

MINUTES CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP
NEW JERSEY

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP HELD VIA AUDIO-VIDEO CONFERENCING ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2024 AT 6:04 P.M.

Councilmember Weldon M. Montague, III led all assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Roll Call:

Present: Councilmember Kerry J. Coley, East Ward
Council Vice President Tency A. Eason, North 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 Adrienne K. Wooten, At-Large

Also Present: Joyce L. Lanier, City Clerk
Chris M. Hartwyk, Business Administrator
Gracia R. Montilus, City Attorney
Marlin G. Townes, Legislative Research Officer
Trisha Scipio, City Clerk's Office

Absent: Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert, West Ward
Tamara Robinson, Deputy City Clerk
Margarette Homere, City Clerk's Office

The City Clerk announces that the requirement 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 and published in the Star Ledger, on Friday, October 11, 2024, posted on City's website at (www.orangenj.gov), posted on the Council's website at (www.orangetwpnjcc.org), and filed in the Office of the City Clerk.

RESOLUTION

475-2024 A resolution to hold an Executive (Closed) Session.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this meeting is to discuss litigation matters.

A motion to adopt Resolution 475-2024 was made by Councilmember Weldon M. Montague, III and seconded by Council President Adrienne K. Wooten.

Roll Call:

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert

Motion Adopted

A motion to enter into Executive Closed Session was made by Councilmember Jamie B. Summers-Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Weldon M. Montague, III.

Roll Call:

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert

Motion Adopted

The body entered into Executive Closed Session at 6:07pm.

Council President Adrienne K. Wooten stated this is a special meeting to discuss the lawsuit on cannabis. Attorney Gracia R. Montilus stated there were at least two lawsuits filed concerning cannabis. The lawsuits were dismissed or should have been dismissed. There is another conference scheduled to make sure all matters have been dismissed with prejudice. There was a draft ordinance on cannabis that should have been reviewed with recommendations that will be presented to Council. Joe Bell has been out of the office and Attorney Montilus will reach out to him for further discussion. Councilmember Kerry J. Coley inquired as to the timeline of events and where can he find this information in writing. City Attorney Gracia R. Montilus stated documentation will come to the body in short order and he will follow up with Joe Bell tomorrow. Councilmember Clifford R. Ross inquired if Councilmembers would have an opportunity to review the draft before it is presented for First Reading. Council President Adrienne K. Wooten inquired if it would be appropriate for Councilmembers to meet in groups of three or less to move the process along. City Attorney Gracia R. Montilus suggested against this and would be willing to set up a liaison for a question-and-answer session with two Councilmembers at a time. Councilmember Weldon M. Montague, III suggested that each Councilmember present their ideas to Council President to get all questions asked up front. Councilmember Kerry J. Coley inquired about how this legislation would affect insurance, which Attorney Avram D. White will be charged with researching. Councilmember Jamie B. Summers-Johnson spoke about the resident's desire to have legal cannabis in Orange as it is revenue generating. Councilmember Weldon M. Montague, III agrees that this is a good time to consider legalizing cannabis. Council President Adrienne K. Wooten believes it is important to keep track of the funds generated from legalized cannabis and how they are spent. Council Vice President Tency A. Eason stated she is completely against legalizing cannabis, she wants the law department to investigate how the funds are tracked, and wants her Council Colleagues to consider the consequences. Council President Adrienne K. Wooten stated she and Councilmember Jamie B. Summers-Johnson were represented by a different counsel during this lawsuit for the record. Councilmember Weldon M. Montague, III inquired how long it would be before the ordinance would be presented to the public which should be December.

Council President Adrienne K. Wooten inquired about the lawsuit of the woman who allegedly fell on Main Street (Alice Lane). The Business Administrator Chris Hartwyk stated funds must be moved around to cover this case before it is put on the agenda. Councilmember Clifford R. Ross inquired about a lawsuit which City Attorney Chris Hartwyk will research and get back to him. Council President Adrienne K. Wooten stated a question was presented to her about the number of attorneys are on retainer.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilmember Jamie B. Summers-Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Weldon M. Montague, III

Motion Adopted**The meeting was adjourned at 6:37pm**

Approved: November 6, 2024



Joyce L. Lanier
City Clerk



Adrienne K. Wooten
Council President