

**BOROUGH OF KEYPORT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024 8:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER: 8:05 PM

SUNSHINE LAW NOTICE: Read by Municipal Clerk

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council, Borough of Keyport, held on the above date in Borough Hall Council Chambers, Keyport, NJ, pursuant to the Annual Notice on file with the Borough Clerk forwarded to the Asbury Park Press, and Newark Star Ledger and posted on the Bulletin Board in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, P.L.1975, c.231.

ROLL CALL:

Members present: Councilmember Brady, Councilmember Gross, Councilmember McNamara, Councilmember Peperoni, Councilmember Reilly, Council President Vecchio, Mayor Araneo

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/MOMENT OF SILENCE

PROCLAMATION

Memorial Day Proclamation read by Mayor Araneo

COMMITTEE REPORTS

(Councilmember is lead or co-lead liaison of Committees in bold)

Councilmember Brady: Environmental, Recreation/Senior Center, Fire/First Aid/OEM, Municipal Alliance, Green Team

- Environmental Commission – Kean University sustainability and environmental studies capstone project was presented, which cataloged plant life, created a revegetation plan, suggested grants, and made a QR code and website with an interactive map for more information.
- Recreation – determined steps for holding a Keyport day at a Blue Claws game, discussed graduating candidates for the Recreation award, hosted a table at I ♥ Keyport Day, and assembling a townwide yard sale interest list. Upcoming events include the senior prom and food truck festival, and bus service will be available for parking overflow.
- Both groups are always looking for volunteers.

Councilmember Gross: KBBC, Public Works/Water-Sewer, Recreation/Senior Center, Redevelopment

- Public Works – basic infrastructure maintenance, storm drain cleaning, and repairs are ongoing. Mulching and powerwashing, at the playground and parks. Set up and tear down of recent events, including recycling and trash pickup, like I ♥ Keyport Day. Completed beach debris cleanup and mandatory safety training.
- KBBC – ribbon cuttings for Primo, Anyway You Wine It, Smokey's Doggy Café, and Brinia's Sazon. I ♥ Keyport Day included 20 participating restaurants. Upcoming events include the Food Truck Festival, Keyport Car Show, and Woofstock.

Councilmember McNamara: Finance/Grants, Cannabis, Green Team, Police, NPP

- Finance and Grants – the Budget will be considered at this meeting.
- Cannabis – Premo held a grand opening ribbon cutting on Saturday.
- Green Team – attended the Sustainable Jersey summit held at Bell Works.

Councilmember Peperoni: Planning Board, Recycling, Health/Registrar/Construction/Fire Bureau/Code Enforcement/Zoning, Redevelopment, Harbor Commission,

- Read the Board of Health treasurers report.
- Read the Construction Office report, including a summary about 31 West Front Street.

Councilmember Reilly: Fire/First Aid/OEM, Police, Municipal Alliance, Finance/Grants, Cannabis

- First Aid – 592 runs YTD. This week is EMS week; thanked EMS volunteers for dedication and service.

- Police – 4,907 calls YTD; Operation Take Back resulted in 43 pounds of unwanted medications collected; an investigation of Lucky 7 convenience store, on Broad Street, for selling vape products to minors resulted in over \$10,000 untaxed unlicensed vape products seized by Keyport PD and Taxation; assisted Freehold Borough police with a kidnapping investigation and arrest of two suspects who resided in Keyport for 1st degree kidnapping, 2nd degree aggravated assault, and 3rd degree aggravated assault; recognized May 15th as National Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week in which May 15th falls as National Police Week. LEAD graduation will be the first week of June. Provided training updates, including Monmouth County Sheriff’s Office training on May 15th. Thanked Chief Torres for all they do.
- No Fire Department report.

Council President Vecchio: Harbor Commission, NPP, Public Works/Water-Sewer

- NPP – two resolutions are on this agenda about Beach Park, concerning purchasing playground equipment and resurfacing.
- Harbor Commission – replacement railing recently installed. Floating ramp installation schedule for tomorrow. Update regarding dredging of the boat ramp.

Mayor Araneo: Library, Planning Board, KBBC, Green Team, Cultural/Civic, Mayors Wellness Campaign

- Attended Running and Winning May 7th workshop at Monmouth Regional High School with other women elected officials.
- Attended meeting with Middletown concerning shared services of the municipal court.
- Juneteenth Committee confirmed the annual event June 15, 2024 11am-12:30pm at the waterfront next to the Gazebo. Will place the plaque next to the tree planted last year.
- May 23rd is Red, White, and Blue Day to pay tribute to service members; Borough employees can contribute \$5 and wear red, white, and blue.
- Unable to attend the most recent library meeting.
- NPP flood gates were purchased through a grant, and they must be available for review and inspection for five years so they must remain in place and can’t be removed.
- Will be working with Council President Vecchio to address the Planning Board letter.
- Awaiting budget adoption before proceeding with studying the post office property.
- Utility pole cleanup is ongoing; the Borough follows up but residents can call too.
- No update from NJ DEP concerning Aeromarine.
- Henry Hudson Trail - Monmouth County started some of the cleanup.
- Fire hydrant replacements installed at West Front and Washington and at Maple Place and Highway 35. Broad Street hydrant estimated to be replaced in the next few weeks. Madison hydrant needs to be replaced due to being hit by a truck; the claim is in process.
- Monmouth County update about dredging the boat ramp.
- Crosswalks across Maple Place and at the intersection of Division and Osborn will be improved by a NJ DOT tap grant for pedestrian safety improvements and include a flashing beacon at the crossings of Maple and Church. Listed streets with pot holes which will be repaired.

Mayor Araneo asked if any council members had questions about the Consent Agenda.

Councilmember Reilly requested to pull from **R2024-166** (May 21, 2024 Bills List) PO #24-00458, Board of Fire Commission District #1.

Motion to pull PO #24-00458 from **R2024-166**.

MM: Vecchio 2nd: McNamara

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Gross, McNamara, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays:
Absent:
Abstain:

Councilmember McNamara requested to table **R2024-174** (Tax Abatement for 128 First Street) in order to review information regarding permits issued.

Motion to table **R2024-174**.

MM: McNamara 2nd: Brady

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Gross, McNamara, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio

Nays:

Absent:

Abstain:

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Meeting was opened to the public for comments on **agenda items only**.

Opened: 8:26 PM Motion by Peperoni, Carried by Vecchio. Ayes by all present.

Robert Bergen, 16 Green Grove Ave. – asked about the tax abatement resolutions (**R2024-167 through R2024-177**) given prior discussions about not granting abatements and introducing an ordinance restricting abatements so developers aren't eligible for tax abatements. Mayor Araneo responded that the ordinance will sunset on June 30th. Mr. Bergen asked about telling developers not to offer the tax abatement.

George Walling, 54 Second Street – asked about the process to give a tax abatement, to which the Borough Administrator provided an explanation. Mr. Walling remarked that the Certificates of Occupancy haven't been issued on the properties with proposed abatements listed on the agenda. Councilmember McNamara explained that the Tax Assessor has indicated abatements can be filed at the point of substantial completion.

Robert Bergen recommended tabling the tax abatements.

Mike Lane, 51 First Street – commented on tax abatements, and mentioned **R2024-174** (128 First Street) was a total rehabilitation deserving of a tax abatement. Councilmember McNamara explained there are two types of abatements, either for new construction or for rehabilitation; the application for 128 First Street was submitted as new construction but should be considered rehabilitation.

Dan Fox, Fire Chief – asked why the purchase of the car was removed from the **R2024-166** Bills List. Councilmember Reilly replied that the purchase order was not signed off yet in Keyport, although it was approved in Aberdeen. Mr. Fox noted that Aberdeen is paying insurance on the car and waiting for this transaction to be completed. The Borough Administrator clarified that the requisition was signed.

Ed Carew, 64 Broadway – asked about **R2024-178** and the Broadway sanitary sewer contract and timeline. The Borough Engineer replied that the county will be paving Route 35 in the fall so this sewer improvement is a priority to complete in the summer before the paving. Mr. Carew also asked about the library board resignation, which the Mayor replied was Tom Hendrickson.

Elmer J. Graham Jr., 22 St. Peters Place – commended the governing body for handling the tax abatements right. Asked about **R2024-178**, to which the Borough Engineer responded it will upgrade the sanitary sewer from 6-inch to 8-inch standard before the road is paved by the county. Asked about **R2024-179** and the acquisition of Beach Park equipment; the Mayor responded that this is for the NPP grant. Asked about **R2024-188** and the Unused Technical Review Process Funds. The Borough Clerk explained that there is a Technical Review Process committee that helps applicants with the Planning Board process and that this applicant has a balance which would be returned to them.

Mike Lane – Commented that the agenda doesn't limit speakers to 5 minutes at this point. Commented on **R2024-180** regarding Beach Park, Hurricane Sandy, and flood plain review. The Borough Engineer will look at the design and the planned surface will be appropriate for flooding. Asked about flood plain development permits, and the Engineer stated a permit will be issued if required by ordinance. Asked about governing body meeting minutes, to which the Mayor responded.

Elmer Graham Jr. – responded to Mr. Lane's comment about meeting minutes and noted that the Borough Clerk and Deputy are doing a terrific job.

Closed: 8:48 PM Motion by Peperoni, Carried by Vecchio. Ayes by all present.

CONSENT AGENDA

(All resolutions listed hereunder are considered to be routine in nature and will be enacted in one motion. Any person may request that an item be removed for separate consideration.)

- R2024-162 Payment of Bills Listed on the April 19, 2024 Bills List
- R2024-163 Payment of Bills Listed on the May 3, 2024 Bills List
- R2024-164 Payment of Bills Listed on the May 7, 2024 Bills List
- R2024-165 Payment of Bills Listed on the May 17, 2024 Bills List
- R2024-166* Payment of Bills Listed on the May 21, 2024 Bills List
- R2024-167 Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 4 Raritan Cove in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-168 Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 11 Raritan Cove in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-169 Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 12 Raritan Cove in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-170 Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 13 Raritan Cove in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-171 Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 15 Raritan Cove in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-172 Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 16 Raritan Cove in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-173 Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 17 Raritan Cove in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-174** Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 128 First Street in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-175 Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 208 Main Street in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-176 Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 87 Fulton Street in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-177 Approving a Five-Year Tax Abatement for 89 Fulton Street in the Borough of Keyport
- R2024-178 Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Broadway Sanitary Sewer Replacement
- R2024-179 Authorizing the Acquisition of Recreation Equipment for the Borough of Keyport Beach Park Improvements with MRC Recreation through the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey Cooperative Pricing System #ESCNJ 20/21-06
- R2024-180 Authorizing the Acquisition of Recreation Equipment for the Borough of Keyport Beach Park Improvements with Rubber Recycle State Contract 16-Fleet-00131
- R2024-181 Approval to Submit a Grant Application and Execute a Grant Contract with the State of New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for the SFY2024 Safe and Secure Communities Grant Program
- R2024-182 Authorizing Increase in Hourly Rate of a Special Law Enforcement Officer for Hours Worked at Keyport Schools
- R2024-183 Authorizing Increase in Hourly Rate of a Part-Time Secretary to Department Head in Police Department
- R2024-184 Authorizing Appointment of a School Crossing Guard
- R2024-185 Authorizing Sewer Relief Due to Broken Pipe – 68 Main Street
- R2024-186 Authorizing Sewer Relief Due to Broken Pipe – 116 Church Street
- R2024-187 Authorizing Refund of Property Tax Overpayment
- R2024-188 Authorizing Return of Unused Technical Review Process Funds
- R2024-189 Authorizing an Agreement between the Borough of Keyport and Hauser Hill Farms for use of Fireman's Park Parking Lot for a Farmers Market
- R2024-190 Approving the Request of the Keyport Fire Department's 2024 Parade Chairman to Conduct a St. Patrick's Parade on September 7, 2024
- R2024-191 Authorizing Use of Borough Property by Keyport Public School for a Class Trip
- R2024-192 Authorizing Contract Purchase of 2023 Ford Utility Interceptor
- R2024-193 Authorizing Keyport First Aid Squad to Use Veterans Park for Annual Picnic
- R2024-194 Approving the Request of the Keyport Fire Department to Hold the Annual September 11 Service
- R2024-195 Authorizing Use of Borough Property by Friends of the Keyport Library and the Keyport Public Library for a Book & Bling Sale
- R2024-196 Approving New Jersey State Firemen's Association Application for Membership
- R2024-197 Authorizing Municipal Auction of Surplus Property

- R2024-198 Appointment to Keyport Bayfront Business Cooperative (KBBC) Board of Directors
- R2024-199 Appointment to Keyport Library Board of Trustees
- R2024-200 Appointment of Municipal Alliance Committee Member
- R2024-201 Appointment to Recreation Committee

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS

Motion to approve resolutions **R2024-162 through R2024-173** and **R2024-175 through R2024-201** on the Consent Agenda, and noting that **R2024-174**** was tabled and PO #24-00458 was pulled from **R2024-166***.

MM: Vecchio 2nd: Gross
Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Gross, McNamara, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays:
Absent:
Abstain:

PUBLIC HEARING/ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE

1. Ordinance No. 2024-02 – Limiting the use of certain streets to certain vehicles
The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **ORDINANCE ADOPTING AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 7 (TRAFFIC), SCHEDULE VIII (TRUCKS OVER FOUR TONS AND VEHICLES OVER THE REGISTERED GROSS WEIGHT EXCLUDED)**

1a. Motion to Open Public Hearing: 8:50 PM
MM: Vecchio 2nd: Brady

Robert Bergen – Looking to limit traffic certain times and days and suggested talking to Police Chief. Believes a truck turning from Cass Street to Jackson Street presents dangerous conditions. Urges amending ordinance to prevent vehicles over 8 tons come off Beers Street and prevent trucks greater than 26-feet length or 26,000 pound, the Best Tile trucks, from turning from Cass Street to Jackson Street. Has pictures and video.

Anthony Garzone, 106 Perry Street – asked about direction of traffic, to which the Borough Engineer responded. Box trucks are hitting things. Asked who to call to enforce the ordinance, to which the Mayor responded the police can respond.

John Merla, 34 Broad Street – commented regarding the zoning officer approvals.

Anthony Garzone – there was a sign that said no trucks straight, which meant trucks made a left or right. Trucks stopped coming down the street and the sign worked.

1b. Motion to Close Public Hearing: 9:00 PM
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly
1c. Motion to adopt Ordinance:
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Vecchio
Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays: McNamara
Absent:
Abstain: Brady

Councilmember Brady noted she abstained because of the proximity of her home.

1d. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as adopted:
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly Ayes: all present Nays:

2. Ordinance No. 2024-03– Designating multi-way stop intersections with stop signs installed
The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **ORDINANCE ADOPTING AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 7A (TRAFFIC SCHEDULES) OF CHAPTER 7 (TRAFFIC)**

2a. Motion to Open Public Hearing: 9:01 PM
MM: Reilly 2nd: Peperoni
No comments were made.
2b. Motion to Close Public Hearing: 9:01 PM
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly
2c. Motion to adopt Ordinance:
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Gross, McNamara, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays:
Absent:
Abstain:

2d. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as adopted:
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly Ayes: all present Nays:

3. Ordinance No. 2024-04– Establishing requirements for tree removal and replacement

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 24 (STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL) OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT AND ESTABLISHING TREE REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

3a. Motion to Open Public Hearing: 9:02 PM
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly

Ed Carew – asked if this is for the general public, and the Borough Administrator responded that it’s a requirement of the NJ DEP. Asked if for every tree removal would another one need to be planted, and the Borough Attorney stated the ordinance provisions set forth the circumstances and time frame. Asked about this being advertised, and the Attorney responded it will be advertised in accordance with State law and posted on the website. Councilmember Brady added that there are some exceptions.

Robert Bergen – asked if this applies to the borough too, and how it’s determined which trees in parks come down.

Elmer Graham Jr. – asked why this ordinance is necessary, and the Borough Attorney replied it’s required by NJ DEP regulations.

Mike Lane – noted there’s a large number of trees that were removed at Aeromarine in the last couple of months. The Mayor and Borough Administrator noted that there’s no tree removal ordinance in place so it wouldn’t have come before the borough.

Robert Bergen – questioned who made the determination that the trees behind the laundromat were dying, to which the Borough Administrator answered it was the county. Asked about getting the email from the Borough Administrator or the county.

Elmer Graham Jr. – commented on tree removal regulations coming out of Trenton.

Anthony Garzone – questioned why is there a need for the ordinance if there’s a State regulation. The Borough Attorney noted that the DEP asked this be codified in municipal code.

3b. Motion to Close Public Hearing: 9:11 PM
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly
3c. Motion to adopt Ordinance:
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly
Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Gross, McNamara, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays:
Absent:
Abstain:

3d. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as adopted:
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Vecchio Ayes: all present Nays:

4. Ordinance No. 2024-05– COLA Rate Ordinance

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)**

4a. Motion to Open Public Hearing: 9:12 PM
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Vecchio
No comments were made.
4b. Motion to Close Public Hearing: 9:12 PM
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Brady

- 4c. Motion to adopt Ordinance:
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Brady
Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Gross, McNamara, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays:
Absent:
Abstain:
- 4d. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as adopted:
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly Ayes: all present Nays:

Motion to open to the public for comments on **Ordinance No. 2024-05**: 9:13 PM
MM: Vecchio 2nd: Brady

Mike Lane – asked how much have to reduce the budget to avoid the cap. The CFO responded that this ordinance adds \$90,000 to the budget cap so it would have to be reduced by that much to avoid the budget cap.

Closed: 9:15 PM Motion by Vecchio, Carried by Brady. Ayes by all present.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

1. Ordinance – Revisions to Chapter 2 entitled Administration

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **ORDINANCE TO AMEND, REVISE, AND SUPPLEMENT CHAPTER 2 OF THE BOROUGH CODE OF KEYPORT, ENTITLED “ADMINISTRATION,” MOST NOTABLY SECTION 2-3 ENTITLED “BOROUGH OFFICES,” SPECIFICALLY 2-3.7 “BOROUGH ENGINEER”; SECTION 2-3.9 “ZONING OFFICER”; SECTION 2-3.10 “CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER”; SECTION 2-3.11 “ACTING ZONING OFFICER”; AND, SECTION 2-3.12 “ACTING CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER”**

- 1a. Motion to introduce:
MM: Reilly 2nd: Brady
Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Gross, McNamara, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays:
Absent:
Abstain:
- 1b. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as introduced in the Asbury Park Press for a public hearing:
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly Ayes: all present Nays:

Resolution #2024-202 to Read the 2024 Municipal Budget by Title

Motion to approve **R2024-202**:
MM: Reilly 2nd: Brady
Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Gross, McNamara, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays:
Absent:
Abstain:

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2024 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

The Clerk read the Budget by Title: **MUNICIPAL BUDGET OF THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, NEW JERSEY, FOR THE YEAR 2024**

- 1a. Motion to Open Public Hearing: 9:17 PM
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Vecchio

Budget Presentation by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Appropriation and Levy Cap Compliance

The budget is in compliance with both the appropriation cap and levy cap. It is \$2,714 under the appropriation cap and \$576 under the 2% levy cap.

Budget Structure

Overall the budget is a fiscally sound and responsible plan. The budget contains no gimmicks or structural issues.

The budget provides necessary funding for all municipal services at current staffing levels and for continued investment in the Boroughs equipment and infrastructure.

The budget allows for the regeneration of a majority of the surplus being utilized.

The budget reflects the policies of the current administration and governing body as well as those approved and put in place by prior administrations and governing bodies.

Revenues

The Borough is utilizing \$850,000 in Surplus to support the 2024 budget which is the same amount that was utilized in 2023. The Borough's surplus balance at 12/31/23 is a healthy \$1,025,000. It is important to maintain healthy reserves for cash flow, maintaining a strong bond rating, and protection against economic downturns.

State Aid increases minimally for the second time in fifteen years from \$719,412 to \$722,933. In 2007 the Borough received \$1,250,000 in state aid which was cut in 2008, 2009 and 2010 down to the \$714,473 which we received through 2022. While the Borough's costs have increased over the past fifteen years, state aid has not grown with it.

Appropriations (some of the driving factors and highlights)

Total Operating Appropriations exclusive of grant and library appropriations have increased by 3.93% from \$8,505,929 to \$8,183,992 or \$321,937.

Total Budgeted Salaries and Wages, a component of Operating Expenses, have increased by \$142,800 or 3.18% from \$4,496,620 to \$4,639,420 due primarily to contractual obligations.

Total Other Operating Expenses and Statutory Expenditures (exclusive of grants and library) have increased by 6.00% or \$289,131 from \$4,798,405 to \$5,087,536.

Some of the Appropriations driving the increase in other operating expenses are:

- 1) Liability and Workers Comp Insurance appropriation increase of \$32,000.
- 2) Group Health Insurance Increase of \$150,400 due primarily premium increases and a roster increase.
- 3) The Police Retirement Pension System Contribution has increased by 10.77% or \$76,357 from \$709,031 to \$785,388.
- 4) Garbage Removal Contractual Costs have increased by \$27,000.

Pension contributions are actuarially based and calculated and billed to the Borough by the State of NJ based upon the Borough's pensionable salaries.

These three appropriation increases total \$285,757 which accounts for almost all of the total increase in operating expenses. All other - other expense budgets have in total been held the same as the prior year.

Debt Service has decreased by \$61,633 from 2023 to 2024. The additional debt service is for principal and interest on debt authorized in 2022. Permanent Debt Service Requirements will go down by 45k in 2024. Total debt service however will be effected by current year debt authorizations. The Borough continues to aggressively amortize its debt.

The Amount to be Raised by Taxation in the Budget (exclusive of the Library Tax Levy) will increase by 6.80% from \$8,103,719 to \$8,654,731. This will result in a reduction in the municipal tax rate of 2.3 cents per \$100 in assessed valuation from 78.7 cents in 2023 to 76.4 cents in 2024. Although the Amount to be Raised by Taxation is increasing the tax rate is decreasing due to an increase in the Borough's Net Valuation Taxable.

Anthony Garzone – asked the CFO about the tax rate decrease, to which the CFO explained reassessment and the increase in value.

Robert Bergen – asked about the increase in net value assessment this year, to which the CFO responded. Asked what is the percentage increase in the state health benefits plan, and the CFO noted the premium is 7%. Mr. Bergen asked if anyone is looking into moving, and the Borough Administrator noted there's a health benefit manager reviewing it. Questioned how council gets a say in the budget policy. Asked about debt service and funds set aside for Waterfront Park.

Mike Lane – emailed an analysis of the annual percentage increase of the budget over the last five years, and observed the budget went up 40% with the burden of the increase on home owners more than renters and businesses; he expects his tax bill will increase. The CFO explained that the budget is tight and council works hard to keep taxes as little as possible; however, reviewing the last 15 years illustrates that the increases average about 3% per year but the last six years have been difficult. Mr. Lane remarked that the new cannabis revenue was not identified. The CFO contacted the cannabis business about the tax imposed and it will be separated in the next budget but this year it will come in under miscellaneous revenue. Mr. Lane asked about the PILOT money; the CFO responded that the budget can only anticipate the revenue based on what came in last year. Mr. Lane asked about whether the pedestrian safety

improvement program on sheet #40 is related to First Street, to which the Borough Engineer affirmed and added that the pedestrian crossing improvements are from a federal grant and the final plans are with the DOT and it's anticipated it will be put out to bid this summer.

Elmer J. Graham Jr. – pleased with the budget despite constraints, and believes it will be beneficial to the taxpayers of Keyport.

Robert Bergen – asked about the level of State aid, and the CFO responded from 2010 to last year it was the same.

1b. Motion to Close Public Hearing: 9:43 PM
MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly

Resolution #R2024-203 Self-Examination of Budget

Motion to approve **R2024-203**:

MM: Peperoni 2nd: Reilly

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Gross, McNamara, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays:
Absent:
Abstain:

Resolution #R2024-204 Adoption of the 2024 Municipal Budget

Motion to approve **R2024-204**:

MM: Reilly 2nd: Vecchio

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Gross, McNamara, Peperoni, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays:
Absent:
Abstain:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 16, 2024 Regular Meeting
February 6, 2024 Workshop Meeting
March 5, 2024 Workshop Meeting

MM: Peperoni 2nd: Brady Ayes: all present Nays:

REPORTS

1. Municipal Clerk's Report for April 2024
2. Tax/Water/Sewer Collector's Report for April 2024
3. Board of Health Treasurer's Report for April 2024
4. Building Department Report for April 2024
5. Municipal Court Report for April 2024

MM: Peperoni 2nd: Brady Ayes: all present Nays:

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Meeting was opened to the public for comments.

Opened: 9:44 PM Motion by Vecchio, Carried by Brady. Ayes by all present.

George Walling – asked about the status of 125 Highway 35 and any fines, to which the Borough Administrator responded and the Mayor added that it hasn't gone before the judge and the borough is working on it. Asked for an update on 31 West Front Street, to which the Borough Engineer responded that last week he met with the owners of 29 West Front Street, where the wall collapsed, and the insurance company hired a third-party engineer, which will report back in about two weeks. He met with the tenants but they are not allowed back in the building until the structural report is completed. For 31 West Front, they have the footing and foundation permit so that work is ongoing, and they won't get a permit to build up from the footing and foundation, up to the sidewalk level, until they meet all the requirements and submit the items needed first.

Robert Bergen – asked about the cause of the collapse, to which the Borough Engineer responded. Asked about Perry Street and forcing site plan approval by the Planning Board; the Borough Attorney replied that Council hasn't taken action to require this come before the Planning Board.

George Walling – asked about the resolution and Developer’s Agreement, to which the Borough Attorney replied the Borough is reviewing everything and will take appropriate action based on all legal remedies.

Tim Sharpe, 33 Pershing Place – asked about shared court services with Middletown, given the previous experience was a failure. The Mayor explained that this will be for period of time while the Borough building is updated. The Borough Administrator clarified that Hazlet was joint court and this would be a shared service. The Mayor noted that this wasn’t primarily for cost savings but for building improvements; however, it would save money at this time.

Mike Lane – recalled that the 31 West Front applicant testified that they could insert this new building between two existing buildings, and asked the Borough Engineer if it was part of the plan to pour concrete between the two walls. The Mayor and Borough Engineer replied. Mr. Lane further asked about enforcement of parking restrictions at Brown’s Point Marina and the requirements to install storm water pumps at 25 East Front Street to prevent water from running onto Front Street; reiterated the need for checklists, dates, reviews, and enforcement by the Construction Department. The Borough Administrator responded that the checklist process is being reviewed and updated.

Chad Simons, 21/29 West Front Street – commented on the Developer’s Agreement and the costs of the Borough Engineer. Councilmember Brady replied, followed by the Borough Attorney who stated she drafted a letter about the borough incurring costs. Asked how the borough classifies what happened to the building, to which the Borough Administrator noted she and the Engineer determined it was a wall failure. Stated he would like to see the borough come up with some sort of protocol for this situation since the police weren’t called about this.

The Mayor stated that OSHA, DCA, DOLWD, and UCC all visited the site and found that construction work could proceed since there were only minor violations that wouldn’t prohibit work from continuing.

Mr. Simons asked if the placement of netting would be required, to which the Borough Engineer responded.

John Merla – pleased that potholes have been addressed, especially with graduation coming up. Reported on the condition of Church Street, which now has gas markouts. The Borough Engineer noted that service is being cut behind the sidewalk and the road opening permit was denied. Previously advocated to take down 162 Second Street but it’s a bigger mess now; the Borough Administrator said it’s being worked on. Mr. Merla applauded council’s due diligence with the budget.

Carlo Anthony Penya, 260 Raritan Blvd. Cliffwood Beach – acknowledged livestreaming this meeting as a bridge for those who can’t attend. Peak attendance was 40 viewers and an average of 15 staying through the meeting. The major questions were about businesses and relief. The Mayor said the KBBC is setting up a GoFundMe campaign and a special bank account.

Elmer J. Graham Jr.– glad to hear about the GoFundMe campaign. Recommends We Care Adult Care in Red Bank. Mentioned the American Legion meets the first Thursday of every month. Commended work on the budget.

Closed: 10:25 PM Motion by Peperoni, Carried by Reilly. Ayes by all present.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn

MM: Reilly 2nd: Gross Ayes: all present Nays:

Time of Adjournment: 10:26 PM