocondo returned to the meeting. Mrs. Steffanelli said that there was a meeting on November 13, 2014 regarding the pipeline.

Mayor Giocondo announced the next meeting would be Monday, December 8, 2014. There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm on motion by Mr. Vandegrift seconded by Mr. Nemeth and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Hovan, RMC
Borough Clerk