

**MINUTES CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP
NEW JERSEY**

THIS IS A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE GREEN ACRES PUBLIC HEARING OF THE CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP HELD VIA AUDIO-VIDEO CONFERENCING TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2023 AT 7:07 P.M.

Roll Call:

Present: Councilmember Kerry J. Coley, East Ward
Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert, West Ward
Councilmember Weldon M. Montague, III, At-Large
Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross, At-Large
Councilmember Jamie B. Summers-Johnson, South Ward
Councilmember Adrienne Wooten, At-Large
Council President Tency A. Eason, North Ward

Also Present: Joyce L. Lanier, City Clerk
Chris M. Hartwyk, Business Administrator
Laquana Best, Planning Director
Derrick Brown, Fire Chief
Nile Clements, Chief Financial Officer
Vincent DeFilippo, Health Officer
Paula Ferreira, Tax Collector
Adrian Mapp, Finance Director
Marty Mayes, Public Works Director
Aaron Mizrahi, Esq., Deputy City Attorney
Gracia R. Montilus, Esq., City Attorney
Chris Murray, Tax Assessor
Wendy M. Sykes, Director of Community Services
Marlin G. Townes, Legislative Research Officer
Avram White, Esq., Deputy City Clerk
Vincent Vitiello, Police Chief
Tamara Robinson, Deputy City Clerk
Margarette Homere, City Clerk's Office
Trisha Scipio, City Clerk's Office
Gabrielle Sims-Shelton, City Clerk's Office
Joe Barbadoro, Municipal Engineer

Absent:

The Deputy Clerk announced the Recognition of a Moment of Silence.

The Deputy Clerk announced the Green Acres Public Hearing is now open.

Department of Public Works Director Marty Mayes thanked the City Council for allowing him present on Metcalf Park as the City is applying for Green Acres Funding and the application is due March 1, 2023. Director Mayes introduced the Municipal Engineer, Joe Barbadoro (Senior Engineering Technician at Remington & Vernick Engineers) so that he could speak to the project and the funding that the City is applying for. Mr. Baradoro began to share his screen. He started by showing the section of Metcalf Park adjacent to Argyle Street, and pointed out the proposed location of the Tennis Court, Basketball Court and Pool. As a part of the application they will resurface the Tennis Court. There will be one full size Tennis Court as the area cannot support two full size Tennis Courts. The side of the court will remain blank as sort of a Pass and Play area requested by the City.

area will be expanded, made Concrete instead of Stone. The existing Pavilion will be rehabilitated and picnic benches will be installed. The Concrete Pool Deck will be expanded. The Basketball Courts will be resurfaced under a different project. We will be applying for stadium lighting surrounding the Basketball Court. Mr. Baradoro went to the second slide. There was a concept plan which includes a dog park at the intersection of Chestnut Street and Valley Street. Presently there exists a parking lot which a portion will be demolished and a concrete curb will be installed around the perimeter of the dog park. A six foot tall PVC coated chain link fence will be installed with two points of entry one at Valley Street. There will be some amenities for dogs such as a drinking fountain. The turf is canine grass specifically for dogs which needs less maintenance. These are the permits that we will be applying for – again this is a concept plan. They were authorized to provide design services for the first area and the dog park is a concept plan. If the application is approved at the Council Meeting tonight and the funds are given to us by Green Acres we will be shovel ready. We are applying for \$1,015,090.00 which includes construction and professional services. We are doing an environmental assessment given that these areas have already been developed. They do not anticipate any environmental impacts.

COUNCILMEMBERS

Councilmember Jamie B. Summers Johnson was pleased to hear about the dog park and its location because of the residents comments. Councilmember Adrienne Wooten asked if the baseball fields would be upgraded which Director Marty Mayes stated they will be upgraded. There will be two to three treatments, one done in March. It has been added to the budget request and hopes it will be approved. The fields will not go from grass to turf. Councilmember Adrienne Wooten also inquired if there would be a walking or jogging path which they will enhance the current path. Councilmember Kerry J. Coley asked for a copy of the rendering. Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert inquired if there would be any addition upgrades to the play area which the park is not eligible for additional upgrades. The Green Acres Funding is for specific items in a twenty year time period. The items being serviced are areas that have not been upgraded in the past twenty years. She asked if it included the fence or the Rahway River area. The Rahway River area is a big deal, it needs more funding, time and permits that the City does not have at this time. The department will be going out to bid next week to try to have the basketball courts complete before the summer as this is a separate project. Only a portion of the parking lot will be used for the dog park as Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross had concern about parking and he also inquired about bleachers which will be included with the Basketball Court. Councilmember Kerry J. Coley asked if this meeting was published which it was.

PUBLIC

Richard Martha asked about water fountain near the basketball court which Director Mayes states this has to be researched as it is not in the current plans. He also asked about the metal furniture in the picnic area and hopes for something more pleasant to the eye. Joe Baradoro stated they could work with the city to select better benches. Ronald Scott, Jr. asked if there would be adequate lighting for the entire park. Director Mayes stated full lighting is not eligible for the funding. He asked if it was it possible to make one of the baseball fields into a dual purpose space which is a discussion for later down the road. Director Marty Mayes stated he has had conversations with the group Friends of Metcalf and there will not be a Pickle Ball Court. The area next to the Tennis Court is open and a decision needs to be made if it will be play area and if it will be a rubberized surface. James H. Ward, III of 743 Hauxton Avenue feels the proposal is good but he thinks the presentation is inadequate as the funding being applied for is upward of a million dollars. Last budgetary period \$75,000 was allocated to repair the playground and he hasn't heard anything about that. The residents have been waiting a long time to gain full access to the Basketball Courts. He understands these plans are preliminary but more creative suggestions should be submitted and this should be sent out to bid. Concrete is not a good idea being added to the Rahway area as it is not good for the environment. He stated he understands this is preliminary for the purpose of obtaining the funding but he would like to see the funding used effectively. This park is in his Ward and he has a say in this matter. Council President Tency A. Eason stated this is in preliminary stages a focus on getting the funding and there will be another forum for public comments. Aisha Samuel of 401 Highland Terrace thanked the Police when Council President Tency A. Eason informed her this was not the forum for this particular comment. Daniel

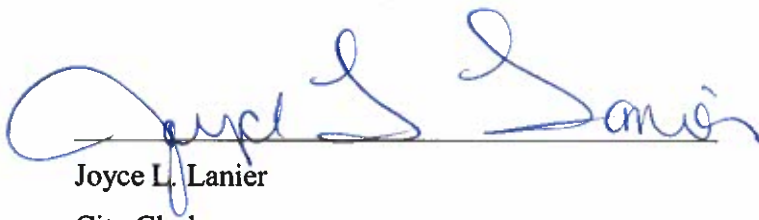
Joseph Wiley stated he is with The Hubb and he participates with Friends of Metcalf Park. He agrees with James H. Ward, III and believes adding concrete near the Rahway River is not a good idea. He stated there was a resident survey done and he was wondering if there was room to add these comments to the proposal. Director Marty Mayes stated again, that there are at least two comments from the survey that have been implemented – the Pass and Play area and the lighting around Basketball Court. Kweli Campbell stated the comments from the survey was for lighting for the entire park and not just the Basketball Court. She feels it is important to listen to the community. The walking and jogging path was not included. She needs clarity about the grant, is it a matching grant and does the city have to raise the additional funds. We need to work on communications and we do not need two baseball fields. Director Marty Mayes stated there are Resolutions 108-2023 and 109-2023 on tonight's agenda speaks specifically about the funding. Resolution 108-2023 is a \$500,000 award, our project will be vetted, viewed, and ranked based on that first so there is a possibility of us being awarded \$500,000 from that one (The Urban Park). Resolution 109-2023 (The Green Acres) – if we are not awarded on the first Resolution than the second resolution will kick in. Zonasha Ward wanted to add that lighting in the park was discussed and she feels the stadium lighting is abrasive and we need to consider the noise pollution in regards to that. She asked if there will be proper water structure in the dog park, will there be adequate seating, and she would like to know if the funds can be reallocated somewhere else. Business Administrator Chris Hartwyk wanted to state for the record that there has never been any inappropriate reallocation of Green Acre Funds, Urban Park Grant Funds or of any other grant funds. The City has applied for through appropriate means, reallocation of funds on a state level, when funds are not used on a state level and become available for reallocation. This needs to be very clear. Director Marty Mayes thanked the Business Administrator for clarifying that the City utilize grant funds properly. Director Marty Mayes thanked Councilmembers and residents for their comments. He agreed with Ms. Ward that the City deserves more and better. There will be another forum to continue the discussion.

A motion to close the Citizens Comments was made by Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross and seconded by Councilmember Jamie B. Summers Johnson.

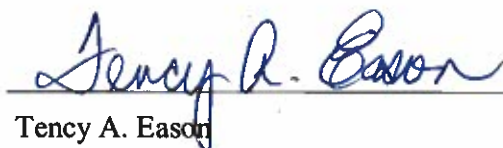
A motion to close the Green Acres Public Hearing was made by Councilmember Jamie B. Summers Johnson and seconded by Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49pm

Approved: March 7, 2023



Joyce L. Lanier
City Clerk



Tency A. Eason
Council President