

The **April 11, 2016** meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Spring Lake Heights, Monmouth County, New Jersey was called to order by Mayor O'Brien at 7:30 p.m. in the Frank E. Adams Municipal Building.

Present:

Councilman Christopher Campion  
Councilman Arthur Herner  
Councilwoman Sara King  
Councilman Robert Merriken  
Councilman James Shuler  
Mayor Thomas O'Brien

Absent:

Councilman Thomas Vorbach

Also Attending:

Janine Gillis, Borough Clerk  
Joseph J. Delaney, Jr., Administrator  
Gary McLean, Esq., Borough Attorney

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: Resolution No. R2016- 78** Authorizing an Executive Session

**LAND ACQUISITION:** \* Lake Drive \* Church Street

Borough Clerk, Janine Gillis, read the resolution into the record.

On a motion by Mr. Merriken, seconded by Mrs. King, Resolution R2016-78 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Campion, Mrs. King, Mr. Herner, Mr. Merriken, Mr. Shuler

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Councilman Vorbach

**8:00 p.m.-PUBLIC SESSION: CALL TO ORDER ▪ SILENT REFLECTION ▪ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

Present:

Councilman Christopher Campion  
Councilman Arthur Herner  
Councilman Robert Merriken  
Councilman James Shuler  
Councilwoman Sara King  
Mayor Thomas O'Brien

Absent:

Councilman Thomas Vorbach

Also Attending:

Janine Gillis, Borough Clerk  
Joseph J. Delaney, Jr., Administrator  
Gary McLean, Esq., Borough Attorney  
Thomas Seaman, CFO

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE**

The Mayor reported the meeting was being conducted pursuant to the requirements of the N.J. Open Public Meetings Act with notice included in the annual notice of meetings sent to the Coast Star and Asbury Park Press; posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building and on the Borough website.

**APPROVE AGENDA**

On a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mr. Merriken, the agenda was approved, by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Campion, Mrs. King, Mr. Herner, Mr. Merriken, Mr. Shuler

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Vorbach

**APPROVE MINUTES - March 28, 2016 Regular Meeting**

On a motion by Mr. Merriken, seconded by Mr. Shuler, the minutes of March 28, 2016 Regular Session were approved, by the following vote:

Ayes: Mrs. King, Mr. Herner, Mr. Merriken, Mr. Shuler

Nays: None Abstain: Mr. Campion Absent: Mr. Vorbach

**PRESENTATIONS**

- Wreck Pond Improvements presented by Peter Avakian, Avakian Engineering & Turner Shell, Monmouth County Division of Engineering & Traffic Safety

Mr. Avakian reported that the improvement to the pond has been an ongoing project for over 10 years, with costs fully funded by various grants. He reminded all that Hurricane Sandy was devastating to coastal communities. One of the improvements planned for the pond was to design and construct an outflow pipe between the ocean and Wreck Pond; this is partially complete with about 460 feet of pipe but will be extended to about 600 feet when complete. Unfortunately, the project is on hiatus due to the yearly nesting of the Piping Plover in the area of Wreck Pond. The project will be restarted approximately in September. Mayor O'Brien asked if there is a backup plan in case of a storm before September, Mr. Avakian replied yes. There is a gate in the pond that would be opened as needed. Mayor O'Brien also asked about the fish population and whether or not they are affected. Mr. Avakian stated that there is a good population; Mr. Shell added that DEP did a study in the past year or 2 and obtained some baseline information. Mr. Avakian added that another project was the dredging of the pond which has made improvements to the outflow as well and gives the pond greater depth. Mr. Avakian added that a 3rd project was the living shoreline. This project is the planting of a vegetative berm with native plants, which would improve the area environmentally and provide for a variety of native species. When this project is closer to starting he would gladly come back and to do another presentation.

Mr. Champion asked what impact the dredging would have on Spring Lake Heights residents; Mr. Avakian replied that it probably wouldn't have much impact.

Mayor O'Brien thanked them for coming out and speaking at the meeting.

**SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS**                      None

**PUBLIC COMMENT (Agenda items only)**                      None Presented

On a motion by Mr. Champion, seconded by Mr. Merriken, the public comment period was closed, by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Champion, Mrs. King, Mr. Herner, Mr. Merriken, Mr. Shuler  
Nays: None            Abstain: None            Absent: Mr. Vorbach

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- 2016 Budget

Mr. Champion offered that the goal is always to keep taxes down with no increases but that isn't always possible. He offered that the Borough should prepare for large scale purchases by putting funding aside. He added that the goal of this budget was to put money aside planning for various capital improvements, which includes; municipal vehicles and buildings and the borough's water/sewer mains.

Mr. Delaney started the presentation of the budget which included information as to the property assessments in town from 2011 to present, a chart detailing the distribution of property taxes collected from 2011 through 2015 and a graph that showed how school, county and municipal taxes have changed. It showed that the school taxes have been raised more than municipal and county taxes.

Mr. Delaney then reviewed the proposed 2016 municipal budget starting with the various revenues, all appropriations, the Water-Sewer Utility Budget and finally the Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund. He talked about the age of the Borough's equipment which was well beyond what is viewed as their life expectancy and that this budget plan was planning for the future. Mr. Seaman added this this practice while not always feasible is considered to be a best practice.

Mr. Delaney added that proposed budget provides for an increase of about \$120.00 a year for the average assessed home.

Councilman Herner called the budget fiscally responsible.

The public hearing on the budget was set for April 25, 2016.

- **Assessment Demonstration Program**

Mayor O'Brien reminded all that the deadline for opting out was April 30<sup>th</sup> and that council hadn't come to a conclusion as of yet. Mr. Champion offered that at first he wasn't a fan of the program but after the presentation by county officials at a prior meeting he has changed his view. He felt that there are benefits to the program, one of which is having tax appeals completed prior to the municipal budget being set. He added that the borough's contract is up in one more year and that going out to bid to finish the assessments would be the way to go.

Councilman Herner also stated that he thought it was beneficial, he stated that there will always be some unhappy people over their assessment.

Mayor O'Brien feels the program is good, adding there will always be complaints but having appeals complete before the budget is adopted, works best for the borough.

Mr. Shuler has read that there are some changes to the ability of opting out. He added that the program seems very aggressive but felt that if some points were addressed the program might be ok.

Mrs. King added that when county officials were here for the presentation they were going to update as to some changes that were being worked on and we haven't heard back. She also expressed concern over the controversy surrounding the company doing the inspections.

Councilman Champion added that the Borough is 2 years into the 5 year program, with one year left to our contract the final 2 years the program could go out to bid to completing the 5 year plan.

Mayor O'Brien asked Mr. Delaney to reach out to the officials that made the presentation for an update. He also suggested that with April 30<sup>th</sup> deadline that the item be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

### **MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councilman Herner – announced that employment applications can be picked up at the municipal office for summer rec employment. He announced that Public Works has installed buffer plantings at Allaire Road Park as well as some tables and benches. He also reported that signs will soon be placed at both Allaire Rd Park and Ocean Road Park.

Councilman Champion - offered that Dr. McCartney, Superintendent/Principal of the Spring Lake Heights School corresponded with him about testing of the water at the school. A private company was brought in to test the water at the school; the findings determined that the level of lead in the water is significantly below the level that would require action.

Councilwoman King – no report

Councilman Shuler – no report

Councilman Merriken – no report

Borough Clerk Janine Gillis announced that 14 businesses in town have signed up to participate in the "Paint The Town Pink" event. She also reported that there is an event scheduled for May 24<sup>th</sup> at the Community Center. It will be presented by 2 Doctors.

Kat Crippen also announced that the Earth Day Clean Up is scheduled for April 23<sup>rd</sup> at Black Creek Park. She suggested coming prepared with gloves and boots and that refreshments are served.

**REPORTS, NOTICES & CORRESPONDENCE**

- Monthly Court Revenue – March 2016
- Monthly Revenue Report – March 2016
- Police Monthly Report – March 2016
- Public Hearing April 19, 2016 Re: NJ Natural Gas
- Public Hearing Notice April 27, 2016 Township of Wall Ordinance 2-1026
- Public Hearing Notice April 27, 2016 Township of Wall Ordinance 4-1026
- Invitation to TRI-Shore Little League Opening Day Ceremony – April 16, 2016

**ORDINANCE INTRODUCTIONS - None**

**RESOLUTIONS**

- **R2016-77**, Authorizing submission of applications for NJDEP & NJDOT approvals/permits related to subdivision & development of Block 73 Lot 4.02

On a motion by Mr. Campion, seconded by Mr. Merriken, Resolution R2016-77A was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Campion, Mrs. King, Mr. Merriken, Mr. Shuler  
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Vorbach

- **R2016-78**, Approving use of the community center.

On a motion by Mr. Merriken, seconded by Mr. Shuler, Resolution R2016-78A was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Campion, Mrs. King, Mr. Merriken, Mr. Shuler  
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Vorbach

- **R2016-79**, Approving Payment of Claims on the April 8, 2016 Bill List.

On a motion by Mr. Merriken, seconded by Mr. Shuler, Resolution R2016-79 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Campion, Mrs. King, Mr. Merriken, Mr. Shuler  
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Vorbach

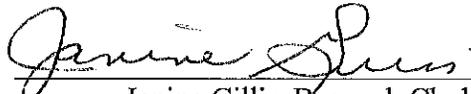
**PUBLIC COMMENT (Any item) None Presented**

On a motion by Mr. Merriken, seconded by Mr. Campion, the public comment period was closed, by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Campion, Mrs. King, Mr. Herner, Mr. Merriken, Mr. Shuler  
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Vorbach

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, on a motion by Mr. Campion, seconded by Mr. Vorbach, the meeting was adjourned without objection at 10:13 p.m.

  
Janine Gillis, Borough Clerk

Approved: April 25, 2016