

**City of Woodbury
City Council Meeting Agenda
Virtual Meeting**

Link:

May 26, 2021

Virtual Waiting Room Opens 6:00 p.m.

Meeting starts 6:30 p.m.

The meeting of May 26, 2021 was called to order by Council President Hagerty at 6:30 pm. Council President Hagerty led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a Moment of Reflection.

Open Public Meeting Statement

Ms. Swanson read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement. This is a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Woodbury. Due notice of this regular meeting provided to the press and public by posting and publication of Resolution #21-05 adopted at the 2021 Reorganization Meeting on January 6, 2021. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Phil Murphy signed Executive Orders No. 107 and 108, which took effect on March 21, 2020. Due to these Executive Orders the City of Woodbury has made it possible for public participation in City Business via an electronic format as defined in the Open Public Meetings. The agenda for tonight's meeting is being displayed on your screen. Or if you prefer, it can be found on the City of Woodbury's website at www.woodbury.nj.us. Ms. Swanson then gave instruction on how the public sessions would be run, to ensure everyone who wishes to speak has a chance to do so.

Roll Call:

Present: Councilwoman Carter, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Merinuk, Councilwoman Miller, Councilwoman O'Connor, Council President Hagerty, Mayor Sickel

Absent: Councilman Miller, Councilwoman Parker, Councilwoman Moore

Others Present: Acting City Clerk, Cassidy Swanson; Solicitor, Jeff Krachun; Housing Official, John Leech; CFO, Robert Law; Police Chief, Thomas Ryan; Engineer, Erika Covely,

Approval of Minutes:

Council President Hagerty asked for a motion to approve the minutes of council meetings held on March 10th and March 24th, so moved by Councilman Fleming, and second by Councilwoman O'Connor. Motion was approved via voice vote resulting in the following:

Ayes 5 Councilwoman Carter, Councilman Merinuk, Councilwoman Miller, Councilwoman O'Connor, Council President Hagerty,

Nays 0

Abstain 1 Councilman Fleming

Absent 3 Councilman Miller, Councilwoman Parker, Councilwoman Moore

Open to the Public for Agenda Items

Council President Hagerty stated the meeting will be opened to the public for agenda items only. Since the meeting is being held virtually and some individuals are calling in, Ms. Swanson will

read the agenda items aloud. Ms. Swanson then read the titles of the Ordinances and Resolutions. Ms. Swanson went on to give instructions again on how the public can be heard at this time. Councilman Fleming made a motion to open to the public, seconded by Councilman Merinuk. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Jared Hunter – 23 N Drexel ST. – Mr. Hunter inquired if there will be an in depth discussion of the city’s budget. CFO, Robert Law answered. He then inquired about an earlier version of the agenda including a resolution about the firework display, and wanted to know why it was removed and if there are any updates. Council President Hagerty answered.

Kaylyn Roger – 224 Delaware St. – Ms. Roger inquired about the budget being determined solely by the finance committee or if it’s a joint effort with the help of City Council and our Mayor. CFO, Robert Law answered. She then inquired who was on our finance committee and if there a date set for the public to view. CFO, Robert Law answered. CFO, Robert Law answered. Ms. Roger then expressed that she hopes there is more transparency compared to last year in posting of budget.

Hearing no one, Councilman Merinuk made a motion to close to the public, seconded by Councilman Fleming. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

RESOLUTION NO. 21-86 RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WOODBURY TO ANTICIPATE MISCELLANEOUS REVENUES IN THE 2021 BUDGET USING THE THREE-YEAR AVERAGE OF REALIZED REVENUES FROM THE PRIOR THREE YEARS Councilman Fleming made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 21-86, seconded by, Councilman Merinuk. Motion approved by a roll call vote resulting in the following:

Ayes 6 Councilwoman Carter, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Merinuk, Councilwoman Miller, Councilwoman O’Connor, Council President Hagerty

Nays 0

Absent 3 Councilman Miller, Councilwoman Parker, Councilwoman Moore

RESOLUTION NO. 21-87 RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WOODBURY INTRODUCING THE 2021 ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE CITY OF WOODBURY Councilman Fleming made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 21-87 seconded by, Councilman Merinuk. Motion approved by a roll call vote resulting in the following:

Councilman Fleming expressed that the proposed 2021 budget is very tight. He stated that we were hoping to utilize funding from the federal COVID-19 relief bill, but that option was not available. He stated that we are hoping to have funds by the end of the year, with the potential to help the 2022 budget. He reiterated that the Finance Committee began working on the budget in 2020, and because the city went through a reevaluation in 2019, by comparing 2020, the 2021 budget will require a conversion of the 2020 rate for the 2021 new assessed values. Appeals on the 2019 reevaluations have already resulted in reductions in our net value taxable of about 1 million dollars which has affected the budget. After the conversion the proposed tax increase in

the introduced budget is \$1.95 per \$100 of assessed value. Once Council and the DSA review the budget we will have a public hearing for input. Prior to the hearing our auditors will make a detailed presentation including major items in the budget. It is important to understand that this is a unique year and home owners will have tax increases as a result of a multitude of factors including the 2019 assessed value and the new proposed tax rate. Councilman Fleming mentioned if anyone has any questions or would like to discuss the budget, he is more than happy to meet or speak with them.

Ayes 6 Councilwoman Carter, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Merinuk, Councilwoman Miller, Councilwoman O'Connor, Council President Hagerty

Nays 0

Absent 3 Councilman Miller, Councilwoman Parker, Councilwoman Moore

Committee Reports

Councilwoman O'Connor– Public Safety – At our most recent public safety meeting on May 17th, there were three segments that were focused on being preparedness and training for our officers, concerns of business owners and residents as well as community relations. All officers are required to complete de-escalation training. We also had a presentation by Councilwoman Moore on equity, diversity and inclusion. The feedback we received from residents and business owners were concerns about parking, patrolling, loitering in commercial areas and speeding. Our police department is doing a great job of staying aware and actively participating in local events.

Report of the Mayor

Mayor Sickel – All summer long we will be offering free yoga June through September taught by Bijon Ponds. The first session is will take place on June 4th at 6:30PM. There will be a movie night on June 11 at Bell Lake featuring the movie, Missing link. On June 13th we will host our second green team initiative. Donna Clementoni and Councilwoman O'Connor made created a very good history piece that will be featured in the June edition of the Mayor's newsletter.

Report of the City Clerk

Ms. Swanson – As friendly reminder Monday is Memorial Day and all City buildings, and the Woodbury Public Library will be closed. There also will be no trash and waste pick up on Monday. This week, following a meeting with the Board of Elections, Ms. Swanson will have details on the upcoming election and polling procedures.

Department Announcements

Mr. Leech – Code Enforcement – Mr. Leech shared the April property maintenance report and compared the numbers from April of 2020 to April of 2021. There were 17 notices of order comparison to 4 last year. There were 13 court summons issued as opposed to 2 last year. There

were 64 housing inspections versus 49 last year. 10 vehicles were removed from private properties as opposed to none last year. Notices of mattresses not being bagged, remained zero for April of 2020 and 2021.

Mrs. Covely - Engineer – Construction has started for the Local Roads Project. Concrete has been finished on Leona Avenue, and contractors are currently working on High Street. Once all the concrete is done they will return to mill and pave the road. This project is expected to be completed by June. The Water Main Project will follow completion of Local Roads Project. The Dam construction is still ongoing and on schedule.

Chief Ryan - Police Department – WPD had an active shooter presentation and discussion today at 26 E. Redbank hosted by the FBI and NJ Department Homeland Security. These discussions contribute to our officers being more informed and citizens more safe. The junior police academy will resume this summer, please reach out to school for all of the information. Council President Hagerty asked about the age limit to enroll in the junior police academy. Police Chief Ryan confirmed the age limit is 18 years old. WPD is currently looking into a civilian police academy, with hopes of that in the future.

Ms. Yeager – Library – Ms. Yeager thanked WPD for their participation in public safety day on Saturday. Videos from the event are available online on Facebook. Last year the library secured a grant through the Gloucester County Cultural Heritage Commission; this is the first step in digitizing local history starting with year books from 1913 – 2005. This will be debuted on June 14th. Beginning June 4th, the library's quiet study rooms and meetings rooms will be open to the public available to book up to 6 months in advance. The Library board of trustees met on Monday and will require masks in building and while in attendance to programs hosted by the library. The non-profit organization, Friends of the Woodbury Public Library, is in need of officers and is looking for help.

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business at this time.

New Business

No new business at this time.

Public Discussion – Opt-In or Opt-Out of Cannabis

Council President Hagerty announced that this discussion will contribute to a series of discussion in the city's decision to opt in or out of cannabis commerce. He then went on to explain the guidelines of the discussion and provided context toward this public section topic. Ms. Swanson then gave instruction on how the public sessions would be run, to ensure everyone who wishes to

Speak has a chance to do so.

Councilman Merinuk made a motion to open to the public, seconded by Councilwoman O'Connor. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

John Traenkner – 136 Spring St. – Mr. Traenkner voiced that he thinks it's a great opportunity and will be a huge game-changer for the City of Woodbury.

Charles Hughes – 31 N. Childs St. – Mr. Hughes thanked council for updating the map to reflect the 1000 ft. radius, and zoning of different areas. Mr. Hughes asked for clarity on the new laws in regards to drug free school zones. Solicitor, Jeff Krachun answered that with the decriminalization of marijuana, the proximity of cannabis commerce does not apply to drug free school zones on a state level. Mr. Hughes then inquired about the significance of the circles on the map and related it directly to the fact sheet that was provided to the public addressing laws A21, and A1987 discussing drug distribution and commerce near schools. Council President Hagerty explained the state guidelines. Solicitor, Jeff Krachun explained that the circles on the map were determined out of consideration of the municipality. Mr. Hughes then asked for a state contact that can explain how a learning institution is to be defined as a school. He then expressed that he does not want cannabis to be sold or distributed within 1,000 ft. of a school. He then inquired if planning and zoning has been looking into this, and if we opt-out now, is there opportunity to opt-in later once we have a better understanding of the industry. Council President Hagerty and Solicitor, Jeff Krachun answered.

Amanda Terpstra – 442 Poplar Ave. Woodbury Heights – Ms. Terpstra thanked council for putting together this public forum. She introduced herself as the co-founder of Best Buds. They are in the process of applying for a retail dispensary permit, and are looking to operate in the City of Woodbury. Ms. Terpstra then asked, after the ordinance is passed and how do we go about the working with the City to get licensing. Solicitor Jeff Krachun answered. Ms. Terpstra then asked for meeting to be arranged offline to help gain clarity on the process and address some concerns. Solicitor Jeff Krachun and Council President Hagerty answered.

Jared Hunter – 23 N Drexel St. – Mr. Hunter expressed his support for opting in for cannabis commerce and stated it would be a great opportunity. Mr. Hunter asked during this process of developing the policy or ordinance if we are pushing a racial equity index impact. Council President Hagerty answered.

Jamilah Damiani – 324 S. Colombia St. – Ms. Damiani referenced her question asked at the last council meeting, if any member of council has ever been to a dispensary. She then expressed her father's knowledge of dispensary operations and how law enforcement is surprised about the professionalism, proper regulation and cleanliness of dispensaries. She then encouraged council to visit 2-3 local dispensaries, document their findings and take that into consideration when making this decision. Council President Hagerty answered, and asked if she had any nearby dispensaries to recommend. Ms. Damiani said she does not have a recommendation for council at this time. Councilman Fleming contributed about his personal experiences and feedback he

has heard.

Kaylyn Roger – 224 Delaware St. – Ms. Roger reiterated that she would like to keep cannabis commerce out of residential neighborhoods. She then inquired how council plans to keep community engaged moving forward when policies are developed. Solicitor Jeff Krachun and Council President Hagerty answered.

Tony Alveario – 522 Delaware St. – Mr. Alveario provided a list of negatives of land uses that contribute to a poor impact on business districts within small towns. He expressed that if we want to change Borad Street, we have to change the businesses we put there. He is not saying to opt in or opt out, but he thinks cannabis commerce belongs in malls and not near homes. Council President Hagerty thanked Mr. Alveario and proposed to have a meeting offline.

John Fulmer – 548 Hunter St. – Mr. Fulmer expressed due to the new nature of this industry to the state of New Jersey, it would be prudent for Woodbury to opt-out until we there is more clarity on policy and procedure of bringing cannabis commerce into the city. Once we gain more of an understanding he expressed that he feels that Woodbury should opt-in for retail but opt-out of cultivation and manufacturing.

Ken Mcilvaine – 456 Delaware St. – Mr. Mcilvaine inquired about the City's percentage of tax revenue through gross sales. Solicitor Jeff Krachun answered. He then asked for the average annual gross sales of a retail establishment of this kind. Council President Hagerty answered. After a rough estimate, Mr. Mcilvaine suggested that cannabis commerce would be a great economic opportunity based on grossed sales.

Pam Lewis – 115 West St. –Ms. Lewis stated that the map created is excellent, but there are a few schools missing. She expressed her understanding on the federal government and state having different positions on school zones. Is there any aspect of cannabis commerce that the city of Woodbury is opposed to? Council President Hagerty and Councilwoman O'Connor answered.

Hearing no one, Councilman Merinuk made a motion to close to the public, seconded by Councilwoman O'Connor. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote

Open to the Public

Councilman Merinuk made a motion to open to the public, seconded by Councilwoman O'Connor. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Cynthia Wheeler – 16 N. Maple St. D3 – Ms. Wheeler requested more information on the damn repair at Stewart Lake. She stated that the proposed completion date was this summer, and she expressed her concerns as the lake does not appear to be retaining water. She expressed being upset about the appearance and smell of the lake as her home faces this fixture. Mrs. Covely

answered.

Jared Hunter – 23 N. Drexel St. – Mr. Hunter asked about any plans or updates in regards to a Juneteenth celebration. Councilwoman Miller answered. Mr. Hunter then informed Councilwoman Miller that Pastor Glen DeSheilds of Bethlehem Baptist was looking to get in contact with her to coordinate a Juneteenth event. Councilwoman Miller answered and explained no one has reached out in regard to Juneteenth, but would welcome anyone who would like to assist. Mr. Hunter then asked if there were any planned Memorial Day celebrations that he could advertise. Ms. Swanson answered.

Aaron Weber – 48 Hess Ave. – Mr. Weber inquired about when the winner of the Arbor Day poster contest will be announced, what the process was of getting the winners awarded the prizes, and if we had any plans to showcase the posters submitted. Ms. Swanson answered. Mr. Weber then asked when the banners will be up for display around town. Ms. Swanson and Mayor Sickel answered.

Mrs. Roger – 224 Delaware St. – Mrs. Roger thanked John Leech and public works for the tree removal. She expressed that she was the chair for the non-profit Friends of the Library, and they are currently looking for a treasurer. She referenced the OCMA public meeting act, and asked if council had any intentions on including the public in all committee meetings. Solicitor Jeff Krachun and Council President Hagerty answered. Mrs. Roger inquired when someone on council has someone taken a college level economic class. Council President Hagerty answered.

Bill Gotthardt – 26 N. Horace St. – Mr. Gotthardt requested an update on the Volunteer Fire Department. Solicitor Jeff Krachun answered. He stated that he would like the solicitor to reach out to volunteers directly regarding their charges. Solicitor, Jeff Krachun answered. He then asked if the Mayor verified all certifications from outside departments that are currently supporting Woodbury. Solicitor, Jeff Krachun answered.

Charles Hughes – 31 N. Childs St. – Mr. Hughes announced that Troop 7 will not be doing any Memorial Day events, and states that the American legion may be having an event.

Jamilah Damiani – 324 S. Columbia St. – Mrs. Damiani stated in the summer 2021 Gloucester County newsletter, there was no representation on behalf of Woodbury and no events listed. She inquired who is responsible for us not being represented in the newsletter. Council President Hagerty and Mayor Sickel answered. Councilwoman Miller expressed her understanding of what kind of events were advertised in the newsletter mentioned.

Hearing no one, Councilman Merinuk made a motion to close to the public, seconded by Councilwoman O'Connor. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Ms. Yeager – Library – Ms. Yeager announced that their Juneteenth story time will take place on the on the 16th. Ms. Yeager thanked Councilwoman Miller for the book she donated for

children's storybook hour. She also reiterated the importance of the Friends of the Library and added that the organization has been around since the 1980's.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Councilman Fleming made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Merinuk. Motion approved by a unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:24p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Cassidy L. Swanson, Acting City Clerk

NOTICE PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A 10:4-8(d)

The items listed on this tentative agenda of the Mayor and Council President of the City of Woodbury constitutes the agenda to the extent known at the time of posting. Since this agenda is tentative, items may be added and/or deleted prior to the commencement of the meeting. Formal action may or may not be taken regarding each item listed on the final agenda.