

**SOUTH PLAINFIELD BOROUGH
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 18, 2022, 7:00 P.M.
AGENDA MEETING**

***Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, this meeting was also transmitted virtually via the Webex platform**

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Anesh called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Anesh read the sunshine statement and announced that same is being held pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act of 1974 and all provisions of that Act have been met with adequate notice of this remote hybrid meeting having been provided to the Borough's two official newspapers and also published on the Borough's website. Instructions for accessing the remote public meeting are found on the Borough's website next to the agendas. Documentation pertaining to the remote meeting can be found electronically on the Borough's website.

The roll call was administered by Amy Antonides as follows:

| COUNCIL | Present | Absent | Late |
|----------------------------|---------|--------|------|
| Councilman Bengivenga | X | | |
| Councilwoman Mott | X | | |
| Councilman Smith | X | | |
| Councilman White | X | | |
| Councilman Wolak | Virtual | | |
| Council President Faustini | X | | |
| Mayor Anesh | X | | |
| ALSO PRESENT | | | |
| Administrator Cullen | X | | |
| Clerk Antonides | X | | |
| Attorney Paul Rizzo | X | | |
| Engineer Miller | | X | |

Mayor Anesh reviewed some basic rules for conducting this virtual hybrid meeting this evening. All lines will be muted until such time that the floor is open for public comment. Each phone call or virtual hand raise will be taken one at a time. To unmute the microphone, just click on the red microphone picture that has a line through it. It will then turn green indicating you have been unmuted and may begin to speak. Callers may dial 1-646-922-2010 followed by the access code of 126 663 1990 #. Using the *6 button will mute and unmute the voice feature for any phone callers.

Review of Agenda Items: Clerk Antonides reviewed all the items on the agenda. Mayor Anesh asked the Council if they had any comments. Councilman Bengivenga made a motion to table Resolution 22-168 to the next meeting, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried. There were no further comments from Council.

**RESOLUTION 22-151
AUTHORIZING A CLOSED SESSION MEETING**

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 and P.L. 2001, C. 404, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of South Plainfield wishes to go into a closed Executive Session and is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist which should not be discussed in public, and

WHEREAS the Open Public Meetings Act pursuant to N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 and N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 permits the Borough Council to discuss certain matter(s) in private, and in this case for the purpose of the Borough Council to discuss the below matters all of which requires attorney-client privilege:

- Litigation/Contractual – Rescue Squad
- Personnel – Building Department
- Contractual – Fireworks
- Contractual – Affordable Housing Agreement

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of South Plainfield that it will go into an Executive Session for the purpose of Borough Council to discuss the aforementioned matters all of which requires attorney-client privilege in this regard.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the results of such discussion may be revealed at such time as the matter(s) are resolved and/or a contract(s) is signed and/or the negotiations are formally settled. Interested parties may contact the Borough Clerk anytime during normal business hours for periodic updates as to the availability in this regard.

| COUNCIL | MOTION | 2 ND | AYES | NAYS | ABSTAIN | ABSENT | RECUSE |
|-------------------------------|--------|-----------------|----------|----------|---------|--------|--------|
| Councilman Bengivenga | | | X | | | | |
| Councilwoman Mott | | x | X | | | | |
| Councilman Smith | x | | X | | | | |
| Councilman White | | | X | | | | |
| Councilman Wolak | | | X | | | | |
| Council President Faustini | | | X | | | | |
| | | VOTE: | 6 | 0 | | | |
| Mayor Anesh – TIE ONLY | | | | | | | |

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY: Mayor Anesh opened the floor for public comment reiterating the aforementioned directions for making remote public comments.

Tim Kelly, President of the South Plainfield First Aid Squad said it's been a volunteer organization since 1944, and he himself has served since he was 15 years old. Mr. Kelly said he is aware that some bad things have taken place recently and we don't have the manpower to cover the day shifts. What we are able to do is cover all the night shifts and special events. We also do transportations for residents. Mr. Kelly said behind him is the future of our squad, and he has learned a lot from the squad over the years. Mr. Kelly said he hopes the Council will consider these things in making decisions about the squad. Mr. Kelly said that though there have been screw-ups lately, it's the first time in many years and breaks his heart to hear all the negative comments on social media about the squad.

Mrs. Karen Kelly, wife of Time Kelly, reiterated that these members present tonight are our future and asked what we are doing for our youth in our town. Mrs. Kelly asked for everyone to please consider our future.

Rbecca Ng, Lieutenant for the squad asked what the benefit would be to have Robert Wood here opposed to our own local EMS. Mayor Anesh responded and said the answer is not a simple one but a complex one. There are many factors that need to be considered. Lt. Ng concluded by asking the Council to take their excellent response times into consideration. Accidents are just that, an accident.

Mike of 88 Gatehouse Lane in Edison, said he is a member of the EMS and a registered nurse and said he believes the emphasis is on the emotional side of things, and it is a real sense of community to have a volunteer first aid squad. Council President Faustini asked why he is a member of the South Plainfield Rescue Squad, and why not Edison. Mike explained that the environment is different in Edison, and it lacks a sense of family. They operate completely different.

Mr. Bob Dolan, Trustee on the Squad, said he has served for some 38 years. There is a massive shortage of EMT's and pointed out that our volunteers are free, and we are fortunate to have 45 of them.

Jacob of 84 Orange Street in Woodbridge said he has served 7 years as an EMT and came to volunteer in South Plainfield because they are the best. There are not a lot of volunteer EMS's left in Middlesex County. More training would be one way of helping to prevent accidents from happening. Jacob said he has missed countless birthdays and events over the years. Jacob said the price of healthcare is ridiculous. The rescue squad should not be judged based on an accident. Accidents will happen.

Ms. Carol of 526 Rose Street in Dunellen said her whole family has been first responders and being an EMT keeps her family legacy alive. Ms. Carol said she's been an EMT for 15 years and enjoys it. Her daughter is seeking to follow in her footsteps. Ms. Carol pleaded to not let an accident hinder the future of the squad, saying that accidents happen all the time and that they even show up on calls to accidents.

Debbie Boyal of Van Fleet thanked the entire rescue squad for all they do for South Plainfield.

There were no further comments made from the public.

ADJOURN AGENDA MEETING: With no further comments, Mayor Anesh asked for a motion to adjourn from the Agenda Meeting. Councilman Smith made a motion to adjourn from the Agenda Meeting at 7:36 p.m., seconded by Councilman Bengivenga and unanimously carried by an all-in favor.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Amy Antonides, RMC/CMC/CMR