A Work Session of the Borough Council of the Borough of Avalon was held on

Wednesday, January 25, 2017 at 7:05 p.m. in the Meeting Room, 3100 Dune Drive, Avalon, New Jersey.

Attendance: Public -------------------- 2 Reporters ----------------------- 2

The Meeting was called to order by Council President Hudanich.

Pledge of allegiance.

Roll call: Council President Hudanich Present  
Councilman Covington Present  
Councilman Dean Absent  
Councilman Deever Present  
Council Vice President McCorristin Present

Also present:

Scott Wahl, Business Administrator

James A. Waldron, Assistant Business Administrator

Stephen D. Barse, Esquire, Borough Solicitor

William McCormick, Chief of Police

William Macomber, Director of Public Works/Utilities

Charles McDonnell, Recreation Director

John Tracy, Construction Official

Paul Short, Code Enforcement Official

Thomas R. Thornton, P.E., Borough Engineer, Hatch Mott Macdonald, LLC

Council President Hudanich read the Open Public Meetings Act Announcement.

Notice of this Work Session was included in the Annual Schedule of Meetings dated June 22, 2016. It was given to the news media and posted on the Official Bulletin Board as required by law.

Discussion regarding Resolution amending Standing Committees of Borough Council.

Council President Hudanich explained this Resolution must be amended due to the recent resignation of a council member. She suggested Councilman Deever fill all standing committees vacated by the resignation.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the February 8, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding Council appointment to the Planning/Zoning Board.

Council President Hudanich suggested Councilman Deever serve as Council’s appointment on the Planning/Zoning Board.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the February 8, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding Resolution authorizing contracts with certain approved state contract vendors for 2017.

Council briefly discussed this annual item and agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the February 8, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding Resolution establishing rules and regulations for tennis courts for 2017.

Chuck McDonnell reported things are running smoothly at both the 8th Street and 39th Street tennis courts. During this past summer, a later tennis session was offered, however there was not much attendance for those sessions, so the later sessions will not be offered this year. He also suggested allowing the nets to be installed a short time before the season when paid registration is required as well as allowing the nets to stay in place for a short time after the season ends to allow residents and visitors to play at the 39th Street courts on nice days outside of the season.

Council Vice President McCorristin asked Chuck McDonnell to provide a report on the Cornhole League that recently started in Avalon.

Chuck McDonnell reported the Cornhole League started Tuesday, January 17, 2017. At a Captain’s Meeting held January 16, 2017 it was determined there would be 26 teams competing in the league. So far the league is very successful with participants from all over the county and there is an abundance of positive feedback.

Council President Hudanich inquired about the new floor in Community Hall.

Chuck McDonnell explained the recently resurfaced floor in Community Hall was done very well and encouraged all to stop by to see the new floor. He added he inspects the floor daily for any damage.

Council President Hudanich spoke in support of daily inspections to allow for the identification of damaging factors.

Chuck McDonnell noted the company that resurfaced the floor explained beach sand will damage the floor very quickly. A new floor covering has been purchased to help avoid possible damage to the floor from beach sand.

Council President Hudanich also suggested buying new mats at all entrance and exit points to help get beach sand off of visitor’s shoes.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the February 8, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding Resolution authorizing release of rental bond for 167 34th Street, Unit 1.

Marie Hood reported all documentation is in order.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the February 8, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Update on the 2017 Winter Hydraulic Beach Fill Project.

Scott Wahl read the following report:

Beach Fill Project: Officials from Avalon and Stone Harbor attended a progress meeting regarding the Avalon/Stone Harbor beach fill project.  This project is sponsored by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and by both communities.  In attendance were representatives from the four agencies, along with Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company, LLC which has been awarded the contract for the beach fill project.

Some heavy equipment has arrived in Stone Harbor for its portion of the project.  Stone Harbor’s beachfront will be constructed first, followed by Avalon.  A Notice to Proceed was issued to Great Lakes on January 16th, 2017.  Various equipment and materials are arriving at the 123rd Street parking lot in Stone Harbor, with submerged pipeline landing at 117th Street. Approximately 4,000 feet of subline still needs to be put in place for the Stone Harbor portion of the project; that may be conducted, weather permitting from January 20th-22nd.

The actual start of the beach fill in Stone Harbor is anticipated to be January 27th, 2017. However, this may be impacted for a few to several days due to two factors.  There will be stormy conditions with rain and rough seas during the early part of next week; the dredge “Texas”, which is being used for this project, may conduct several days of emergency repair work in the Philadelphia/Wilmington area before being mobilized to the 7 Mile Beach.  That could result in a start of the project towards the end of January.

It will take approximately 20 days of uninterrupted work to complete the Stone Harbor portion of the project.  Then, the “Texas” will move to Avalon to begin a massive beach fill project that is currently anticipated to start at 9th Street and go south to 38th Street.  The United States Army Corps of Engineers completed beach profile surveys on January 18th and the exact size and scope of the project will be forthcoming.  Agencies are also working on securing some emergency funding that will provide more sand for the Avalon beachfront.

This project is to repair damage to the Avalon beaches caused by an October, 2015 nor’easter event and Winter Storm Jonas in January, 2016.

Avalon has created a special link on the front page of the website where updates on the beach fill will be provided at least weekly, and when the project moves to Avalon more frequently than that. Our next progress meeting is tomorrow at 10:00am at the Stone Harbor Fire House.

Council Vice President McCorristin asked if the US Army Corp of Engineers is responsible for all inspections and abiding by the Ordinances as the sponsor of the project.

Scott Wahl responded yes.

Councilman Covington asked how the damage from this past week’s storm will impact the profile of the project.

Scott Wahl stated he will be asking that question at the meeting tomorrow. He added the Borough is very fortunate to have orchestrated such a large beach fill with funding for the project. He commended the leadership of the Mayor and Council for their forward thinking in orchestrating this project.

Update on the 2017 Ocean Drive Sanitary Sewer Project.

Tom Thornton reported a preconstruction meeting with the contractor, Mathis Construction, was held on January 20, 2017. During the meeting, the schedule for the project was reviewed and four interim completion dates prior to the summer season were decided upon. The first date is March 3rd, by which the bypass pumping of the 58th Street pump station must be completed. The second date is March 18th required that the sewer improvements south of 46th Street be completed so that the project does not interfere with the County’s paving project in that area. Although this project is primarily a sanitary sewer project, there are some instances where asbestos cement water mains are too close to the sewer mains and may be damaged. To avoid this problem, those water mains will be replaced with PVC water mains. All of those water main improvements must be completed by April 17th. Sewer work between 46th Street and 42nd Street must be completed by May 22nd. The remainder of the project will be completed in the fall. The contractor has been submitting their shop drawings, which are being reviewed by Mott Macdonald. After the success of the preconstruction meeting, the contractor seems to be off to a good start. A preconstruction meeting for the County project on Ocean Drive will be held on January 31, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. in the County Administration Building.

Councilman Covington asked how work is progressing for the reconstruction of 60th Street.

Tom Thornton reported the project is underway and should be done in a few weeks.

Discussion regarding Resolution approving the submission of a grant application and execution of a grant contract with the NJ DOT for the following:

* Reconstruction of Dune Drive southbound between 77th Street and 80th Street
* Reconstruction of 39th Street between Dune Drive and First Avenue

Tom Thornton explained a grant was received four fiscal years ago for the reconstruction of Dune Drive northbound between 77th and 80th Streets. Since then, the Borough has applied for grant funding for the Reconstruction of Dune Drive southbound between 77th and 80th Streets, which was in a similar condition when grant funds were received for the northbound section. Unfortunately, the Department of Transportation has not yet awarded grant funding for that project. The DOT recommended that Avalon apply for more than one project to increase the possibility of being awarded grant money, which is the reasoning for also applying for the reconstruction of 39th Street between Dune Drive and First Avenue. In that area, 39th Street is in need of repair, and it is also a proposed bike lane route.

Councilman Covington asked why a bike lane would be proposed on 39th Street instead of 40th Street.

Tom Thornton explained the width of the streets make it difficult to have bike lanes on both sides of the streets. The proposal is that one direction of bike traffic will travel along 39th Street, while the other direction of bike traffic will travel along 40th Street. He added the submission deadline for the grant applications is next week and recommends that Council consider Resolutions authorizing the submissions of the grant applications at tonight’s Regular Meeting.

Council agreed to proceed with Resolutions to be considered at tonight’s Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding proposal for management of grant for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for home elevations in Avalon.

Scott Wahl read the following report:

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program: There are many advantages to having a Class 5 rating in the Community Rating System program which currently provides a 25% discount on flood insurance premiums for property owners in Avalon. Another benefit was derived yesterday. Avalon and a few other local communities were invited to a meeting at the Cape May County Emergency Management Office to meet with State and Federal officials regarding a large grant that will be provided to our community that will assist property owners with elevating their homes. The funding amount will be in the neighborhood of $1 million and can provide up to 100% funding for Severe Repetitive Loss properties, 90% funding and 75% funding for other properties. We confirmed the funding amount in January and begin to disseminate the information during the first quarter. The team working on this for Avalon includes myself, John Tracy, Ed Dean, and Frank Bruton.

Under the direction of Cape May County Emergency Management Coordinator Marty Pagliughi, Ocean City has agreed to be the lead agency among the four participating communities, which also include Stone Harbor and Sea Isle City. The County has suggested using Tetra Tech for the application and administrative services to execute the grant. Tetra Tech has provided a $40,000 proposal for the execution of the grant which has been reviewed favorably by all four communities. Each of the four communities will contribute $10,000 to cover its share of services with Tetra Tech. Our CFO has provided me with a certification of funds. This evening we are asking Council for its blessing to move forward with this program. Our team will continue to meet with the County and the State in the coming weeks and begin the process of elevating awareness of this program which will involve public meetings, communication with our partners at AHLOA, and other means. This program will provide an ideal, one time opportunity for property owners who are interested in home elevation to have a substantial amount of funding applied to their efforts.

John Tracy added the grant is designed to help properties with repetitive losses and substantial damage. It would be the Borough’s responsibility to educate the public, and interested property owners would need to apply for the funding. Their applications would need to include documentary proof that their property has suffered substantial damage and repetitive loss. The property owner would be responsible for the costs up front, and the grant would reimburse the property owners at the conclusion of the project.

Councilman Covington inquired if the Borough selects the properties eligible to receive funding.

Scott Wahl responded yes and explained each municipality is able to select its own criteria in terms of which homes would be selected. The State can also suggest criteria specific to each municipality.

Council President Hudanich asked if the grant is structured to allow each municipality to tailor the funding to its own individual needs and include both priorities recommended by Tetra Tech.

Scott Wahl responded the grant does allow for flexibility in the criteria and each involved municipality can apply the funding differently. It has been reported that the Construction Office is intimately aware of the properties that are most at risk. The Borough can inform not only Avalon as a whole, but also the individual property owners at risk. Tetra Tech will also help with the reimbursement process.

Council President Hudanich spoke in support of pursuing this and offering the grant to Avalon property owners.

Discussion regarding refund of overpayment of Construction Permit fee.

Council Vice President McCorristin recused himself from the discussion.

Scott Wahl explained this refund is for a permit issued to McCorristin Construction for a project completed in August of 2013. When the construction company applied for the permit, an incorrect calculation was used to determine the permit fee. The overpayment was discovered by an employee of the Construction Office while conducting an audit of permit files.

Council President Hudanich commended the employee that found the error for a job well done.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the February 8, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Council Vice President McCorristin returned to the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Public Comments:

None.

Motion made by Council Vice President McCorristin, seconded by Councilman Covington to adjourn the Work Session.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilman Covington Aye  
Councilman Dean Absent  
Councilman Deever Aye  
Council President Hudanich Aye  
Council Vice President McCorristin Aye

Work Session adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Marie J. Hood, Borough Clerk

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Nancy M. Hudanich, Council President