

MINUTES CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP
NEW JERSEY

THIS IS A CONFERENCE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP HELD VIA AUDIO-VIDEO CONFERENCING TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2023 AT 7:06P.M.

Roll Call:

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

Also Present: Chris M. Hartwyk, Business Administrator
Laquana Best, Planning Director
Derrick Brown, Fire Chief
Nile Clements, Chief Financial Officer
Vincent DeFilippo, Health Officer (Arrived at 7:23pm)
Paula Ferreira, Tax Collector
Marty Mayes, Public Works Director
Aaron Mizrahi, Esq., Deputy City Attorney
Gracia R. Montilus, Esq., City Attorney
Chris Murray, Tax Assessor
Marlin G. Townes, Legislative Research Officer
Vincent Vitiello, Police Chief
Tamara Robinson, Deputy City Clerk
Margarette Homere, City Clerk's Office
Trisha Scipio, City Clerk's Office

Absent: Gabrielle Sims-Shelton, City Clerk's Office
Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert, West Ward
Councilmember Adrienne Wooten, At-Large
Joyce L. Lanier, City Clerk
Adrian Mapp, Finance Director
Wendy M. Sykes, Director of Community Services

The Deputy City Clerk announced a Moment of Silence. Council President Tency Eason dedicated the moment of silence to the family of Lieutenant Walter Imbert and Chris Murray on the passing of his father.

The Deputy City Clerk announced a "SPECIAL NOTICE: Please be apprised anyone wishing to discuss Agenda or General Items shall email their statements or questions to citizencomments@orangenj.gov no later than 7:00 p.m. the day prior to the scheduled public meeting. The City Council reserves the right to respond or not respond during the meeting to any citizen's submission."

The Deputy City Clerk announced the requirements of N.J.S.A. 10:4-9 et. seq., "Sunshine Law" has been met. A notice of this meeting was sent to the Record Transcript, published in the Star Ledger on July 13, 2022, posted on the Bulletin Board in City Hall, the Council's Website (www.orangetwpnjcc.org), the City's Website (www.orangenj.gov) and filed in the Office of the City Clerk.

The resolutions and ordinances to be presented at tonight's meeting are listed on the attached Regular Meeting Agenda. If any Council Member wishes to discuss any resolution or ordinance, it may be discussed at this time.

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING/PUBLIC HEARING

24-2021 An ordinance to amend the City Code of the City of the Orange Township Chapter 4 entitled “Administration of Government”, Article II entitled “City Council”; Section 15 entitled “City Clerk”. (Sponsored by Council Member Coley) *(Postponed since the 6/01/2021 Council Meeting)*

Postpone

5-2023 An ordinance of the Municipal Council of the City of Orange Township, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, approving and authorizing a 15- year tax exemption and authorizing the execution of a financial agreement between the City and PEEK Cleveland I Owner Urban Renewal, LLC. (Amended)

Postpone

ORDINANCES – INTRODUCTION/FIRST READING

61-2022 An ordinance to amend the Code of the City of Orange Township, Chapter 200, entitled “Vehicles and Traffic” Section 200-52-1 Handicapped Parking Spaces. (352 Mechanic Street)

Postpone

2-2023 An ordinance to amend the Code of the City of Orange Township Chapter 200 entitled “Vehicles and Traffic” Section 200-52-1 handicapped parking spaces. (86 Ward Street) *(Postponed at the 1/17/2023 Council Meeting)*

Postpone

15-2023 An ordinance to amend the Code of the City of Orange Township, Chapter 200, entitled “Vehicles and Traffic” Section 200-52-2 Handicapped Parking Spaces. (128 Parrow Street, Apartment 101C) (Sponsored by Councilmember Wooten)

Postpone

RESOLUTIONS NO * 178-2023 THROUGH *188-2023

*179-2023 A resolution requesting that the Municipal Council and the Administration of the City of Orange Township form a committee to update, amend, review, and initiate Chapter 16 of the Municipal Code entitled Chapter 16 Ethics, Code Of. (Sponsored by Councilmember Wooten)
Council wants explanation from sponsor

RESOLUTION

177A-2023 A Resolution to hold an Executive (Closed) Session to discuss legal matters.

A motion to adopt Resolution 177-2023A was made by Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross and seconded by Councilmember Kerry J. Coley

Roll Call:

Yeas: Hon. Kerry J. Coley, Hon. Weldon M. Montague, III, Hon. Clifford R. Ross, Hon. Jamie B. Summers-Johnson, and Hon. Tency A. Eason

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Hon. Quantavia L. Hilbert and Hon. Adrienne Wooten

Motion Adopted

A motion to enter into Executive Session was made by Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross and seconded by Councilmember Kerry J. Coley

Roll Call:

Yeas: Hon. Kerry J. Coley, Hon. Weldon M. Montague, III, Hon. Clifford R. Ross, Hon. Jamie B. Summers-Johnson, and Hon. Tency A. Eason

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Hon. Quantavia L. Hilbert and Hon. Adrienne Wooten

Motion Adopted

Executive Closed Session began.

Roll Call:

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

Also Present: Chris M. Hartwyk, Business Administrator
 Aaron Mizrahi, Esq., Deputy City Attorney
 Gracia R. Montilus, Esq., City Attorney
 Marlin G. Townes, Legislative Research Officer
 Tamara Robinson, Deputy City Clerk
 Margarete Homere, City Clerk's Office
 Trisha Scipio, City Clerk's Office
 Gabrielle Sims-Shelton, City Clerk's Office

City Attorney Gracia R. Montilus wanted to address a matter that came to the attention of the Law Department. It involves an issue that could potentially put the City, Administration, and members of the Governing Body at legal risk to the extent that the information could be misinterpreted. There was something posted online by a member of the Governing Body talking about the recent school threat that occurred in the Orange School System. It is important for the Governing Body to understand that this cannot happen. It puts the City and Administration at risk. Councilmember Kerry J. Coley asked for specifics. City Attorney Gracia R. Montilus stated Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert posted a statement on Facebook referencing a threat in the Orange School System urging residents with concerns to direct questions to her for information. This matter is being investigated and handled by the Essex County Prosecutors Office. If a matter is being handled by the Prosecutors Office, no one from the Governing Body or even the Law Department should interject themselves into an ongoing investigation or offer any information. We are under the authority of the Prosecutors Office with respect to that investigation. Putting out a flier can jeopardize the investigation, under minds the authority of the ECPO, flies in direct contrast to what they directed us to do, and flies in direct contrast to what the Mayor has directed – which is to let the ECPO conduct their investigation. Gracia R. Montilus wanted to have this conversation directly with Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert as these actions are negligent and puts our students at risk. Councilmember Weldon M. Montague, III asked if the City Attorney had spoken directly to Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert which he had not as of yet. Councilmember Kerry J. Coley suggested the City Attorney follow up with a confidential letter so all members are clear with what was stated tonight. City Attorney Gracia R. Montilus stated the close session was done as not to create discoverable documents so he will confer with the Administration. Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross stated this escalated up to the Essex County Investigation Team. This rule also applies to local investigations as well. City Gracia R. Montilus stated the Governing Body should not do anything that would impede any investigation and that Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert does not have any information to lend in this matter. The proper agencies should be given the room to do their due diligence and Councilmembers should refer questions to the proper authorities whether it is the OPD, ECPO, or the Law Department that will answer the legal questions. The same principle is for Fire Department investigations as well. Council President Tency A. Eason wanted to clarify that this was not a flier but a Facebook Live post. City Attorney Gracia R. Montilus stated shooting this video in front of Orange property was done in poor judgement. He will follow up with Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert directly. Council President Tency A. Eason thanked Business Administrator Chris Hartwyk for keeping the Councilmembers up to date in real time.

A motion to close Executive Session was made by Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross and seconded by Councilmember Weldon M. Montague, III

Motion Adopted

Roll Call:

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

Conference Meeting reconvened at 7:35pm.

Council President Tency A. Eason thanked the residents for their patience as the Council discussed legal matters with the City Attorney.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

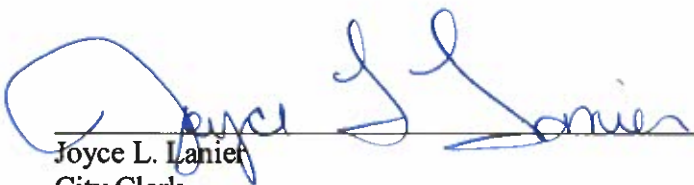
COVID Update

Health Officer Vincent DeFilippo stated the numbers for New Jersey as a whole are low. The City of Orange is good. As of May 11th, the Federal Government will stop State of Emergency that was issued by the President. As of today there were 636 positive cases, 3 people died, 317 people hospitalized, 38 people in intensive care, and 16 people on ventilators. There should be a down trend but it may rise again in September. There are still free at home test kits available, call 1-800-232-0233. They look outdated but they are not. Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross announced St Matthews AME Church located at 336 Oakwood Avenue will do testing and vaccinations on Friday, April 21, 2023 from 1-6pm, which Health Officer Vincent DeFilippo will have posted to the website. Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross also mentioned residents are complaining the loud music from the Ice Cream Truck parked on Lincoln Avenue where the Food Bank. Health Officer Vincent DeFilippo stated the department could put something on the books to prohibit amplified music. When trucks have a Peddler’s license, they are not supposed to stay stationary but move to another location after the last customer is served. Councilmember Kerry J. Coley inquired about Covid home testing kit expirations which will be posted to the website.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilmember Kerry J. Coley and seconded by Council Vice President Clifford R. Ross

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41pm.

Approved: May 2, 2023


 Joyce L. Lanier
 City Clerk


 Tency A. Eason
 Council President