

A Work Session of the Borough Council of the Borough of Avalon was held on Wednesday, August 12, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room, 3100 Dune Drive, Avalon, New Jersey.

Attendance: Public ----- 1

Reporters ----- 1

The Meeting was called to order by Council President McCorristin.

Pledge of allegiance.

<u>Roll call:</u>	Council President McCorristin	Present
	Councilman Deever	Present
	Councilwoman Hudanich	Present
	Councilwoman Juzaitis	Present
	Councilman Wierman	Present

Also present:

Scott Wahl, Business Administrator  
James Waldron, Assistant Business Administrator  
Nicole Curio, Esquire, Borough Solicitor  
John Roscoe, Captain of Police  
William Macomber, Director of Public Works/Utilities  
Thomas R. Thornton, P.E., Borough Engineer, Mott Macdonald  
Ken Koches, Manager of Middlesex Water Company  
Brian Reynolds, Chairman of the Environmental Commission

Council President McCorristin read the Open Public Meetings Act Announcement.

Notice of this Regular Meeting was included the annual Schedule of Meetings dated June 24, 2020. It was given to the news media and posted on the Official Bulletin Board as required by law.

**Presentation regarding recent Municipal Shoreline Surveys.**

Scott Wahl announced a report of the second quarter survey of Avalon's beachfront was received from Dr. Stewart Farrell with Stockton University, which has been provided to Council. He notified Council of Dr. Farrell's inability to attend the meeting, therefore read the following report, as a short review of Dr. Farrell's report:

Sand Loss: Council is aware of the specific beaches that are profiled in the University's quarterly reports. A good summary is provided by Dr. Farrell on the final page of the report.

We had relatively mild weather conditions during this time frame. Even to that end, there was a moderate increase of sand loss between 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> streets. There is hope that future sand loss will be slowed to some degree now that the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Jetty project is coming to completion. The federal project that was completed in the fourth quarter of 2019, which avoided a backpassing project in 2020, was 135,000 cubic yards from 9<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> streets. Council will recall that the hydraulic project placed a large amount of sand between 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> streets to allow the sand to accrete southward. This report shows that's exactly what occurred as sand landed on the beaches from 23<sup>rd</sup> through 28<sup>th</sup> streets. Finally, there was a significant sand gain during the first quarter in 2020, but much of that sand was lost during the second quarter (Station 78).

Sand Gain: Dr. Farrell's report does show, due to littoral currents (and not wave action) that the sand that was lost has been deposited offshore. The third quarter (which we are in now) traditionally results in some of this offshore sand being re-deposited on the beaches. There is the potential for some accretion on our beachfront during this quarter, which ends at the end of September.



Moving forward: Dr. Farrell and the Business Administrator spoke about the report and potential future actions by the Borough. Council is advised that there may be a recommendation for a sand backpassing project in early spring 2021, and the Department of Public Works should put that in their calendar. That is wholly dependent on any accretion of sand that was transported during the second quarter to a seaward berm, and late fall/winter storm activity.

**Discussion regarding a Resolution confirming the Mayor's nomination and appointment of Raymond Poudrier as Electrical Subcode Official of the Borough of Avalon effective January 1, 2020.**

James Waldron reminded Council that John Tracy retired on March 1, 2019 from the positions of Construction Official and Building Sub Code Official. The Borough of Avalon subsequently appointed Rick Allen to the position of Building Subcode Official and Ed Dean as Construction Official. A subsequent vacancy was created on December 31, 2019 due to the resignation of Electrical Inspector, Brian Glaze. The Electrical Inspector position was filled on an acting basis by Executive Order of the Mayor, pending Council's advice and consent. Due to unforeseen delays as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency, the approval of said appointment is being brought before Council today. It is requested that Council look upon this appointment favorably by adopting a Resolution confirming same, as well as approving the job description submitted for the title of Electrical Subcode Official. The salary was fixed as of January 1, 2020, which was consistent with the Salary Ordinance Council previously approved.

Councilwoman Hudanich noted the Borough is lucky to have found such a qualified person.

After a brief discussion, Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for today's Regular Meeting.

**Discussion regarding a Resolution authorizing Middlesex Water Company to solicit bids to replace and install all water meters in the Borough of Avalon.**

Scott Wahl read the following statement, explaining this agenda item:

Summary: Administration is seeking Council's approval to allow Middlesex Water Company to solicit bids for a project that will replace all water meters in the Borough. Council has appropriated \$2.55 million in the 2020 Municipal Budget for this replacement program to occur.

Background Information: Current water meters in Avalon date back to the mid-1990s and should be replaced on about a 20 to 25-year cycle. Through the years, water meters can begin to lose their efficiency. Routine water meter tests are done on random meters to examine efficiency and performance. The water meters in Avalon require an individual to read each of them in person, and due to the age of the meters, requires a re-reading on occasion. This requires manpower, and man hours to perform, lasting days at a time for each meter reading period.

New water meters: The Borough has two options regarding these electronic water meters. One option would be to install equipment (at no additional cost to the property owner) on the water towers that would automatically cull the data from the water meters throughout our community immediately and electronically. A second option could be performed in about a half a day with someone riding around town in a vehicle and automatically collecting the meter data on an electronic device. For instance, the individual could drive Avalon Avenue once, and collect all of the data from all of the beach block homes. Both scenarios are much more efficient than the current system.

An option that may be part of the bid would allow individual customers who have instant data on how much water they have used at any time. This can be important for customers during extreme cold snaps who have meters running through a broken frozen pipe. If the meter is running and the house is not in use, then the customer can immediately get help to fix the problem instead of it being found by Middlesex in their daily course of work. Any new meter would be much more efficient for a longer period of time to provide accuracy and fairness to the customer. Additionally, the Borough would expect to see some level of savings in its management contract of the water/sewer/stormwater utility as fewer man hours will be needed to actually capture the data that results in the water bills. Avalon can also include this new meter program in its bid specs in 2021 as the management contract is up for renewal and bidding.



Bid Specs: Middlesex Water would be responsible for preparing the bid specs for which the company is very familiar with as it has done this project many times before in its company. Middlesex would also oversee the installation of the water meters which provides only a minutes-long interruption in service to the customer.

Ken Koches explained the customer portal has many features a property owner would find valuable, including the ability to alert property owners of a meter running when the home is otherwise unoccupied.

Council President McCorristin asked if the customer portal will be available to property owners if the meters are read by personnel traveling through town.

Ken Koches replied yes, and noted the information will come straight from the meter. The two options to be explored are the meter constantly communicating with the Borough and property owners, and the meters being read only when personnel travels through town to receive the information from the meter.

Council President McCorristin spoke in favor of the constant communication option, so that the information is automatically received.

Ken Koches noted the constant communication option is a fixed antenna system, which is the newest technology.

Councilwoman Hudanich asked if there is a dashboard on the meters or if the information would be accessed by an internet connected device.

Ken Koches confirmed this would be an application on a phone or computer.

Councilwoman Hudanich asked for explanation as to how the information is collected from the meters.

Ken Koches explained in one scenario, an individual would drive around with a computer in the vehicle, with the computer automatically gathering and reading information from all meters within a certain range.

Councilwoman Hudanich referenced the constant communication option and inquired as to the technology being used and the circumference of that parameter to gather the information. She further questioned if an additional antenna will need to be placed on the water tower.

Ken Koches replied installation of an antenna will be required on the 38<sup>th</sup> Street Water Tower, which would have the ability to read all the meters in the Borough.

Councilwoman Hudanich voiced additional concerns about the height of the antenna and any potential interference.

Ken Koches noted 38<sup>th</sup> Street is a central location of the Borough, and assured Council the antenna has the range to gather the meter readings at any time.

Councilwoman Hudanich stressed the importance of knowing the height of the proposed antenna and if there would be any interference with other real estate the Borough has on the towers.

Ken Koches mentioned the water tower will act as the tower for the antenna, therefore the installed antenna would be very small and not take up much real estate on the tower.

Councilwoman Hudanich inquired if Council could be provided pictures of the proposed antenna.

Ken Koches ensured Council that graphics of the proposed antenna and a cost analysis will be provided in advance of the next Council Meeting.

Councilwoman Hudanich spoke in support of the new technology, however emphasized the importance of Council being well informed prior to making a decision.

Councilman Deever asked if the new meters would be affected in any way by a power outage.

Ken Koches replied each meter has its own battery, the life span of which would be approximately 15-20 years. If power is lost, property owners will not lose the signal.

Council agreed to proceed with a Resolution to be prepared for the August 26, 2020 Regular Meeting.

**Discussion regarding a Resolution authorizing an adjustment in MUA billing for premises at 2288 Dune Drive, Avalon, New Jersey.**

Scott Wahl recommended that Council defer discussion on this item until further notice. A discussion was held with Council President McCorristin and Tax Collector Alexis Coan regarding this matter, at which point it was determined that more information is needed.

**Discussion regarding an Ordinance creating Environmental Trust Fund.**

Scott Wahl reported there are times when the Borough is approached by an architect or developer building a property who is obligated to provide an environmental benefit as a condition of providing the property owner with access to a waterway, as the DEP will look favorably upon any environmental benefit. He stressed the importance of the Borough establishing a mechanism for receiving such contributions to be dedicated to an environmental project, such as a living shore line.

James Waldron added this proposed Ordinance and subsequent Dedication by Rider is a mechanism to comply with regulations of both the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and Division of Local Government Services (DLGS). Currently, if the Borough were to receive a contribution from a builder, there is no mechanism in place to accumulate funds from year to year, as the Borough's budget is on a cash basis. In order to implement a procedure for this, a Dedication by Rider must be requested from the DLGS, which will permit the Borough to accept contributions without respect to the local budget year. The purpose of the proposed Ordinance is to determine what money is acceptable, how the money is managed, and the projects in the trust fund. Any and all spending from the trust fund would be administered by Borough Council. There is also an indication that Council can reject funds where it appears to be inappropriate from the source, or because owner's conditions may be attached. Regardless of when funding is deposited, funds can be expended in different fiscal calendar years.

After further discussion, Council agreed to proceed with an Ordinance to be considered on first reading at the August 26, 2020 Regular Meeting.

**Public Comments**

Council President McCorristin asked if Council can expect an update from Lomax Consulting on vegetation in various locations around the Borough, such as the dunes and Armacost Park.

**Council to check over the agenda for the Regular Meeting.**

Council proceeded to check over the agenda for the Regular Meeting.

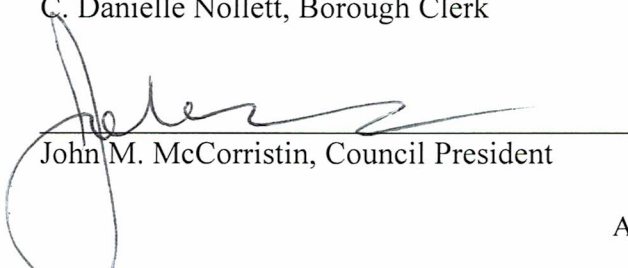
Motion made by Council President McCorristin, seconded by Councilman Deever to adjourn the Work Session.

<u>ROLL CALL VOTE:</u>	Council Deever	Aye
	Councilwoman Hudanich	Aye
	Councilwoman Juzaitis	Aye
	Councilman Wierman	Aye
	Council President McCorristin	Aye

Work Session adjourned at 4:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
C. Danielle Nollett, Borough Clerk

  
John M. McCorristin, Council President