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

Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 4:03 p.m. in the Meeting Room, 3100 Dune Drive, Avalon, New Jersey.

Attendance: Public - - - - - - - - - - 2 Reporters - - - - - - - - - - 1

The Meeting was called to order by Council President Hudanich.

Pledge of allegiance.

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

Also present:

Scott Wahl, Business Administrator

Stephen D. Barse, Esquire, Borough Solicitor

Paul Short, Code Enforcement Official

Jim Waldron, Assistant Business Administrator

Captain Jeffrey Christopher

Steven Camp, Assistant Director of Public Works

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

Monica Coskey, 7 Mile Publishing

Frank Bruton, CRS Coordinator, Mott Macdonald, LLC

Jim Nanos, southjerseydrones.com

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 Shared Services Agreement with the Borough of Stone Harbor for back-up Construction Official Services.

Scott Wahl explained this agreement was originally ratified in 2015 to allow Stone Harbor and Avalon to provide back-up services for Construction. There are many construction projects taking place at any given time during both municipalities, which requires Construction services on a daily basis. There are times when the Construction Official in each town may be out of the office, and this agreement allows for one Construction Official to assist the other and perform the duties of the office when needed. There is no cost associated with this agreement, and has worked brilliantly for both communities. There is a good working relationship between both Boroughs and all involved are interested in renewing the agreement, which has also been helpful during situations where a conflict may have been involved. A Construction Meeting was recently held in northern New Jersey, and it was relayed that there is a growing interest of Construction Departments in other communities entering into similar agreements. He recommended that Borough Council approve an agreement for another two year period.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the March 22, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding professional services contract with 7 Mile Publishing.

Scott Wahl reported the annual proposal from 7 Mile Publishing has been received and continues to provide exemplary services to the Borough. There have been a few additions and deletions to this contract as compared to last year, and the total cost of the contract is slightly higher. Additions to the contract include a 44 page Information and Recreation Guide as opposed to 2016’s 36 page guide, and a Constant Contact Email Service. Constant Contact Email can include photographs, headlines and hyperlinks to push out information regarding various topics Scott Wahl (continued) such as the sports camps or emergency emails. When a Constant Contact Email is sent, the sender has the ability to see who opens the email, the delivery rate, and if there is any bounce back. In addition to sports camps and emergency purposes, the emails can also be sent to include information regarding capital projects, construction projects, beach closings, and so forth. In addition, funding for the bicycle safety initiative was removed from the contract, and funding has been added for Snowfest Saturday.

Monica Coskey added with the ability to see bounce backs through the Constant Contact Email Service, it is very easy to remove those email addresses from the email list. Additionally, the service integrates with Facebook so that the message contained in an email can easily be posted on the Borough’s Facebook page. She also suggested the newsletters could be sent out through the service.

Councilman Covington inquired if there is information on bike safety within the Information and Recreation Guide.

Monica Coskey responded that there is a full page of the guide dedicated to the bike safety initiative. AHLOA is also distributing brochures published by the NJ Department of Transportation to help raise bike safety awareness.

Councilman Covington asked when the new bike lanes should be discussed.

Scott Wahl responded the anticipated project completion date for the new bike lanes is Columbus Day weekend this year. The bike safety portion of the Information and Recreation Guide delineates the Avalon regulations and State regulations as well as support of AHLOA’s initiative. Information regarding bike safety and possibly the new bike lanes can be included in the Spring or Fall Newsletter.

Council President Hudanich suggested delaying the publication of the new bike lane regulations to avoid confusion in the summer season.

After further discussion, Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the March 22, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding proposal from Mott Macdonald for monitoring, oversight and guidance of the Community Rating System.

Frank Bruton explained the focus of this program is continuing with annual recertification. The most recent recertification was successful in maintaining the Borough’s Class 5 rating with a total of 2,700 points. While performing the recertification, opportunities to obtain even more points were found which could possibly advance Avalon’s program to Class 4 status with a 30% discount during the next recertification schedule.

Council Vice President McCorristin asked what the discount is for a Class 5 rating.

Frank Bruton responded the discount for Class 5 is currently 25%. By its definition, the recertification must be done every year to ensure the program is being followed, however the focus will soon be moving to advancing the program rather than staying status quo.

Councilman Covington questioned how membership within the Atlantic Cape Coastal Coalition impacts the recertification process.

Frank Bruton explained membership within the Atlantic Cape Coastal Coalition is a multi-jurisdictional program for public information as another method of outreaching to the community with regards to the awareness of various flooding mitigation or actions on how to respond during an emergency status. Participation in program will help advance Avalon approximately 250 points, which is half of a class. In order to get those points, a program of how the outreach will be put forth must be established and a report must be completed as well. The Coalition is an organized approach of getting an outreach to the public, and at the end of the year it is reviewed to determine successes or failures. The Coalition is something to be developed and worked on over the years by attending mandatory meetings. At the mandatory meetings, representation of the Floodplain Manager as well as one non-government borough resident is required.

Council President Hudanich inquired if the mandatory meetings of the coalition include communication and sharing of best practices.

Frank Bruton explained the meetings are a communicative effort. Outreaches will be done through email, Facebook or mailings. The primary focus will be to get the message to as many individuals as possible regarding allowable uses of the floodplain as well as floodplain regulations and standards that must be met to aid in the mitigation against flood.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the March 22, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Discussion regarding Shared Services Agreement with Sea Isle City and Stone Harbor for Comcast local access channel.

Scott Wahl read the following report:

Background: Eight years ago when Scott Wahl was hired as Public Information Officer, he was charged with the creation and implementation of a shared public access channel for the Borough for community notices and emergency management. The channel was initially on Channel 2 and moved to Channel 97 two years ago when MeTV was added to Comcast on Channel 2. The channel remains a shared information channel for viewers in Avalon, Stone Harbor, and Sea Isle City.

Budget: Comcast provided each of the three communities with different levels of funding for “television-related expenses” for the startup and maintenance of the channel. The three communities shared equally in the costs eight years ago for the equipment to get the channel up and running and the communities agreed that Scott Wahl would be the facilitator of the channel. Avalon currently maintains a balance of $18,675.30 in the budget. The only expenses that have been paid out of the fund from the initial startup were video production fees for videos that appear on the channel (emergency management, etc) and the annual fee paid to Telvue, who provides technical support, production elements, and troubleshooting for the channel; that fee is $2400 annually. As of now, the channel can be sustained for seven additional years with no additional expense by the Borough.

Partnering Towns: Sea Isle City and Stone Harbor share the time equally with Avalon. The three communities are each provided with 20 minutes of air time per hour, 24 hours a day for broadcast. This time includes town specific videos, weather forecasts, tide information, community events, and when necessary, emergency and weather alerts. The Avalon Office of Public Information provides all emergency alerts, creates all content for Avalon and Stone Harbor’s portion of the channel, assists Sea Isle City with video creation and implementation for the channel, and is responsible to troubleshoot, with Telvue’s assistance, shall any problems arise. Stone Harbor contributes $5000 annually to Avalon for support; Sea Isle City contributes $2000 annually since that community creates and builds its own television slides.

Agreement Term: It has been the past practice to authorize one year renewals. That was done initially to make sure that the partnering towns had a trust that Avalon could host and maintain the channel properly, fix any problems, and provide emergency alerts. Scott has spoken with administrators from both Stone Harbor and Sea Isle City and they both are in agreement that the expectations have been surpassed and would like to enter into a three year SSA with Avalon for this service.

Summary: It is our recommendation to Council that the Shared Services Agreement be extended for a three year term as there are projected to be no additional expenses with the channel and shall any major equipment fail or need to be replaced, it is incumbent upon TelVue to provide that to the three communities.

Councilman Covington inquired how Sea Isle and Stone Harbor will make their payments if the municipalities enter into a three year agreement.

Scott Wahl responded those payments will be made annually.

Council President Hudanich asked if the Borough will be receiving additional funding from Comcast at the time of renewal.

Scott Wahl explained it is his understanding that the funding from Comcast was a one-time only payment.

Council President Hudanich suggested asking Comcast for additional funding when the contract for service is renegotiated. She spoke in support of renewing the agreement with Stone Harbor and Sea Isle City for a three year period and stressed the importance of including explicit language stating the payments should be made annually.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the March 22, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Update on the 2017 Winter Hydraulic Beach Fill Project.

Scott Wahl gave the following report:

The Avalon/Stone Harbor beach fill project has taken a significant step towards Avalon today.  The initial beach fill operation in Stone Harbor has been shut down and will be moving to the Borough of Avalon in the coming days.  Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company's dredge, "Texas" was pumping material Monday night when there was a mechanical breakdown of the cutting wheel.  The dredge is expected to be towed to Cape May for repair, and then proceed north to Townsend's Inlet.  The piping that has been in place on the Stone Harbor beachfront is being flushed clean for dismantlement and relocation to Avalon.

The Avalon portion of the beach fill project will include 940,000 cubic yards of material to be placed on the beaches from 9th Street south to the northern limits of 30th Street, according to the current template.  As of last Thursday, only 1800 linear feet of beach needed to be pumped in Stone Harbor's initial phase of the project in order for the dredge to be moved to Townsend's Inlet.  The production rate on the dredge is approximately 20,000 cubic yards per day.  It is anticipated that the Avalon portion of the beach fill project will extend to mid or late April.  The project timeline may be extended due to unsafe weather conditions or mechanical issues with the dredge.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers has issued a Request for Proposal from Great Lakes for an additional 320,000 cubic yards of sand to be placed on the northerly Stone Harbor beaches, and also on the Avalon beachfront from 76th Street to 80th Street.  When this project occurs, it will very likely begin with the Avalon beaches being pumped first, with the landing area for the dredge pipe to be in Stone Harbor, south of the 80th Street border where there are hotels and a recreational area in Stone Harbor.  Due diligence by the Corps and by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has resulted in an expanded borrow area in Townsend's Inlet that was necessitated by what Avalon and Stone Harbor believes was the erroneous application of the Coastal Barriers Resources Act and by an obstruction found underwater on the edge of the borrow zone.  Dredge pipe has been run over the 8th Street Jetty and various equipment is on the Avalon beach waiting for the arrival of the "Texas".

Scott Wahl reported that the Mayor had suggested a drone flight of the area where the beach fill will be conducted before the project begins, during various phases of the project, as well as after the project is complete to get a clear picture of the condition of the beaches at every stage of the project. Contact has been established with Jim Nanos of southjerseydrone.com who will be conducting the drone flights. Having these drone flight videos could also help the Borough in the future to decide when another beach fill needs to be done.

Jim Nanos explained the purpose of the drone flights is to give a baseline of the current state of the beaches as well as a fair comparison moving forward. The flight line will start from the south and go north and will fly directly over the water line at present date. To accomplish that, the flight path has been pre-programmed into the drone and with only a minor variation attributed to the wind, the drone should fly the same track in every single flight. That should be able to provide a good representation of where the fill is going and how the beach is extending. An altitude of 400 feet is being maintained during each flight, and 4K HD resolution video is being used.

Scott Wahl added the goal is to show the side-by-side results of the first flight and final flight to give a clear picture to the community of what the beach fill project will accomplish.

Jim Nanos also explained the flights will consistently be done during high tide so there is a fair comparison. Unfortunately, as tides and lighting fluctuate, the videos may have minor differences.

Councilman Deever asked how far the drone can fly.

Jim Nanos responded during the pre-project flight completed on March 5, 2017 during high tide at 1:40 p.m., the flight started at the pier on 32nd Street and flew to the inlet in one flight. Due to their being no obstructions while flying on the beach, it is possible to get the entire project in one flight.

Councilman Covington asked if the drone videos will measure the amount of sand being lost.

Jim Nanos responded no, and explained the flights only provide a visual perspective of the current state of the beach and will help to make a visual comparison of project progress.

Council President Hudanich inquired if this drone must be kept in the operator’s line of sight during flight.

Jim Nanos responded yes and stated he moves along with the drone as it progresses through the project area.

Council Vice President McCorristin questioned if these flights will be done during similar tide events in relation to moon phases.

Jim Nanos explained fixed landmarks have been included in the video to attempt to aid in the perspective, as it is unclear if it will be possible to only fly during similar tide events.

Jim Nanos showed a brief video of a drone flying over the beach to depict the state of Avalon’s beaches.

Councilman Covington suggested the street names be added to the video to provide a better understanding of the location of the drone.

Jim Nanos pointed out there is a significant loss of beach at the north end starting around 17th Street.

Public Comments:

None.

Motion made by Councilman Deever, seconded by Councilman Covington to adjourn the Work Session.

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

Work Session adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Marie J. Hood, Borough Clerk

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Nancy M. Hudanich, Council President